CONCEPTS OF THE Qur'ān

A Topical Reading

SECOND EDITION

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Second Edition
Revised and with Additions

Fathi Osman

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بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

IN THE NAME OF GOD,
THE ALL-MERCIFUL, THE MOST GRACIOUS

وَ لَقَدْ ضَرَبْنَا لِلنَّاسِ فِى هَـٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانِ مِن كُلِّ مَثَلٍ لَّعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

And indeed We have put forth for human beings in the Quran [examples] from all categorical situations so that they might be mindful. [39:27]

... لِكُلٍّ جَعَلْنَا مِنكُمْ شِرْعَةً وَ مِنْهَاجًا ۚ وَ لَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ
لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً وَ لَـٰكِن لِّيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِى مَآ ءَاتَىٰكُمْ ۖ فَٱسْتَبِقُوا۟ ٱلْخَيْرَٰتِ ۚ إِلَى
ٱللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

To each of you We have appointed a law and a way to follow. And had God so willed, He would have made you all one single people, but [He willed it otherwise] so as to test you through what He has given you. Vie, then, with one another, in good deeds; unto God you shall return, and He will make you understand all on which you differed.. [5:48]

وَ نَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَـٰبَ تِبْيَـٰنًا لِّكُلِّ شَىْءٍ وَ هُدًى
وَرَحْمَةً وَ بُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٨٩﴾ ● إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِٱلْعَدْلِ وَ ٱلْإِحْسَـٰنِ وَ إِيتَآئِ
ذِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ وَ يَنْهَىٰ عَنِ ٱلْفَحْشَآءِ وَٱلْمُنكَرِ وَ ٱلْبَغْىِ ۚ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾

And We have sent down to you, step by step, this Book, to make all matters clear, and as guidance and grace and good tidings unto all who have submitted themselves to God. God commands justice, the doing of good, and giving to [one's] relatives; and He forbids all that is shameful, and that runs counter to reason, in addition to aggression; He exhorts you so that you may bear this in mind. [16:89-90]

لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِٱلْبَيِّنَـٰتِ وَ أَنزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ ٱلْكِتَـٰبَ
وَٱلْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ ٱلنَّاسُ بِٱلْقِسْطِ ۖ ..... ﴿٢٥﴾

Indeed, We sent aforetime the conveyors of Our messages with clear signs and messages, and We sent down along with them the book and the balance [to weigh right and wrong] so that people observe [in dealing with one another] justice. [57:25]

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In the end as in the beginning, there has always been with all participants in this work, the help and support of God, to Whom is due all praise and gratitude for any good that people do.

while transitionally allowing -with restrictions- some contradictory remnants of the past, until the unwanted phenomena dies out and the Islamic principle gradually prevails.

One obvious example is the case of slavery. Not a single verse constitutes a legal rule of slavery: prisoners of war may be only temporarily kept as prisoners during the war and then they should be set free with or without something in return [The Quran 47:4]. The teachings of the Quran and Sunna prohibit all other possible sources of slavery, and secure for any existing slaves, all the needs of life equally with those who have them, through the transitional stage. Thus slavery becomes an empty shell, or even a burden not a privilege: "Those who have to serve you are your brothers whom God has put in your hands; thus one who has his brother in his hands should give him the same food as he eats, the same clothes as he is dressed; and he should not overload him with work. And when one charges his brother with a weary task, he has to help him" [a Prophet's tradition reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, al-Termidhi, Ibn Majah]. The word "slave" should not be used, rather one has to call a slave "my boy" or "my girl." Assets from the Muslim public treasury have to be yearly allocated for the emancipation of slaves; also individuals are required to emancipate slaves to make amends for certain evil doings, and are urged to do this voluntarily and as much as possible as an act of grace and charity. From the general principles of human dignity and equality in the Quran, the prominent commentator al-Nasafi (d.710 A.H./ 1310 C.E.) stated that slavery was "a remaining track from the state of ungodliness and irreligion, '*kufr*'", and has to be considered in its nature a moral "death," It is for this reason that the Quran orders one who commits manslaughter by human error to emancipate a slave, as if he/she is bringing the slave back to life to make amendment for wrongly causing someone's death [*Tafsir al-Nasafi*, comment on verse 4:92]. Hence, according to the teachings of Islam, Muslims were supposed to have been the earliest people to abolish slavery, and ought not to have waited until Europe did so after managing to obtain cheaper work from machines as a result of the industrial revolution.

A knowledge of pre-Islamic Arabian society is necessary to recognize the gradual Islamic process in developing a practical change in the society and the legal status quos. Meanwhile a conceptual change would be caused in the hearts and minds of the people through the general moral and legal principles of the Quran and Sunna, since a radical change may not be always possible by one stroke. It could not be possible that Islam would achieve all its ideals in the Arabian society in about twenty years, and change or destroy deeply rooted customs. The Quran and Sunna sharply stressed the general principles, and allowed for the minds and customs to turn gradually in the right direction. Unfortunately, the general principles and indicators, and moral and legal ideals were ignored, and the transitional details were taken as permanent rules. Unless the pre-Islamic Arabian society is thoroughly studied, the Islamic epistemological approach and strategic mechanism can not be thoroughly conceived, and the confusion would heavily affect the understanding and implementation of the Islamic reform in our times.

Muhammad Iqbal, the outstanding Muslim poet and philosopher of India (d.1938), very thoughtfully and eloquently emphasized the importance of precisely recognizing "the pre-Islamic usages of Arabia which were in some cases left intact, and in others modified by the Prophet," and to investigate if "the usages left intact by expressive or tacit approval

of the Prophet were intended to be universal in their application." Shah Wali Ullah [a prominent Indian Islamic scholar, d.1762 C.E.] presented a very enlightening analysis on the point which was highlighted by Iqbal :

> I introduce here the substance of his (Shah Wali Ullah's) view. The prophetic method of teaching, according to Shah Wali Ullah, is that, generally speaking, the law revealed by a prophet takes especial notice of the habits, ways and peculiarities of the people to whom he is especially sent. The prophet who aims at all-embracing principles, however, can neither reveal different principles for different peoples, nor leave them to work out their own rules of conduct. His method is to train one particular people, and to use them as a nucleus for the building up of a universal Shari'a. In doing so, he accentuates the principles underlying the social life of all mankind, and applies them to concrete cases in the light of the specific habits of the people immediately before him. [Muhammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, New Delhi:1984, pp.171-2].

Such a developmental conception of the texts is naturally different from a direct abrogation of a previous legal text by a later one.

It is vital to maintain the dynamism of the message of Islam through an understanding of the pre-Islamic society, of the Islamic concepts in their totality and development, and through a grasp of the general principles and the detailed rules and their inter-relations. This would secure the dynamism of Islam and its ability to respond to the changing human needs of the societies in different times and places. It would also make such dynamism understandable to Muslims and non-Muslims of our time, whose life circumstances have qualitatively changed from the previous generations, through the successive centuries that have passed since Islam emerged in Arabia in the year 610 C.E. Through such an understanding, *ijtihad* can more realistically find the necessary mechanisms through observing the goals and the general principles of Shari'a, which provide an invaluable and enriching source for an open-ended dynamic law that responds to the changing social circumstances. These principles include: no exploitation nor fraud to be allowed in earning money from one another and the consent of all parties in dealing is required [4:29], any suffering of pressure should be removed [5:6, 22:78], and no harm that may be caused by one to another is tolerated, be it intentional or unintentional, initial or reciprocal [a Prophet's tradition reported by Malik, Ibn Hanbal, Ibn Majah and al-Darqutni].

In addition, intellectual methods for responding to developing circumstances, such as applying the original allowance unless prohibition can be proved (*istishab*) as evidenced among Hanbali and Zahiri jurists, analogy (*qiyas*) and preference of one of two possible analogies (*istihsan*), evident among Hanafis, and consideration of the emerging common benefit that was not specified in the Quran and Sunna (*al-maslaha al-mursala*), in use among Malikis. Imam al-Haramayn al-Juwayni (d.1085 C.E.), a prominent Shafi'i jurist, stated centuries ago that the common need of an entire society has to be responded to in the same way as the necessity of an individual in allowing what is prohibited in principle [*al-Ghiyathi*, Doha, Qatar: 1400 A.H., p.478]. Another prominent jurist, Ibn al-Qayyim (d.1350 C.E.), a Hanbali, dedicated the third volume and over 100 pages of the fourth volume of his "*I'lam al-Muwaqqi'in*" to a very valuable chapter entitled "*The Change of*

Fatwa (legal opinion) According to the Change of Time, Place, Circumstances, (Human) Intentions and Customs," in which he provided 116 examples. Near the end of the book, the author discussed the relation between the rules of Shari'a as dictated in the Quran and Sunna on the one side, and the practice of *ijtihad* in conducting the day to day state affairs and governing the people "*al-siyasa al shari'iyya*", on the other, underlining the lack of comprehension in both extremes of excessiveness and restriction in this respect: "and both parties were affected by their failing to know what God has sent the Conveyor of His messages with, since God has sent the conveyors of His messages and has sent down His (revealed) books so as people would maintain justice....Thus, whenever the signs of the truth and the evidences of justice rise, and the light of justice becomes obvious in any way, there is the law of God and His religion and acceptance" [*I'lam*, vol.4, pp.309-10].

This book "Concepts of the Quran" has been a modest contribution on this long path. This is a revised new edition with amendments and additions throughout the book. A new section "Status of the Non-Muslims in the Muslim State,"has been added to the chapter on "Law" in order to collect, augment, and clarify the several references that had been made in different places in the book.

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And it is from God alone that one gets the guidance to the right path and the help in accomplishing any good work.

INTRODUCTION

"...We have sent down to you, step by step, this Book, to make all matters clear, and as guidance and grace and good tidings unto all who have submitted themselves to God. God commands justice, the doing of good, and giving to [one's] relatives; and He forbids all that is shameful, and that runs counter to reason, in addition to aggression; He exhorts you so that you may bear this in mind" [The Quran, Sura 16, Verses 89-90].

The Quran is the book that was gradually revealed by God to Muhammad, the Prophet and the Conveyor of God's message which is presented in this book. The revelation started in the year 610 C.E. when Muhammad was 40 years old, and continued until his death in the year 632 C.E. /11 A.H. The faith which this message has invited people to embrace is called " Islam," which merely means in Arabic " submission to God", and this is used in the Quran for all the messages of God through all their successive conveyors (e.g. Nuh 'Noah', Ibrahim 'Abraham', Ya'qub 'Jacob', Yusuf 'Joseph', and other Ya'qub descendants (in Arabic' al-Asbat'), Musa 'Muses', Sulayman 'Solomon', 'Isa 'Jesus'; see the Quranic verses 2:128, 130-133, 3:52, 5:44, 111, 7:126, 10:72,84, 12:101, 22:78, 27:44, 28:53). In this way, the Quranic verses which refer to "Islam" as the faith that is accepted by God must be understood [e.g. 3:19,85, 6:125, 39:22, 61:7]. Submission to God or "Islam" is frequently used in the Quran in this broad meaning for all human beings as well as the whole creation of God [e.g. 2:112, 3:83, 4:125, 6:71, 31:22, 39:54, 41:33, 43:69, 46:15, 51:36, 68:35, 72:14].

The "Quran" is an Arabic words which means "what is read or recited" [e.g. 75:17-18]. The word is frequently used throughout the book itself as its name [e.g. 2:185, 4:82, 5:101, 6:19, 7:204, 9:111, 10:15, 37, 61, 12:3, 15:1, 87,91, 16:98, !7:9, 41, 45-46, 60, 78, 82, 88-89, 20:2, 114, 25:30, 32, 27:26, 92, 28:85, 34:31, 36:2,69, 41:36, 43:31, 47:24, 50:1,45, 54:17, 55:2, 56:77, 59:21, 73:4, 20, 76:23, 84:21, 85:21]. It was revealed in Arabic and described in the revelation itself as an Arabic book [e.g. 12:2, 20:113, 39:28, 41:3, 44, 42:7, 43:3]. It is also called "The Book" (in Arabic al-Kitab), and it is considered to be the challenging evidence of the authenticity of Muhammad's message, which lets it be in no need of a physically miraculous evidence: *"And they say, "Why have no miraculous signs ever been sent down to him from his Lord?" Say, "Miracles are in the power of God alone; and I am but a plain warner." Is it not enough for them that We have sent down this Book unto you, recited to them. Surely, in that there is grace [from Us] and a reminder to people who [deeply think and thus] believe"* [29:50-51]; [for the challenge of matching the Quran or even any small part of it see e.g. 2:23, 10:38, 11:13, 17:88].

According to the Quran, Muhammad terminated prophethood, and his divine message is the final one [33:40]; and thus only a book can be the continuous and ever lasting evidence of his message, since physically miraculous signs would lose their impressiveness and even acceptability through successive centuries. The first revealed verses in the Quran emphasize reading and learning: *"Read, and your Lord is the Most Bountiful, who has taught [the human being] through the pen, taught the human being*

what he did not know" [96:3-5]. Instead of such a physical miracle, the Quran urges its reader to observe and reflect on God's signs in His whole creation, as well as on the Quran and God's message in it. [As for God's signs in His whole creation see e.g. 3:26-27, 6:76-79, 95-99, 7:185, 13:2-4, 11-13, 17, 15:19-22, 16:3-18, 65-72, 79-81, 17:12,44, 21:22, 30-33, 22:5, 23:12-27, 91, 24:40-45, 29:20, 41, 30:9, 17-24, 48-51, 54, 31, 10-11, 20, 29, 31, 32:7-9, 35:11-13, 27-28, 39:21, 41:53, 50:6-11, 51:20-22, 67:3-4, 71:15-20, 78:6-16, 90:8-10, 91:1-10, 92:1-4, 95:4-6. As for reflections on the Quran and God's message in it see e.g. 4:82, 6:104, 7;203-5, 17:41, 38:29, 39:19, 27, 47:24, 54:32, 68:52]. Also, the Quran may be called " *al-Dhikr* 'the remembrance or the reminding or the tiding' " since it conveys to the human being what puts him/her in perspective with the whole creation and the Creator [e.g. 3:58, 15:6,9, 16:44, 36:69, 41:41]. As the Quran is a book that presents Muhammad's message and is an evidence to its authenticity, it urges human beings to use their minds -the greatest divine favor for homo sapiens- in seriously thinking about God's signs in His creation and God's guidance in His revealed book, stressing the merits of those who use their minds, reflect, enjoy thoughtfulness, remember, really know, really comprehend etc...[e.g. 2:73, 242, 3:118, 12:2, 24:61, 57:17; 2:219, 3:191, 7:176, 184, 10:24, 16:44, 30:8, 21, 59:21; 2:197, 169, 3:190-1, 5:100, 12:111, 38:29, 65:10; 2:221, 269, 14:25, 17:41, 28:43, 51, 39:27, 44:58; 2:102-3, 230, 7:32, 12:40, 21:24, 29:64, 34:28, 39:9; 6:65, 63:3].

The Quran was gradually revealed over the years of Muhammad's prophethood until he died. It presents the reason for such a revelation of the Book in parts: to respond to the changing circumstances of the message and its Conveyor *"And those who stubbornly deny the truth said, 'Why has the Quran not been sent down upon him all at once?' [It has been revealed gradually] so that in this manner We might strengthen your heart thereby, and [thus] We have revealed it to you in distinct recitation, and [so that] whatever they bring to you [of argument or interrogation], We convey to you the truth [about it] with the best explanation"* [25:32-33 ; also, see 5:101, 16:101-3, 17:106, 20:114, 75:16-17]. However, the Book in its totality was not arranged according to the time of revelation, nor to the topic. The whole revelation was divided into 114 units, called "suras, sing. sura", each of which consist of a number of verses "ayat, sing. aya" which number about 6,200 verses in the entire Book. The length of the verse and the number of verses in a sura differ from one to another.

The "Opening" sura (al-Fatiha), which must be repeated at least twice in every prayer, concisely presents the faith in God and the life to come, and indicates the due relation between God and the human beings who pray for His guidance to the right way. After the Fatiha, the arrangement of the suras within the Quran is in general according to their size; the long ones come first, followed by the medium ones, and the short ones come in the end. The suras which were revealed while the Prophet was in Makka (Mecca) have short verses in general , and most of the short suras in the Quran were revealed there. The Meccan suras mostly emphasize the fundamentals of the faith, the essential endurance, steadfastness, and other moral values to which the believers in God must adhere, the stories of the previous messages of God and the end of those who stubbornly deny the truth, as well as the bountiful rewards that God has readied for those who attain to faith and do good deeds. Accepting the truth and attaining to faith has to always be connected

with behaving righteously and virtuously towards others, as they come inseparable from one another in about 75 verses throughout the Quran. The revelation in Mecca also dealt with the prayers, which represent the earliest and fundamental acts of worship required from a Muslim, as well as referring, without details, to giving charity "zakat" to the poor.

In Madina "Medina", where the Muslims established their earliest state with the Prophet as its leader, the Quran gradually provided for organizing the behavior of the individual, the family, society, and the state, in addition to stressing the fundamentals which had already been revealed in Mecca. These themes, or some of them, come together in each sura revealed in Mecca or Medina, as this allows the sura to deal with various issues, and so the reader of any sura can know more of God's guidance and enjoys the variety which does not undermine the integration and the smooth flow and harmonious presentation through the various themes within the sura *"And indeed We made this Quran easy to bear in mind; is there any, then, who is willing to take this to heart?"* [54:17]. In this way, the sura exemplifies the epistemology interrelation and unitedness in the message of Islam as represented in the Quran (i.e. relations of: the Creator and the creation, the creation within its components, the human beings within themselves and with the creation and with the Creator; the relation between this world's life and the eternal life to come, etc...).

Believing that the Quran in all its details is the word of God, and that its guidance presents a way of life of which its main avenues are covered by it, does not mean that there is no place for the human mind to interact with the divine text through efforts to understand, interpret, infer by deduction or induction or any other intellectual method, develop according to the general principles, and implement this text. The word of God is revealed through the Arabic language, and the language may sometimes allow various interpretations according to the different linguistic meanings of the word [e.g. the Arabic word (*qur'*) 2:228 may mean the 'red' period of a woman's menstruation or the 'white' period between a woman's two menstruations], or according to the possible various semantics by understanding a word or an expression literally or metaphorically [e.g. does the expression 'touch the women" as a reason for a full wash of the whole body before a prayer when water is available (4:43, 5:6) literally mean mere touching or is this expression a metaphor for sexual intercourse?]. The human mind has to consider the possible alternative meanings and determine the most acceptable one, benefitting from other relevant texts in the Quran and the authentic Sunna, and from the purpose of the text and what may more likely coincide with the divine wisdom in its revelation. The possible interrelations between the various relevant texts in the Quran and the authentic Sunna have to be analyzed and judged by the human mind to determine what may be a general or absolute rule and what may be a particular or restricted case. These intellectual efforts for interpretation, inference, development and implementation may differ from one person to another, and may differ with regard to the same person from time to time. The human mind can be influenced by the the socio-cultural circumstances, and so such intellectual effort may lead to different conclusions in different times and places. It is essential to know the socio-culture circumstances in Arabia, especially in Mecca and Medina during the time of the Prophet, in order to grasp the socio-cultural background in

which the Quranic text was revealed. Natural and social sciences and human studies help us in understanding the Quran, since the Quran brings out correlated concepts in its statements and guidance, not mere scattered words so that each of them can be understood separately. Consider as an example, how we may now understand and interpret in the light of our contemporary knowledge about nature, individuals and societies, the verses referring to the succession in political and socio-economic powers with reference to the succession of day and night and of life and death [3:26-7]. The conception and interpretation of any text require more than knowing the meaning of each word that constitutes it, for the linguistic context and the socio-cultural background are essential for a proper intellectual approach towards the goal.

This is by no means against the permanence of the Quranic message and guidance. The Quran repeatedly stresses its universal message [e.g. 12:104, 21:107, 25:1, 68:52, 81:27]. Therefore, it frequently addresses the "children of Adam" as a whole [e.g. 7:26-7, 31, 35, 172, 17:70, etc...], as well as "the human beings" as a whole [e.g. 2:21, 168, 4:1, 170, 174, 7:158, 10:23, 57, 104, 108, 22:1, 5, 49, 73, 31:33, 35:3, 5, 15, 49:13, etc...]. However, the message of the Quran has to reach the whole human kind through a human medium and in a given time and place: "*God knows best where He lets His message [be revealed]*" [6:124], " *And this [message] is a reminding and [a cause of] eminence for you and your people; and in time you all will be called to account [about what you have done with it]*" [43:44]. According to God's choice and plan, an Arab became the Conveyor of His final message to the whole humanity [33:40], and Arabic became the language of the final divine revelation [e.g. 12:2, 13:37, 16:103, 20:113, 26:192-5, 39:28, 41:3,44, 42:7, 43:3, 46:12]. The message initially addressed Arabs as it was revealed, in order to subsequently reach through the Arabs, others who may early accept the faith, and all of humanity in its different places and generations. The essence and content of the message is universal, but the form and structure of the addressing should be understandable to the Arab addressees in the time of the Prophet, so that they might be able to take the message to other peoples, and so that the message itself may be able to survive and spread among the Arabs themselves. It is essential to bear in mind these two obvious facts together as inseparable, in order to understand well the final divine message itself, and to avoid any possible confusion which may sometimes occur.

As examples, the verses 54:16-7 are repeated several times throughout the sura, and the verse 55:13 is repeated 31 times throughout the same sura, but such a repetition can not be understood as redundancy if one bears in mind that the initially addressed Arabs in the time of the Prophet were used to and impressed by such repetition in their culture and rhetorics. They were used, in their poetry, to going from one theme to another, later returning to something which had been previously mentioned, just when one thinks that the poet moved to another theme which he had previously dealt with at length. Muhammad Asad, may God shed His blessing and grace on his soul, being a non-Arab but one who studied Arabic in depth, beautifully and accurately grasps this "Arabic phenomenon" in his foreword to "*The Message of the Quran*". The Arab cultural tradition in memorizing their outstanding literature may also explain how the Quran has been in this way made "easy to be born in mind"[54:17] in its structure and style. A serious learner of the Quran has to know the Arabs, Arabia and Arabic at the time of the

revelation of the Quran "and must always bear in mind," as Asad precisely underlines in his Foreword, "that some of its (the Quran's) expressions -especially such as related to abstract concepts- have in the course of time undergone a subtle change in the popular mind. As it has been pointed out by the great Islamic scholar Muhammad Abduh, even some of the renowned, otherwise linguistically reliable Quran commentators have occasionally erred in this respect." On the other hand, ellipticism has also been "an integral characteristic of the Arabic idiom and, therefore, of the language of the Quran" as Asad also mentions. One has to intellectually make up for this ellipticism in the Quranic structure in order to understand the text.

In its two- fold approach towards the universal and the particular, the Quranic message of reform has first to deal with the initially addressed Arab society, and subsequently with any other society that it may reach later wherever it is. Sometimes, we like to see the Quran addressing our contemporary needs in the most explicit and understandable way for us in our time. Thus, we forget to consider how the Arabs at the time of the Prophet would be able to be impressed by such a message which would be so far from and unsuitable to them, believe in it, learn its Book, and extend the message to others. Had the Quran sacrificed the "particular" and "transitional" for the "universal" and "permanent", it would have the Arabs' hearts and minds, and would not thus have survived to gain others' hearts and minds in later times or in other places, and so it would have missed both the present and the future. And how can one be sure that what may suit our minds and needs today, would not be surpassed in the next decade or centuries?

In our contemporary world, we may think that the Quran would have been closer to all hearts and minds if it prohibited in clear-cut words: slavery, war, and any discrimination or injustice towards women, any race or ethnicity or faith. Why should the Quran provide its teachings in such direct and explicit formulation, and ignore the role and responsibility of the human mind, which has to always penetrate to the general goals and principles of the message, and to the different levels of requirement and rejection in it, and to the inter-relation and inter-action between the permanent divine guidance and the changing human circumstances? Isn't the human mind the marvellous and characteristic gift of God to the human being, which has to interact with His other gifts -the divine guidance- in order to understand and implement it? Why should the Quran ignore the natural laws of socio-cultural development and risk the human confusion or rejection in the time and place of its revelation? The human intelligence is valued and entrusted for a deep and broad understanding of the Quran by the Lord who has created the human being with his/her intellectual merits, and has sent down the Quran with its manifold and sophisticated structure and dynamics for responding to changing circumstances. Slavery may today be understood as implicitly or indirectly or gradually forbidden in the light of the Quranic principles, but we have been enabled to reach this understanding through the human mind and the human socio-cultural development. It is always the responsibility of the concerned scholars to present the essence and content of the Quran to human minds and hearts in different times and places, however difficult it may seem to grasp the Quranic form. The miracle of the Quran is constant and renewed through the dynamism of the human mind that can go the furthest depths and widest ranges in order to grasp the transcendental essence of God's final message to humanity.

Sayed Abul-A'la al-Maududi, may God shed His blessings and grace on his soul, wrote these enlightening words in his "Introduction" to " *The Meaning of the Quran*" by Abdullah Yusuf Ali: "It [the Quran] is a unique Book...[the reader] finds that it deals with creeds, gives moral instructions, lays down laws, invites people to Islam, admonishing the dis-believers, draws lessons from historical events, administers warnings, and gives good tidings- all blended together in a beautiful manner. The same subject is repeated in different ways, and one topic follows the other without any apparent connection. Sometimes a new topic crops up in the middle of another without any apparent reason. The speaker and the addressees and the direction of address change without any notice. There are no signs of [topical] chapters and division anywhere. The problems of philosophy and metaphysics are treated in a manner different from that of the text books on the subject. Man and the universe are mentioned in a language different from that of natural sciences. Likewise, it follows its own method of solving cultural, political,social and economic problems, and deals with the principles and injunctions of law in a manner quite different from that of the sociologists, lawyers and jurists. Morality is taught in a way that has no parallel... In order to understand the Quran thoroughly, it is essential to know the nature of this Book, its central idea and its aim and object. The reader should also be well acquainted with its style, terms and method. He should also keep in view the background and circumstances under which a certain passage is revealed.

"The real nature of the Quran [is] that this is the divine guidance... The subject it deals with is man: it discusses those aspects of his life that lead either to his real success or failure. The central theme is the exposition of the 'reality' and the invitation to the 'right way' based on it... The aim and object is to invite man to that right way and to present clearly the guidance... One should know the social, historical or other antecedents or conditions which help to explain any particular topic. For the Quran was not revealed as a complete book... Moreover, it is not a literary work of the common conventional type... The Quran adopts its own style to suit the guidance of the Islamic movement that was started by Allah's Messenger... As by and by [in Madina], several changes took place in this stage, and every changed condition had its own special problems, so Allah revealed to the Prophet the kind of discourses required for any particular occasion... Some of these were couched in the fiery rhetoric of a warner, and the others in the form of royal edicts of the lawgiver. Some adopted the method of a teacher, trainer and reformer; and taught the principles and the methods of organizing a community, of building up a state and of constructing a good civilization for the conduct of different affairs of life. Others gave instructions for dealing with the hypocrites or the unbelievers who had come under the protection of the Islamic state. Then in some of these discourses, the Muslims were taught the kind of relations they should have with the people of the Book and with the belligerent powers and with their own allies. In others they were taught, trained and organized to carry out their obligations as vicegerents of the Lord of the universe. Some gave instructions for their guidance, and warned them of their weaknesses, and exhorted them to sacrifice their lives in the way of Allah. Others taught the moral lessons they needed in defeat and victory, adversity and prosperity, war and peace... The different portions of the Quran were revealed according to the requirement of the various phases of the movement. It is thus obvious that a book like this can not have the kind of uniformity of style which

is followed in formal books... It repeats at suitable places its basic creed and principles... Though it was to be the Book for all times, it had to be revealed piece-meal in 23 years according to the needs and requirements of different stages... In order to avoid one-sidedness [in the order of the Quran] at any stage of its study, it is essential that the Makki surahs should intervene between the Madani surahs... and that the surahs revealed in the later stages of the movement should come between those revealed in the earlier stages, so that the entire picture of the complete Islam should always remain before the reader... The Quran claims to provide guidance for the whole mankind, but [the reader] finds that it is mainly addressed to the Arabs who lived at the time of the revelation. Though at times it also addresses other people and mankind in general, it mainly discusses those things which appealed to the taste of the Arabs and were linked with their environment, history and custom... [Nevertheless,] what [the Quran] says regarding the blasphemous people of Arabia is equally true of every period and every place... There is no reason why such a universal revelation should be dubbed as local or temporary, simply because it was addressed to a particular community and during a particular period. There is no philosophy, no way of life and no religion in the world which expounds from the beginning to the end everything in the abstract, without making any reference to particular cases or concrete examples, for it is simply impossible to build a pattern of life merely in the abstract..."[pp.xxi, xxiii, xxv, xxvi, xxx, xxxii, xxxvii, xxxviii].

In fact, the manifold approach in the Quran and the variety of themes in the single sura would attract the various human attitudes and concerns:*"And thus, indeed, many facets [of guidance] have We given to people in this Quran, but the human being is above all else, always given to disputation"* [18:54, see also 17:41,89, 25:50], *"And We have indeed brought out in this Quran for the people every indication and illustration [of the truth,] so that they could bear it in their minds"* [39:27, see also 30:58]. However, the variety of approaches and themes have never heart the flow, integration and harmony of any sura nor the whole Book:*"Had it [the Quran] been from any but God, they would surely have found within it many a contradiction [or an inconsistency]"* [4:82]

The permanent universal message of the Quran is obvious in its principles of reforming the human individual and society, although it was initially addressed to the Arabs at the time of revelation. It is not directed to a special class which may dominate and control so as to let them influence others who are under their power, such as the clergy, the rulers and leaders, or the wealthy. On the contrary, the Quran stresses the individual responsibility in determining the destiny of himself/herself and the whole society as well [e.g. 6:94, 17:13-14, 19:80,95, 34:46], and condemns imitation of and subservience to the powerful {e.g. 4:97-100, 7:75-6, 14:21, 33:66-8, 34:31-8, 40:47-8]. Also, the message of the Quran does not address a particular race, ethnicity or gender {e.g. 30:22, 49:13, 9:67-8, 71-2, 33:35, 60:10-12, 66:10-12]. The Quran frequently seeks the attention of the individual human being in his/her very nature, the human beings and the children of Adam in their totality [e.g. 4:28, 10:12, 11:9, 12:5, 14:34, 16:4, 17:11,13-14, 67, 83, 100, 18:54, 29:8, 41:49, 42:48, 46:15, 53:39-42, 70:19-28, 75:14-15, 36-40, 76:1-3, 80:24-32, 82:6-8, 84-6, 86:5, 90:4-10, 95:4-6, 96:6-7, 100:6-8, 103:2-3; 2:8, 13, 21, 44, 83, 124-5, 164-5, 168, 200-2, 204-7, 213, 219, 251, 264, 3:4, 14, 21, 96, 110, 134, 140, 4:1, 37-8, 58, 105, 114, 133, 161, 5:32, 6:91, 122, 128, 7:158, 179, 10:44, 57, 99, 11:85, 118-9, 14:1,

16:44, 61, 17:89, 22:1-5, 11, 40, 73, 77-8, 29:2, 30:30, 39, 41, 58, 31:18, 33, 34:28, 35:2 ,15, 28, 45, 40:57, 42:42, 49:13, 51:56, 55:33, 57:24-5, 72:6, 83:2-6, 99:6-8, 110:1-2, 114:1-6; 7:26-7, 31, 35, 172, 17:70, 36:60-1]. The Quranic verses which deal with the human entity (self) and (innate self) are so numerous throughout the Book [e.g. 2:281, 286, 3:25, 30, 4:1, 6:98, 104, 152, 164, 7:42, 12:53, 17:15, 21:47, 23:62, 31:28, 34, 32:13, 35:32, 39:6, 41, 40:17, 41:46, 47:38, 50:16, 59:9, 18, 65: 1, 7, 74:38, 75:2, 14, 79:40, 82:19, 86:4, 89:27, 91:7-9].

Furthermore, the Quranic message which was initially addressed to a tribal society has always dealt with the family, society, and the state and its authorities. It mentions " the tribes" only once in the plural with "the peoples" also in the plural as various human groups which have to know one another well, in order to cooperate for the common benefit of the humankind [49:13]. Men and women are equally addressed as they are equally created and are equally responsible [e.g. 4:1, 7:189, 9:68, 71-72, 33:35-6, 39:6, 60:10-12, 66:10-12]. Human difference is a part of the human nature and thus it can not be avoided, and the divine guidance has stressed pluralism as the only way that goes with this human nature and gets the best out of the human differences in an organized, constructive and moral manner: *"If you differ on any matter among yourselves, refer it to God and the Conveyor of His message, if you do [truly] believe in God and the Last Day"* [4:59], *"And had God so willed, He would have made you all one single people, but [He willed it otherwise] so as to test you through what He has given you. Vie, then, with one another, in good deeds; unto God you shall return, and He will make you understand all on which you differed"* [5:48; and see as an example for the ethics of difference 2:44, 16:125, 29:46, 42:15, 49:6, 9-13, 61:2-3], *"And had your Lord willed, He would have made all humankind one single people; but [He willed it otherwise, and so] they continue to have their differences [to test them as to how they tackle them], except those upon whom your Lord has bestowed His grace [through benefitting from His guidance] in tackling their differences. And to that end [of testing them] has He created them [all]"* [11:118-119]. Human diversity should enrich the human kind if the various human individuals and groups communicate and cooperate [e.g. 3:104,110, 4:114, 5:2, 30:22, 49:13]. Differences in beliefs and views should not be suppressed, since suppression can never lead to a genuine agreement or a true unity [e.g. 2:256, 10:99, 11:28]. People have to handle their differences ethically and methodologically, while admitting the human diversity and handling it through pluralism. God only can definitely judge these differences on the Day of Judgement, for He alone knows all individual intentions and circumstances [e.g. 2:113, 3:55, 4:141, 5:48, 105, 6:60, 108, 164, 7:87, 16:23, 124, 22:69, 28:70, 88, 29:8, 31:15, 23, 39:3, 7]. What counts in this life in human relations is good deeds and sincere cooperation [e.g. 2:62, 177, 203-7, 3:75-6, 113-115, 60:7-9].

The Quran presents the arguments of the opponents of Islam and responds to them, introducing invaluable guidance with regard to the human pluralism [e.g. 2:80-2, 111-3, 3:154, 156, 181, 4:123-4, 36:47, 45:24]. The counter-argument ought to be conducted in the best ethical and objective way [e.g. 16:125, 29:46, 42:15; and see for an example of a fair and ideal argument even in the most challenging situation 2:139, 3:64, 6:135, 10:41, 11:93, 121-2, 34:24-6, 28:55, 39:39, 42:15]. The Book records the victories and defeats, the positives and negatives of Muslims and non-Muslims, and draws from each the moral

and behavioral lessons [e.g. 2:83-6, 96, 134-9, 148, 216, 3:75-6, 103-8, 112-5, 118-123, 135, 140-8, 152-161, 4:95-100, 104-115, 9:23-7, 38-9, 42-59, 81-2, 93-102, 117-8, 24:11-25, 33:10-20, 47:38, 48:1-7, 11-12, 15, 18-21, 27-9, 49:2-5, 7, 11-12, 14, 17]. Justice should be secured for friends and non-friends, but going beyond justice to forgiveness, kindness, generosity and grace is always urged and is bountifully rewarded by the Most Gracious [e.g. 4:58, 135, 5:8, 42, 49:9, 57:25; 2:109, 178, 229, 237, 3:134, 159, 5:13, 15:85, 16:90, 35:32, 42:37, 40-3, 41:34-5, 43:89, 60:8, 64:14]. Competition is allowed and encouraged in doing the good [e.g. 2:148, 3:123, 5:48, 23:66, 35:32, 56:7-40, 57:21, 83:26].

In the Quran, the natural order and laws are emphasized and should be learned and observed by the believers [e.g. 6:96, 10:5, 13:8, 15:19, 21-2, 16:66, 68-9, 21:30, 23:96, 25:2, 53, 36:37-40, 35:27-8, 43, 36:37-40, 39:6, 9, 41:53, 48:23, 51:20-1, 65:3, 67:3-4, 82:6-8, 87:2-3, 90:8-10, 91:1-10, 96:1-5]. Nothing in God's creation comes accidentally or without a plan, nor it can be understood through superstition: *"It is He who has made the sun [a source of] radiance and the moon a [reflected] light for which phases are determined, so that you might know the counting of years and the making of calculations. None of this has God created except according to that [order] which is right..."* [10:5], *"and He has set up within them [the heavens] the moon as [reflected] light and has set up the sun as a radiant illuminator"*[71:16], *" Neither may the sun overtake the moon, nor can the night outstrip the day, since each floats along in [its own] orbit through space [according to God's laws for the universe]"*[36:40], *"... no fault you may see in the creation of the All-merciful; turn your vision through it one time after another: can you see any flaw?"* [67:3], *" and We caused plants of every kind to grow on it[the earth] in a balanced manner"*[15:19], *" and it is He who has created everything and has determined it in accordance with His own plan [for the whole creation]"*[25:2], *"thus no change will you ever find in God's law; yes, no deviation will you ever find in God's law"* [35:43].

The human being is not a god but a creation of God. He/she is created with physical, spiritual-moral and intellectual-psychological merits, and his/her dignity has to be secured in all dimensions [e.g. 2:30-9, 16:70, 55:3-4, 82:6-8, 90:8-10, 91:7-10, 96:3-5]. The physical-psychological relation between man and woman is natural and has to be fulfilled through marriage. The family is the nucleus of the society, and is the earliest social milieu for the human development. The inter-relation between the spouses and between the parents and their children should be a model for the whole society [25:71]. While togetherness and love consolidate the family, discussion of natural human differences is legitimate and required, and it is directed in the best way. If the family life has to come to an end for unavoidable reasons, divorce must be conducted fairly and graciously, and the children's rights are secured [e.g. 30:21, 2:229, 231, 233, 236-7, 241, 4:6-10, 21, 35, 65:6-7]. The child must be raised in a way that develops his/her human personality in all its dimensions including self-confidence and self-expression [e.g. 31:12-19]. One can not expect every individual to clearly and decently express his/her opinion in the society [3:104, 110], if he/she has not been trained to clearly and politely express his/her opinion in the family. The have-nots have their rights in the wealth of the haves [e.g. 51:19, 70:24], since earning money and developing wealth is a process in which the whole society participates. Rendering the purifying welfare dues (*zakat*) is connected with practicing the

prayers throughout the Quran. Legitimate earning of money and enjoying the good of this world's life are merely a practical recognition of God's favors, but equal opportunities and justice in the distribution of human needs should be observed. Indulgence in luxuries while ignoring the poor and deprived is strongly and repeatedly condemned and forbidden throughout the Quran [e.g. 7:31-3, 9:34, 11:116, 16:116, 17:16, 26-7, 29, 21:13, 25:67, 34:34, 43:23, 56:45-6, 59:7-10, 68:17-33, 93:6-10, 104:1-3, 107:1-7].

All such concepts of human development in its comprehensiveness and for all human beings in their diversity, in addition to the indication of the faith and the acts of worship and the moral values, are thoroughly interwoven through the suras in structural and sounding harmony for the reader of the Quran and the listener [e.g. 25:32, 73:4]. The Quran is definitely not poetry [36:69], but it has the impressive poetic character in its harmonious flow (i.e.maintaining mostly the length of the verse or its main parts when it is long, and the last sound in it through the whole sura). Meanwhile, the Quran has the flexibility of prose in presenting legal norms and historical facts [e.g. 2:219-242, 274-283, 3:152-175, 4:1-35, 101-125, 8:1-28, 41-75, 9:1-29, 38:127, 65:1-7]. Such legal and historical texts are beautifully presented and well developed, while blended with religious and moral teachings. The harmonious structure of the Quranic sura helps one to grasp its various contents, keep them in mind and even to memorize the very words [54:17]. It has been agreed almost unanimously among Arabs through generations from the time of the revelation of the Quran until now that the Quran is unmatchable and inimitable, although it has challenged any possible imitation of it or of any reasonable part of it [e.g. 2:23, 10:38, 11:13, 17:88].

Besides, the Quran which is the divine Book revealed to Prophet Muhammad to present God's message that he should convey to people, there are the traditions of the Prophet in words or practice "Sunna" which represents the second source of this message. The Arabic word "Sunna" originally means "the way, or the way of practicing", and so the Sunna of the Prophet means his way in explaining and implementing God's message through his words and deeds *"And upon you We have sent down this reminder, so that you might make clear to people what is sent to them, and so that they might reflect"* [16:44], *"Hence, follow whatever the Conveyor of the Message gives you [thereof] and refrain from whatever he forbids you, and be conscious of God; surely, God is strict in retribution"* [59:7], *"O You who have attained to faith! Obey God and obey the Conveyor[of His message]* [47:33]; also 3:32, 132, 4:13, 59 69, 80, 5:92, 8:1, 20, 46, 9:71, 24:52, 54, 56, 33:33, 71, 49:14, 58:13, 64:12], *"And We have never sent a conveyor of [Our] message, but to be heeded by God's leave"* [4:64], *"Surely, in the Conveyor of God's message you have a good example for everyone who looks forward [with hope and awe] to meeting God and the last day, and remember God unceasingly"* [33:21]. In addition, the words or actions which the Prophet witnessed, and of which he did not express any objection, are considered as implicitly approved by him, and thus included in the Sunna. Every Sunna of the Prophet has to be understood according to the context if it is a command or mere encouragement on one side, a prohibition or a mere discouragement on the other, or just an allowance in between. In this respect the tradition has to be studied in the light of its words, circumstances, and relation to other texts in the Quran and the

Sunna. The Sunna should be authentic, although its meaning and level of requirement or forbidding may allow different views. The Quran itself is authentic in the Muslim belief, but many of its verses may allow different interpretations from the scholars.

Muslims believe that the words and practice of the Prophet (Sunna) represent God's revelation in their content whenever any is related to the divine message, not when it is related to Muhammad as a human being. The Quran is God's revelation in its contents and words, while the revelation in Sunna is expressed in the human words of the Prophet. Although the style of the verbal traditions is superb, the difference between it and the style of the Quran is outstanding and quite noticeable. Not all the Sunna can be considered as divine revelation, since Muhammad was a human being and the divine revelation which he received did not give him a divine nature nor cut off his human nature *"Say[O Prophet]: 'I am but a mortal human being like all of you; only it has been revealed unto me that your God is the One and Only God"*[18:110; also 17:93, 21:34, 41:6, 42:51]. Accordingly, what comes out of the Prophet as a mere human habit (e.g. preferred way in standing or sitting, preferred food or drink, preferred color in clothes, etc..), or according to his experience and discretion (e.g. military planning), or what is proved to be meant especially for him not for all the Muslims -all these do not represent a binding legislations for the believers. Within the Prophet's traditions we read: " I am but a human being; if I order you regarding something related to you religion you have to take it, but if I order you regarding something of my opinion I am only a human being"[reported by Muslim and al-Nasa'i], "I am a human being like you, and human thinking may be right or wrong, but whenever I say: 'God says' I never lie in relation to God"[reported by Ibn Hanbal and Ibn Majah], " I am but a human being, and you come to me in a litigation, and some of you may be more vocal and skillful in presenting his[/her] case, and thus I rule according to what I hear. Whoever of you may get whatever is the right of another according to my ruling, it is a peace of fire, and it is for him[/her] to take it or leave it"[reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi, al-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah], " You are more knowledgeable of the affairs of you world life"[reported by Muslim].

When there is no text in the Quran or the Sunna that can apply directly and explicitly to a case, the Muslim jurists have developed certain intellectual methods of reasoning that can be used to find out what may apply to such a case. An analogy (*qiyas*) to a case indicated to the Quran and the Sunna can be applied if the reason of the rule in the indicated case is the same as in the case under consideration. If two different analogies can be drawn out for the considered case, the more helpful and beneficial for most people may be preferred over the other (*istihsan*). Besides, the general principle that everything is initially allowed as long as no text of prohibition is provided (*istis-hab*) may apply. The consideration of the limited general benefit of the people (*maslaha mursala, istislah*) is presented as another source. The goals of the message of Islam and its law and the general principles of this law as indicated in the Quran and the Sunna represent an invaluable source that responds to the different emerging needs in the ever changing circumstances which can not be met by specified divine texts. Considering the results of the enquired case may help in making the decision about it. What may lead to something required ought to be required, and what may lead to something forbidden ought to be forbidden. Such intellectual practices (*ijtihad*) rely on a Prophet's tradition that allows such an approach

whenever it is needed [reported by Ibn Hanbal, al-Termidhi, al-Nasa'i, Ibn Majah and al-Darami].

This universal message which was addressed to the Arabs at the time of the Prophet, with the multi-themed structure of the suras, can reach the mind and heart of the general reader. The researcher and some readers may like to see the total verses related to one theme collected together, in order to know how the Quran deals with a particular theme as a whole. Modern contributors about one or more of these themes are there, but they often blend the Quran, the Prophet's traditions, the jurists' elaboration and the authors' view together in order to provide a comprehensive study of the topic. Besides, such works may not cover all the main concepts of the Quran, but they may be interested only in some of them. Although their value and continuous benefit for the general readers and researchers are always admitted, some others may need to focus only on the Quranic verses themselves in relation to the various themes, and to let such a focus cover the total Quranic concepts. Contemporary works have pointed out this need about two decades ago. Thomas Ballantine Irving, Khurshid Ahmad, and Muhammad Manazir Ahsan published "*The Quran: Basic Teachings*" in the year 1979, which they delineated as " An anthology of selected passages from the Quran translated into contemporary English, with an introduction to the message of the Quran" [The Islamic Foundation, Leicester: U.K.]. Fazlur Rahman's contribution "*Themes of the Quran*" was published in the year 1980 [Bibliotheca Islamica, Chicago IL : U.S.]. More recently other books have followed in this direction, such as: " *Companion to the Quran*" by William Montgomrey Watt ["One World" Publications, U.K.& New York N.Y.: U.S.], "*A Guide to the Contents of the Quran*" by Faruq Sherif [Paul & Company:Publishers Consortium Inc., Concord MA: U.S.], and " *Understanding the Quran: Themes and Style*" by Muhammad Abdel Haleem [St. Martin's Press, New York NY: U.S.]. In Arabic, the late Dr. Muhammad al-Bahiyy an ex-minister of Awqaf and ex-president of al-Azhar university in Egypt, and the late sheikh Muhammad al-Ghazali a former deputy minister of Awqaf in Egypt, had contributions in this field. Such works in different languages underscore the contemporary need which has been strongly felt for the benefit of younger Muslim generations, especially those who have been born in the West and/or are living there, and for the benefit of Western academia, media persons, students and others. Dr. Peter Heath, a visiting Fulbright fellow to Malaysia, once emphasized how the " non-narrative" or "meta-narrative" structure of the Quran would seem alien to those readers who are more familiar with the narrative style in other religious scriptures[New Straits Times August 18, 95, Kuala Lumpur: Malaysia].

This work aims to respond to this need. It started as a wish to produce a concise topical reading of the Quran, a wish which was supported by a group of friend in Los Angeles CA, and has developed into a large-scale work. It focuses on the Quran, but its analysis of the Quranic concepts that have to be covered may be more comprehensive than what has been known in this area. The commentary on the Quranic verses is meant to explain and clarify, but without being distracted or distracting by any means from focusing on the verses. In dealing with each concept, I have followed in presenting the related verses the existing order of the suras in the Quranic collection *(al-Mus-haf)*, while the verses themselves are arranged according to the topics. In cases where numerous verses address a

certain topic in the same way, commentary on only one of these verses is included, and the sura (chapter) and aya (verse) numbers of the rest are simply cited to avoid unnecessary repetition. Following the chronological order of the verses according to the revelation sequence within every concept would take the Muslim readers far from the order of the Quranic suras with which they become familiar. However, the verses which were revealed in Mecca are marked through the Book by a small illustration (icon) of the "Ka'ba", the center of the Inviolable House of Worship established by the Prophets Ibrahim (Abraham) and his son Isma'il (Ishmael) in Mecca, according to Muslim belief, and it is placed at the beginning of the Meccan verse or verses. The verses which were revealed in Medina are marked with a small illustration (icon) of the dome of the Prophet's mosque in Medina placed in the same way. At the end of the book, the reader finds a table in which the Quranic suras are arranged chronologically according to the order of revelation.

I have used the most recent English interpretation of the meaning of the Quran. According to Dr. Hassan A. Ma'ayergi in his book "*Towards an International Society for the Holy Quran: Introduction and Bibliography*" [Doha, Qatar: 1990], the work of Abdullah Yusuf Ali first appeared in 1935, the one of Mohammad M. Pickthall in 1940, that of A. J. Arberry in 1955, while the interpretation of Muhammad Asad was first published in 1980. My copy of the work of Thomas B. Irving, may God bless his life and effort, indicates that its year of publication was 1985. Abdullah Yusuf Ali mentioned in his preface to the first edition of his work, "...in translating the Text I have aired no views of my own, but followed the received Commentators. Where they differ among themselves, I have had to choose what appeared to me the most reasonable opinion from all points of view". Pickthall mentioned in his foreword, " the aim of this work is to present the English reader what Muslims the world over hold to be the meaning of the words of the Quran and in the nature of that Book, in not unworthy language and concisely, with a view to the requirements of English Muslims. It may be reasonably claimed that no Holy Scripture can be fairly presented by one who disbelieves its inspiration and its message; and this is the first English translation of the Quran by an Englishman who is a Muslim." In the same way, Irving's work is the first American translation of the Quran by an American. Muhammad Asad's foreword to "*The Message of the Quran*" reads, "The work which I am now placing before the public is based on a lifetimes study and on many years spent in Arabia. It is an attempt - perhaps the first attempt - at a really, explanatory rendition of the Quranic message into a European language. None the less, I do not claim to have 'translated' the Quran in the sense in which, say, Plato or Shakespeare can be translated. Unlike any other book, its meaning and its linguistic presentation form one unbreakable whole. The position of individual words in a sentence, the rhythm and sound of its phrases and their syntactic construction, the manner in which a metaphor flows... all this makes the Quran, in the last resort, unique and understandable - a fact that has been pointed out by many earlier translators and by all Arab scholars. But although it is impossible to 'reproduce' the Quran as such in any other language, it is none the less possible to render its message comprehensible to people who, like most Westerners, do not know Arabic at all, or - as the case with most of the educated non-Arab Muslims- not well enough to find their way through it unaided. To this end, the translator must be guided throughout by the linguistic usage prevalent in the time of the revelation of the Quran, and must always bear

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in mind that some of its expressions - especially such as relate to abstract concepts - have in the course of time undergone a subtle change in the popular mind, and should not therefore be translated in the sense given to them by post-classical usage... Another (and no less important) point which the translator must take fully into account is the 'ijaz' of the Quran: that inimitable ellipticism which often deliberately omits intermediate thought-clauses in order to express the final stage of an idea as pithily and concisely as is possible... Apart from linguistic considerations, I have tried to observe consistently two fundamental rules of interpretation. Firstly, the Quran must not be viewed as a compilation of individual injunctions and exhortations but as one integral whole...Secondly, no part of the Quran should be viewed from a purely historical point of view: that is to say, all its references to historical circumstances and events - both at the time of the Prophet and in earlier times - must be regarded as illustrations of the ' human condition' and not as ends in themselves".

I have benefited to the most extent of Asad's translation, and of the others; but since my mother tongue is Arabic, I sometimes could not feel that any of the above-mentioned English translations has accurately grasped the English equivalent of a certain Arabic word or expression. This does not mean that my attempt in this respect is definitely successful but I have anyhow to do my best. One of the main problems in translating the Quran is that sometimes the Arabic word or expression can allow more than one meaning, and naturally one may not find the same possibility in any particular word in English. The Arabic word or expression may sometimes mean, in itself or in its implicit significance as used in the context, more than any parallel in another language. Yusuf Ali indicated that he used to choose from among the different interpretations of the classical commentators that of which he might be more convinced. Muhammad Asad - on the grounds of his good knowledge of Arabic and his rationalistic attitude - might go his own way in understanding and interpreting the Quranic text. I have tried my best to interpret what I feel to be as close as possible to the Arabic text of the Quran within the given context.

This problem in translation may be represented at most in giving the English meaning of the "Beautiful Names of God" or His "Attributed," which are counted as 99 in the Prophet's tradition [reported by al-Termidhi, Ibn Hibban, al-Hakim in '*al-Mustadrak*', al-Bayhaqi in '*Shu'ab al-Iman*' after Abu Hurayra; and there are other less reliable reports of these attributes by others]. Various views have always been expressed in defining the difference in meaning between two divine attributes both derived from the same root. "*Rahman and Rahim*" are two attributes of God which have the same Arabic root that gives the meaning of "mercy" or "grace." Both attributes come together in the first sura of the Quran "The Opening, al-Fatiha" which is repeated twice at least in every prayer, and both attributes come as well at the start of every sura in the Quran except one. Naturally, it is not easy to represent accurately these two attributes in another language. Similarly, we find two attributes related to forgiveness "*Ghaffar and Ghafur.*" Related to creation, the Quran uses "*Khaliq, Khallaq, Fatir*" and others. At times, an attribute of God can not be translated in one word, and the precise Arabic meaning requires a certain explanation to make it understandable in relation to God for the reader of English, such as "*al-Latif, al-Wakil, al-Kafil, al-Mu'min.*" In the same vein, attributes such as patience and forbearance, leniency and clemency can be understood in relation to a human being

but may not perfectly represent God's attributes "*al-Sabur, al-Halim.*" I have tried my best to find what may be closer to the Arabic meaning and what may be more suitable for the context in such cases. The names of the Prophets before Muhammad, peace be upon all of them, are placed according to their Arabic pronunciation with the form known in the English translation of the Bible between parentheses when they are used for the first time in the Quranic text, such as "Ibrahim (Abraham), Isma'il (Ishmael), Is-haq (Isaac), Ya'qub (Jacob), Yusuf (Joseph), etc...." But when the same name is repeated in the Quranic text or the commentary, the English form of the name is only used, since the book addresses in the first place the non-Arabic speaking readers. It is well known that the pronoun "We" can be used to represent the first singular person so as to symbolize greatness and superiority, and thus using it for God does not indicate any plurality in relation to the one God. Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary says about "We": "used by sovereigns; used by writers to keep an impersonal character. I have preferred, whenever God is addressed, to use the plural pronoun for the second person "You, Your, Yours" instead of the singular "Thou, Thee, Thine" which has been used in divine scriptures to represent the oneness of God, since this singular form has been abandoned, and one form is used to address both the singular and the plural.

Furthermore, whenever a long verse *'aya'* covers more than one aspect but not all of these aspects are directly related to the theme discussed, only the related portion is mentioned in the English translation. The whole verse is mentioned in Arabic with the discussed portion written in bold letters.

This book begins with "The Opening, al-Fatiha" which condenses the principles of the faith, and thus it is required to repeat it at least twice by the Muslim in each of the five daily prayers. The book then goes through the main topical areas of the Quran, from the faith, to the acts of worship, to the moral values, and ends with the law. In "The Faith", the book follows the Quran in its approach "from the creation to the Creator". It goes through "the cosmos" and "the life" in its various kinds which culminate in the human being whom the Quran deals with in depth, underscoring the human physical, and intellectual /spiritual /psychological /moral merits. The Quran refers to these various phenomena of God's creation as a means to call the attention to the magnificence and order in this creation which logically necessitate the acknowledgement of the existence of the One All-mighty, All-knowing and All-wise Creator. The Quran is not a book of science proper which can be acquired - as it has actually been occurring -by the human senses and mind. However, the Quranic condensed and enlightening references to nature have always been proved to be in accordance with what modern scientific development has brought to light.

After presenting the Quranic picture of "The Eternal Life to Come" as an essential component of "The Faith," "The Messages of God" through the successive conveyors from Adam to Muhammad are presented according to the Quran. There were conveyors who represented significant milestones in the history of prophethood, and so the Quran deals with them at length and sometimes repeatedly, such as Nuh (Noah), Hud who was sent to the people of 'Ad in Southern Arabia, Salih who was sent to the people of Thamud in Northern Arabia, Shu'ayb who was sent to the people of Madyan (Median) in Northern Arabia, Ibrahim (Abraham), Is-haq (Isaac), Ya'qub (Jacob), Yusuf (Joseph) and Jacob's

descendants or tribes descending from him (al-Asbat), Musa (Moses), Dawud (David), Sulayman (Solomon), and 'Isa (Jesus). Being the Prophet to whom the Quran was revealed Muhammad naturally has a special place in this book.

The chapter in "Worship" presents the concept of worship " '*Ibada*" in the Quran, followed by the various acts of worship mentioned in the Quran. Not only the main and well known ones that are presented, such as the prayers '*al-salat*', the purifying welfare dues '*al-zakat*', the fasting '*al-siyam, al-sawm*', and the pilgrimage '*al-hajj*', but also the supplication '*al-du'a*',' the recitation of the Quran and the remembrance and glorification of God '*dhikr, tasbih*' are traced through the Quran.

"The Moral Values" are the concrete practical and behavioral result of "The Faith" and the " Worship" in this present world's life, through which one can judge the "religiosity" and "righteousness" of one who believes in God and worships Him alone. These moral values apply to and radiate through all avenues of human life: within the individual, family, neighborhood, community and society, and in the whole world. "The Law" is meant to support the moral values, as well as its enforcement which must to be supported by the moral values in order to be productive and effective. The Quran deals with several areas of law, such as: the family, the civil and commercial, the state-people mutual relation, the penal, and the universal relations of peace and war.

The verses of the Quran are not evenly distributed amongst the different topics which they address. The faith in the One God and accountability of the human being in the eternal life to come represent the essence and the cornerstone of the message of God revealed to Prophet Muhammad, just as it was before in all the messages of God. Therefore, the faith is dealt with extensively through the whole Quran. Even in addressing moral values or presenting legal norms, the Quranic verses about these matters are always connected with the due consciousness of God and the human accountability in the eternal life to come. Considering this fact, it has been appropriate to distribute the themes of the Quranic verses that deal with " The Faith" on three chapters. Besides,"The Opening, al-Fatiha" comes by itself as the first chapter of this book. Although this sura consists of a few verses, it condenses the basics of the faith, and thus it has to be repeated twice at least through every prayer (*salat*), and it has always been " The Opening" of the whole Quran since its collection in the time of Caliph ' Uthman [23-35 A.H., 644-656 C.E.].

Supplications stress certain virtues that the believer prays to God to help him /her in adhering to them, and certain evils that the believer prays to God for His help in resisting them. They represent the moral essence of the divine message presented in a concise, expressive and impressive form, and are strongly connected with the basic faith in the All-mighty and Most Gracious Lord. A selection of the Quranic supplications which cover various aspects of human activities are seen by the writer of this book as its best 'ending', just as "The Opening, al-Fatiha" has been the best 'beginning'.

In addition to the outstanding linguistic dictionaries of Arabic, I have benefited from the main Arabic commentaries on the Quran "*tafsir,*" classical and modern, especially the following:

- al-Tabari, Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn Jarir (d.310 AH. /922), *Jami' al-Bayan,* Cairo, Egypt.

- Ibn 'Atiyya, Abu Muhammad Abdu-l-Haqq, al-Gharnati (d.546 AH. /1151), *al-Muharrar al-Wajiz,* al-Ribat, Morocco.
- al-Qurtubi, Abu Abd-Ullah Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Ansari (d.671 AH. /1172), *al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Qur'an,* Cairo, Egypt.
- al-Zamakhshari, Abu-el-Qasim Jar-Ullah Mahmud ibn ' Umar (d.538 AH. /1143), *al-kashshaf*, Cairo, Egypt.
- al-Fakhr al-Razi, Muhammad Fakhr-ul-Din ibn Diya' il-Din ' Umar (d.604 AH. /1207), *Mafatih al-Ghayb* or *al-Tafsir al-Kabir*, Cairo Egypt.
- al-Nasafi, Abd-Ullah ibn Ahmad ibn Mahmud (d.701 AH. /1301), *Madarik al-Tanzil*, Cairo, Egypt.
- Ibn Kathir, Abu-el-Fida' Isma'il ibn 'Amr (d.774 AH. /1372), *Tafsir al-Qu'ran al-'Azim,* Cairo, Egypt.
- al-Baydawi, Abu Sa'id 'Abd-Ullah ibn ' Umar ibn Muhammad al-Shirazi (d.791 AH. /1389), *Anwar al-Tanzil*, Cairo, Egypt.
- Jalal-ul-Din, Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Muhalla & Jala-ul-Din Abd-ul-Rahman ibn Abi Bakr al-Suyuti (d.911 AH. /1505), *Tafsir al- Jalalayn*, Beirut, Lebanon.
- al-Shawkani, Muhammad ibn ' Ali ibn Muhammad (d.1250 AH. /1834), *Fat-h-ul-Qadir,* Beirut, Lebanon.
- 'Abduh, Muhammad (d.1323 AH. /1905) & Rida, Muhammad Rashid (d.1354 AH. /1935), *Tafsir al-Manar*, Cairo, Egypt.

In the end, the writer of this book deeply feels that whatever human effort may be done for God's word necessarily reflects the human limitation in the content and in the form as well, especially in a work of such a size, in spite of the dedication and the intensive efforts of all those who participated in it. The writer will be truly rewarded if this work can be of some benefit to the Muslims and others who want to know about the divine Book of Islam and its message. From all my heart and mind, I have realized how true and accurate is Prophet Muhammad's portrayal of the Quran "The wonders of it (the Quran) never end, and it never wears out from the frequent dealing"[reported by al-Termizi, al-Darami, and al-Hakim].

It is only God, to whom we devoutly turn with praise and gratitude, who enables the human being with his /her limitation to achieve what is good.

CHAPTER ONE

THE OPENING

"AL-FATIHA"

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ ﴿١﴾
ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٢﴾ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ
ٱلرَّحِيمِ ﴿٣﴾ مَٰلِكِ يَوْمِ ٱلدِّينِ ﴿٤﴾
إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَ إِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ﴿٥﴾ ٱهْدِنَا
ٱلصِّرَٰطَ ٱلْمُسْتَقِيمَ ﴿٦﴾ صِرَٰطَ ٱلَّذِينَ
أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ ٱلْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ
وَ لَا ٱلضَّآلِّينَ ﴿٧﴾

In the name of God, The All-merciful, The Most Gracious.
Praise and gratefulness are due to God alone, the Lord of all being, the All-merciful, the Most Gracious, Lord of the Day of Judgement.
You alone do we worship and from You alone do we seek aid.
Guide us to the straight way: the way of those on whom You have bestowed your blessings, not of those who have been condemned [by You], nor of those who go astray.[1: 1-7]

This short sura (chapter) which begins the Quran was revealed in Mecca after a few other short suras according to the revelation order, but it was given its place at the beginning of the Quran because of its importance, and so it is repeated in every prayer more than once. All of its verses were revealed at one time. Because it condenses the fundamentals of the Islamic faith, it was called "*Umm al-Kitab*", the Essence of the Book, by Prophet Muhammad himself (peace be upon him). It was also called "*Fatihat al-Kitab*", The Opening of the Book.

The Fatiha begins by mentioning the name of God, who chooses to describe Himself by two attributes derived from mercy and grace: "*al-Rahman, al-Rahim*/ The All-merciful, The Most Gracious." By describing Himself as "*the Lord of all being*" - or of the

whole creation including the universe with all its components - He emphasizes the comprehensiveness and the universality of the faith and the message, as God has not been related to any particular place or people. His relation to His creation, especially the living creatures, is based on "*mercy and grace*", as the sura has stressed. He is not only the All-merciful in Himself, but He bestows His mercy and grace all the time upon His creatures, and He creates mercy in the instinctive feelings and natural laws of life as is seen among birds, animals and human beings, especially in their relations with their newborns. As mentioning the name of the only God, and stressing His mercy and grace in His relation to His creation remind the believer of the fundamentals of the Islamic faith, Muslims have been taught by Prophet Muhammad to begin any considerable work with the name of God [reported by Ibn Hanbal].

The Arabic word "*Rabb*" expresses a relation based on love, care , rearing, and cherishing, combined with authority and mastery. However, the less expressive word "*Lord*" has been used as a translation for this Arabic word since most people have become used to it in the translation of the Quran and the sources of other religions. To stress this relation of care and mercy, the description of God as "*Lord of all the worlds*" was followed by repeating His two attributes derived from mercy and grace "*al-Rahman*" and "*al-Rahim.*" His grace and mercy for all the living creatures in general are obvious in His gifts of instinctive guidance, and, for human beings in particular are evident in the human intellect and the divine messages of guidance.

The accountability of the human being before God, the only Lord of the Day of Judgement and the life to come, follows the statement about His love, grace, caring and mercy, since all these are inseparable, and without such an accountability the life in this world would come to an end without justice being settled for every individual.

Following these statements about God as the Lord, the All-merciful and the only Judge in the eternal life to come, the believer expresses his/her faith in the One God: worshipping Him alone and turning to Him alone for help and support. It is meaningless to believe in the One God while one is allowing himself/herself to seek any means to achieve one's goal, even if these means contradicts the teachings of the One God whom he/she believes in and worships. The believer is emphasizing several times a day that he/she will be consistent in his/her behavior and is reminding himself/herself that one's practices in the daily life have to be in accordance with one's belief in the One God and in His comprehensive guidance.

In the end, the believer asks God for His guidance to follow the straight way of the blessed people, and to avoid the way of those who deliberately reject God's guidance and thus are condemned by Him, and of those who have allowed themselves to be illuded,by their whims or by others, from the right path and go astray. The divine guidance for the straight way is presented in God's message: "*O People of the Book, there has come to you the conveyor of Our message making clear to you much of what you have been concealing of the Book, and to dispense with much [that is now unnecessary]. Now there has come*

to you from God a light and a clear divine writ, through which God guides all who seek His goodly acceptance to paths of peace, and by His grace leads them out of the depths of darkness into the light, and guides them to a straight way." [5:15-16], "*And this is My way leading straight; so do follow it...*" [6:153], "*... and you [O Muhammad] surely shall guide [people] to the straight way, the way of God, to Whom belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on earth...*" [42:52-53].

Thus, the believer emphasizes in these few verses his/her belief in: the One God of all being and of the whole creation who is the All-merciful, Most Gracious Lord, the accountability of the human being that will be the basis for one's eternal life to come, and the messages of divine guidance to the right path through God's revelation. The believer states succinctly his/her faith in all these principles, and emphasizes the sound relation between the sensible human beings and the All-caring an Most Gracious Lord. It is not a momentary and empty acknowledgement of the existence of the One God, but an expression of a dynamic relation which fills the mind and heart, and inspires all human behavior throughout life. The believer prays for God's guidance to the right way represented in the teachings of His message, and for avoidance of the way of those who deliberately and stubbornly reject God's guidance, or those who go astray under illusion, temptation or shortsightedness. The Fatiha is a concise, harmonious and continuous reminder of God's almightiness and grace, the purpose and responsibility of the human being through this world's life, and the strong and close relation between both.

It is no wonder then that this concise sura becomes the "*Opening*" of the Quran, and the basis of any prayer, and was called the "*Essence*" of the Book,. It presents a crystallized and beautifully tuned articulation of the faith, and an inspiring guidance for human behavior.

CHAPTER TWO

THE FAITH (I)

FROM THE CREATION TO THE CREATOR:
CALLING ATTENTION TO THE UNIVERSE AND LIFE

The Quranic approach to the faith in the One God is to call attention to the whole universe in its various physical and biological phenomena, and to its incessant laws and systematic order which maintain continuation and coordination. From these observations, the Quran conducts the argument about the One God and His attributes, and His relation to His creation.

The first Quranic verses revealed to Prophet Muhammad call attention to *"your Lord who has created [all of creation in general], and has created the human being [in particular] of a suspending mixture [of sperm and egg]."* [96:1-2]. These earliest Quranic verses start with a call for reading and comprehension, and emphasize the divine gift of giving the human the ability to learn and write, an ability that puts the "homo sapiens" above all of God's other creations [17:70] and allows him/her to make much of the other creation subservient to him/her.

The Quran calls attention to the various living creatures in the animal and plant kingdoms (e.g. sheep and cattle, camels and horses, reptiles, birds, insects, grains, fruits, grass etc.) It is not only the benefit of the animal or plant which is underlined in the Quran, but also the beauty of their appearance and structure [e.g. 16:6, 8, 13, 14, 69; 50:7, 10; 78:16; 82:7; 95:4]. Water has also been featured in the Quran as an indispensable element for life [21:30; also 25:48-49; 80:24-32].

The whole life and all living creatures, including the human being, to which the Quran calls attention, are on this planet earth. However, the Quran also refers to the cosmos with its stars and planets in their coordinated orbits, to the earth with its mountains and plains, valleys and deserts, rivers and seas, and to the climate in its different aspects: heat, winds, clouds, thunder and lightening, rain etc. It also points out that although the human mind can make many forces of nature subservient to it, the human being should

not fall into the trap of ego-centrism: "*Certainly the creation of the heavens and the earth is greater than the creation of the human beings, yet most people recognize not [such a significant fact]*" [40:57]. The planets are separated in their places and their orbits, and any may have life or potentials for life. Contact between them may be allowed according to God's laws and will: "*And among His signs is the [very] creation of the heavens and the earth, and of all the living creatures which He has spread throughout them, and He is able to make them meet together whenever He wills*" [42:29]. The Quran stresses the beauty of the universe in addition to its flawless laws and order [e.g. 16:6; 37:6; 41:12; 50:7; 67:3-5].

An observation about natural diversity in the universe and among living creatures has been condensed in the Quranic verse that ends with an emphasis on the relation between knowledge and faith, "*Are you not aware that God sends down water from the skies, whereby We bring forth [various] fruits of many hues, just as in the mountains there are streaks of white and red of various shades, as well as [others] raven black, and [as] there are in human beings and in crawling beasts and in livestock too, various [kinds and] hues? Of all His servants, only those who enjoy deep knowledge stand [truly] in awe of God ...*" [35:27-28].

On these grounds of intact coordinated laws of nature, the Quran builds faith in the One God.

"*Limitless in His glory is He who has created in [parallel] pairs what the earth produces, and the human beings' own selves, and that of which [as yet] they may have no knowledge. And a sign for them is the night from which We gradually strip of the [light of] day, and so they are plunged into darkness. And the sun runs through a determined course of its own which is accurately designed by the All-mighty, the All-knowing. And the moon: We have determined its phases [that it must go through] till it becomes like an aged palm-bough [dried up and curved]. Neither may the sun overtake the moon, nor can the night outstrip the day, since all of them float through space [according to God's laws for the universe].*" [36:36-40]

سُبْحَٰنَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ
ٱلْأَزْوَٰجَ كُلَّهَا مِمَّا تُنۢبِتُ ٱلْأَرْضُ وَمِنْ
أَنفُسِهِمْ وَمِمَّا لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَءَايَةٌ
لَّهُمُ ٱلَّيْلُ نَسْلَخُ مِنْهُ ٱلنَّهَارَ فَإِذَا هُم
مُّظْلِمُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾ وَٱلشَّمْسُ تَجْرِى
لِمُسْتَقَرٍّ لَّهَا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ ٱلْعَزِيزِ ٱلْعَلِيمِ
﴿٣٨﴾ وَٱلْقَمَرَ قَدَّرْنَٰهُ مَنَازِلَ حَتَّىٰ عَادَ
كَٱلْعُرْجُونِ ٱلْقَدِيمِ ﴿٣٩﴾ لَا ٱلشَّمْسُ
يَنۢبَغِى لَهَآ أَن تُدْرِكَ ٱلْقَمَرَ وَلَا ٱلَّيْلُ
سَابِقُ ٱلنَّهَارِ ۚ وَكُلٌّ فِى فَلَكٍ يَسْبَحُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

"*... and We caused [life] of every kind to grow on it [the earth] in a balanced manner.*" [15:19]

وَٱلْأَرْضَ مَدَدْنَٰهَا
وَأَلْقَيْنَا فِيهَا رَوَٰسِىَ وَأَنۢبَتْنَا فِيهَا مِن
كُلِّ شَىْءٍ مَّوْزُونٍ ﴿١٩﴾

"... *and it is He who creates everything and determines its nature [and function] with [his own] planning.*" [25:2]

ٱلَّذِى
لَهُۥ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ وَ لَمْ يَتَّخِذْ
وَلَدًا وَ لَمْ يَكُن لَّهُۥ شَرِيكٌ فِى ٱلْمُلْكِ
وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ فَقَدَّرَهُۥ تَقْدِيرًا ﴿٢﴾

"... *no fault you may see in the creation of the All-merciful; turn your vision through it one time after another: can you see any flaw?*" [67:3]

ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ سَبْعَ
سَمَٰوَٰتٍ طِبَاقًا ۖ مَّا تَرَىٰ فِى خَلْقِ
ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ مِن تَفَٰوُتٍ ۖ فَٱرْجِعِ ٱلْبَصَرَ هَلْ
تَرَىٰ مِن فُطُورٍ ﴿٣﴾

Such indefectible order, coordination and continuation should be logically initiated and maintained by One since "*Had there been in heaven or on earth any deities other than the One God, both would surely have fallen into ruin.*" [21:22], "... *nor has there ever been any deity side by side with Him; [for if this was the case] each deity would surely have stood apart [from the others] in whatever one had created, and they would surely have [tried to] prevail over one another: Limitless in His glory is God, [far] above whatever people may define*" [23:91].

The Merciful God would not leave human beings unaccountable for their actions, or would He make their life in this world, where justice may not be fully secured, the only life: "*And yet they say: 'There is nothing beyond our life in this world. We die as we come to life, and nothing but time destroys us.' Of this they have no knowledge whatsoever; they merely conjecture*" [45:24], "*Did you, then, think that We created you in mere idle play, and that you would not have to return to Us? Then, highly exalted be God, the Ultimate Sovereign, the Ultimate Truth: there is no deity save Him, the Lord on His throne of bounty and might*" [23:115-116]; "... *and their reward in the life to come will be far greater if they but knew*" [16:41].

The life to come is the real life, for it is more rewarding, stable and eternal "... *this worldly life is but a brief enjoyment, whereas, behold, the life to come is the home abiding*" *[40:39], "And, the life of this world is nothing but a passing delight and a play, whereas, behold, in the hereafter is indeed the only [true] life if they but knew*" [29:64]; "... *this is the Day on which eternal life abiding begins*" [50:34].

THE UNIVERSE

إِنَّ فِى خَلْقِ
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ وَ ٱخْتِلَٰفِ ٱلَّيْلِ
وَ ٱلنَّهَارِ وَ ٱلْفُلْكِ ٱلَّتِى تَجْرِى فِى ٱلْبَحْرِ
بِمَا يَنفَعُ ٱلنَّاسَ وَ مَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ مِنَ
ٱلسَّمَآءِ مِن مَّآءٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ ٱلْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ
مَوْتِهَا وَ بَثَّ فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ دَآبَّةٍ وَ تَصْرِيفِ
ٱلرِّيَٰحِ وَ ٱلسَّحَابِ ٱلْمُسَخَّرِ بَيْنَ
ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٦٤﴾

Surely, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, in the succession of night and day, in the sailing of the ships through the sea for the benefit of human beings, in the water which God sends down from the sky, giving life thereby to an earth that has been lifeless, and causing all kinds of living creatures to spread thereon, in the change of the winds and the clouds that run through their appointed courses between the sky and earth: [in all these] indeed are signs for people who are sensible. [2:164]

This one verse makes one's senses and thinking move through various aspects of nature which are referred to with accuracy and beauty. The verse begins with a concise reference to the huge cosmos with its stars and planets in general, and the earth where the addressed human beings have been living in particular. The special place and relation of the earth with regard to the sun leads to the succession of day and night, each of which has a different length during the different seasons.

The Arabic word *al-samawat* in the plural - from the verb *sama* which means "to go high"- initially means the different levels of space which appear to a person to be rising above him/her, regardless of his/her position on earth. In general, the term may be used in the Quran for the "heavens" in its wider sense, which is "the expanse of space that seems to be over the earth like a dome, usually used in the plural," according to the Webster New Collegiate Dictionary [e.g. 2:29, 33, 107, 116-7, 164, 255, 284..., also 16:49; 17:44; 19:93; 21"30; 22:18; 23:71; 25:59; 31:10; 34:3; 35:41; 40:57; 41:12; 42:29; 45:36; 59:23; 63:7 etc.] It may also mean - in particular when it comes in the singular *al-sama'* - the sky, which is, according to Webster, "the upper atmosphere that constitutes an apparent great vault over the earth," or "weather in the upper atmosphere," as well as merely the atmosphere [e.g. 2:19, 22, 164; 6:99, 125; 7:96; 8:11; 10:24; 11:44, 52; 13:17; 14:24, 32; 15:22; 16:10, 65, 79; 20:53; 21:32; 22:31, 63; 23:18; 24:43; 25:48, 61; 27:60; 30:48; 31:10; 37:6; 39:21; 41:12; 43:11; 45:5, 13; 50:6, 9 etc.] On the other hand, the word in both its plural and singular terms may be used as a theological term to mean God's presence and supremacy, the place of the angels and "the host on high" [37:7; 38:69], and the blessed abode of the righteous in the eternal life to come [e.g. 7:40; 17:95; 26:4; 27:65; 36:28; 39:67; 48:4, 7; 53:26; 55:33 etc.]

Significantly, it is often stressed throughout the Quran that God's gifts facilitate, in this life, the movement of human beings through the world. The above verse, among others [e.g. 6:97; 10:32; 14:32; 16:14; 17:66; 22:65; 27:63; 31:31; 42:32-34; 45:12; 55:24],

refers to naval transportation, while other verses in the Quran refer to land transportation and the benefit of horses and camels in this respect [e.g. 16:7-8, 36:42, 71-2, 40:79, 43:12]. Thus, the Quran emphasizes that the human being is a "moving creature" and such movement is essential for human nature, and consequently it must be secured by all means as a fundamental human right: "*We have conferred dignity on the children of Adam, and have borne them over land and sea ...*" [17:70].

The human being is universal by nature, and no barrier should restrict his/her movement to different places or mixing with different peoples [49:13] in order to exchange knowledge and develop civilization. In another significant verse in which the Quran mentions the gift of God in making the sea subservient to the human being through the sailing of ships, it follows this directly by referring that He makes subservient to the human being and mind: "*what is in the heavens and what is in the earth, all together, from Him ...*" [45:12]. Here "the heavens" may refer to, or include, the atmosphere as well as the space, through which the human being may "navigate" in the future as he had been doing through the sea at the time of revelation. Surely, such a reference could not have been explicitly presented in the time of the revelation of the Quran, since it could not be understood or even imagined during that time, although it may be obvious now when we think deeply about the context.

Alluding to the sea brings to mind "water," which is a link between the physical and biological aspects of nature: "*and We made out of water every living thing*" [21:31]. Water is sent down to the people from the atmosphere in different forms, and it brings life to earth and to every living creature there. This water comes through a process of evaporation and condensation which lead to the formation of clouds, and wind, in its different courses that are appointed by certain natural laws, has its essential role in this process. Such relations, order, balance and coordination in the various natural phenomena and laws, show that these cannot occur haphazardly, but that there is a supreme wisdom and omnipotence that has created and is maintaining the cosmic order in its vastness and complexity. The possessor of this wisdom and omnipotence is One since a plurality would allow contradiction [see for example the verses 21:22, 23:91, and 4:82, which is also relevant but with regard to the Quran].

Surely, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, there are indeed signs[and messages] for people who really have minds. Those who remember and invoke God when they stand and when they sit and when they lie down on their sides, reflecting upon the creation of the heavens and the earth, [and saying,] "O our Lord! You have not created this in vain [without meaning or purpose]. Glory be to You! Keep us safe, then, from suffering through the fire." [3:190-191]

إِنَّ فِى خَلْقِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ
وَ ٱخْتِلَٰفِ ٱلَّيْلِ وَ ٱلنَّهَارِ لَأَيَٰتٍ لِّأُو۟لِى
ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ﴿١٩٠﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ ٱللَّهَ
قِيَٰمًا وَ قُعُودًا وَ عَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ
وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِى خَلْقِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ
رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَٰذَا بَٰطِلًا سُبْحَٰنَكَ فَقِنَا
عَذَابَ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿١٩١﴾

The various wonders of creation in this huge cosmos should invite those who comprehend to practice deep contemplation and serious thinking, they then would realize that the Creator is the One God, and that His creation in general and the human being in particular have their meaning and purpose. The recognition of the Creator and the belief in the accountability of the human being, inspire morality and justice in this worldly life, and provide hope for full justice and requital for the good-doers and the evildoers in the eternal life to come.

[He is] the One who causes the day to break [from the dark], and He has made the night for a repose, and the sun and the moon for a reckoning [of time as they rise and set]; that is the design of the All-mighty, the All-knowing. And it is He who has set up for you the stars so that you might be guided by them through the deep darkness of land and sea; clearly We indicate our signs for people who know." [6:96-97]

فَالِقُ ٱلْإِصْبَاحِ وَ جَعَلَ ٱلَّيْلَ سَكَنًا
وَ ٱلشَّمْسَ وَ ٱلْقَمَرَ حُسْبَانًا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ
تَقْدِيرُ ٱلْعَزِيزِ ٱلْعَلِيمِ ﴿٩٦﴾ وَ هُوَ ٱلَّذِى
جَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلنُّجُومَ لِتَهْتَدُوا۟ بِهَا فِى
ظُلُمَٰتِ ٱلْبَرِّ وَ ٱلْبَحْرِ ۗ قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا
ٱلْءَايَٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٩٧﴾

The above verse does not refer to the mere succession of day and night in general, but instead specifies how the day breaks after the night repose, bringing light and life and enabling people to earn their living [see also 3:27, 10:67, 22:61, 25:47, 30:23, 35:13, 36:37, 39:5, 40:61, 57:6, 78:10-11]. Besides this, the apparent daily and yearly changes of the sun's place in relation to the earth have provided human beings with a way to reckon the time of day and the four seasons throughout the year, while the monthly movement of the moon and its phases allow the reckoning of the months. The stars provide light in the darkness, and some of them can be used at night by travellers on land and sea as a guide for directions. How perfect is this design that allows human beings to benefit from the light of the sun, the moon and the stars, as well as to reckon the time and determine directions. Those who recognize these facts in God's creation and seriously think about them would come to the conclusion that there is a Creator, and that He is the One, the Almighty, the All-knowing.

It is He who has made the sun [a source of] radiance and the moon a [reflected] light for which phases are determined, so that you might know the counting of years and the making of calculations; none of this has God created except according to that [order] which is right; [thus] does He spell out His signs one after another, to people who know!
Surely, in the succession of night and day, and

هُوَ ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ
ٱلشَّمْسَ ضِيَآءً وَ ٱلْقَمَرَ نُورًا وَ قَدَّرَهُۥ
مَنَازِلَ لِتَعْلَمُوا۟ عَدَدَ ٱلسِّنِينَ
وَ ٱلْحِسَابَ ۚ مَا خَلَقَ ٱللَّهُ ذَٰلِكَ إِلَّا
بِٱلْحَقِّ ۚ يُفَصِّلُ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ
﴿٥﴾ إِنَّ فِى ٱخْتِلَٰفِ ٱلَّيْلِ وَ ٱلنَّهَارِ

in all that God has created in the heavens and on earth, are signs for those who are conscious of Him. [10:5-6]

وَمَا خَلَقَ ٱللَّهُ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ
لَأَيَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَّقُونَ ۝٦

The first of the above verses makes the distinction between the light of the sun which is described in Arabic as *diya'*, and that of the moon which is described in Arabic as "*nur*". Such a distinction during the time of the revelation of the Quran is significant. As some philologists put it, "*diya'* " is meant to describe a light which stands by itself, such as that of fire [see verses 2:17, 20], while the word "*nur*" is more general and may include a light that is a mere reflection or is drawn from another source, such as the light of faith or the light of God's guidance, e.g. 2:17, 3:15, 44, 46, 7:157, 24:35, 39:69, 42:52, 57:12-13, 28]. God is described as the source of all light, *nur*, so this confirms the case and by no means contradicts it [e.g. 24:35; compare 4:174; 5:15; 6:1, 122; 24:40; 39:22, 6964:8]. In other suras, the sun is described in the Quran as a "radiant lamp or source of light" [25:61, 17:16], and "a blazing lamp" [78:13]. Besides, the heat and the light, and the sun and the moon, in their apparent change of place with regard to the earth, have become means for determining the time during the day or throughout the month, and for distinguishing the four seasons of the year, providing a basis for various calculations that are essential for development and civilization [e.g. in production, consumption, income, services, surveying, etc.]. Day and night succeed one another regularly and gradually in a certain order [e.g. 3:27, 22:61, 31:29, 35:13, 39:5, 57:6]. The length of each of them differs throughout the four seasons, thus allowing human beings a shorter day and a longer night in the winter and vice versa in the summer, and an equal day and night in spring and autumn/fall. All these represent signs of a consummate creation of the cosmos and of enormous care for the human beings.

It is God who has raised the heavens without any visible support that you can see; then He established Himself on the throne [of power and control over all His creation]. It is He who has subjected the sun and the moon [to His laws and for your benefit]; each one runs through [its course] for a term appointed [by Him]. He does organize and direct all affairs, showing you clear signs one after another, so that you might believe with certainty in the meeting with your Lord [in the life to come].
And it is He who has spread the earth wide, and set thereon firm mountains and running waters; He created in pairs [male and female] every kind of plant produce; and [it is He who] draws the night gradually to spread

ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى رَفَعَ
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ بِغَيْرِ عَمَدٍ تَرَوْنَهَا ۖ ثُمَّ
ٱسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى ٱلْعَرْشِ ۖ وَ سَخَّرَ
ٱلشَّمْسَ وَ ٱلْقَمَرَ ۖ كُلٌّ يَجْرِى لِأَجَلٍ
مُّسَمًّى ۚ يُدَبِّرُ ٱلْأَمْرَ يُفَصِّلُ ٱلْأَيَٰتِ
لَعَلَّكُم بِلِقَآءِ رَبِّكُمْ تُوقِنُونَ ۝٢ وَ هُوَ
ٱلَّذِى مَدَّ ٱلْأَرْضَ وَ جَعَلَ فِيهَا رَوَٰسِىَ
وَأَنْهَٰرًا ۖ وَ مِن كُلِّ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ جَعَلَ فِيهَا
زَوْجَيْنِ ٱثْنَيْنِ ۖ يُغْشِى ٱلَّيْلَ ٱلنَّهَارَ ۚ

over the day. Surely, in all these are signs for those who reflect. [13:2-3]

إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٣﴾

The "heavens," mentioned in the Quran as a plural, may include what we physically know as the atmosphere and space, and what may be beyond this physical existence, where the "host on high" or the "exalted gathering" exists [37:8, 38:69] and where the angels assemble. These heavens, especially the physical part that we know about, are raised up by means of certain natural laws [i.e. pressure, density etc.], but without any visible columns or pillars. God's throne in its exact meaning, whether literal or metaphorical, is beyond our perception. In the Quran, the throne is only described as "mighty" or "glorious" and as "noble" or "bountiful" [9:129, 23:86, 27:26]. The expression "established Himself on the throne" [see in addition to the above verse 7:54; 10:3; 20:5; 25:59; 32:4; 7:4] comes after mentioning that He created the cosmos: the heavens in its wider sense including the material side of the numerous galaxies, stars, planets, and supernatural concept. God is on His throne - whatever or however it may be - governing His creation with all power, knowledge, care and grace and practicing His almightiness, with mercy and compassion, not just manifesting His ultimate supremacy and omnipotence [10:3, 25:59, 57:4].

The first of the above verses refers to God's keeping of the sun and the moon subservient to His laws and order, and for the human benefit "each one runs through [its course] for a term appointed [by Him] [also 36:38-40]". Accordingly, we have day and night of different lengths in the four seasons, and we receive varying degrees of the sun's heat every season. We see the moon in various phases through the month, and we receive differing amounts of light as a result. All these signs of God's almightiness and wisdom are presented in the Quran so that people may conceive that this world and the human beings in it have not been created without meaning or purpose, but that all that God has provided the human being with physically, intellectually and spiritually is connected with responsibility, and that every individual will meet Him and face His judgement and requital in the life to come.

In addition to heat and light from the sun and the moon, the Quran calls attention to the earth, and how it has been created to accommodate the human being providing him/her with sustenance as well as other essential needs of life. Any part of the earth appears to be stretched flat to the people who live on that part, although it is shaped as a globe in its entirety. It has been provided with firm mountains, sources of running water, and different plants in which male and female organs are found together to secure the reproduction of flowers and various plant produce. Most plants benefit from the succession of day and night, since they usually undergo photosynthesis during the day and respiration at night. All these are clear signs of a marvelous creation of the All-knowing, the All-wise, the All-mighty.

He sends down water from the sky, and the river-courses run high, each according to its measure, and the

أَنزَلَ مِنَ
ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَسَالَتْ أَوْدِيَةٌۢ بِقَدَرِهَا

torrent carries scum that mounts up to the surface. Likewise, there is a scum [that rises], from that [ore] which they heat in the fire, to make ornaments or utensils therewith. Thus does God set forth the parable of the true and the false: as for the scum, it passes away like anything cast out, and that which is of benefit for people abides on earth. Thus does God set forth parables. [13:17]

فَٱحْتَمَلَ ٱلسَّيْلُ زَبَدًا رَّابِيًا ۚ وَمِمَّا
يُوقِدُونَ عَلَيْهِ فِى ٱلنَّارِ ٱبْتِغَآءَ حِلْيَةٍ
أَوْ مَتَٰعٍ زَبَدٌ مِّثْلُهُۥ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يَضْرِبُ ٱللَّهُ
ٱلْحَقَّ وَٱلْبَٰطِلَ ۚ فَأَمَّا ٱلزَّبَدُ فَيَذْهَبُ
جُفَآءً ۖ وَأَمَّا مَا يَنفَعُ ٱلنَّاسَ فَيَمْكُثُ
فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يَضْرِبُ ٱللَّهُ
ٱلْأَمْثَالَ ﴿١٧﴾

The above verse presents many parables which make use of natural facts. The first is about water that God sends down in rain from the skies which fills river valleys: each according to its measure. Similarly, human beings are exposed to knowledge and guidance provided by God or any other source created by Him, and each individual achieves according to his/her potential. Since there is always a chance for presenting true or false information to others, parables are presented to assure that the truth prevails in the end. False information is like the foam which comes over a stream of water and soon vanishes, and like the scum which rises in the process of purifying a metal by heating it, and both are thrown away in the end. The same happens in the struggle of ideas between those who have different stands, and by time "*which is of benefit for people who abide on earth*". However, truth and rightfulness prevail in time through the support of people who believe in them: "*And if God had not enabled people to defend themselves against one another, corruption would surely spread over the whole earth*" [2:251].

Have, then, they never seen that We gradually reduce the earth in its extremities? Whenever God commands none could repel His command; and He is swift in reckoning. [13:41, see also 21:44]

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ أَنَّا نَأْتِى
ٱلْأَرْضَ نَنقُصُهَا مِنْ أَطْرَافِهَا ۚ وَٱللَّهُ
يَحْكُمُ لَا مُعَقِّبَ لِحُكْمِهِۦ ۚ وَهُوَ سَرِيعُ
ٱلْحِسَابِ ﴿٤١﴾

The verse may be referring to the geographic and/or demographic changes in the earth's shape and/or in its population, a phenomenon that is supported by various scientific observations (e.g. astronomical factors; erosion factors such as heat, wind, humidity and rain, decline of population and civilizations due to geographic, economic, and sanitary problems) have their impact on the earth and/or the population, as people may die or migrate from deteriorating areas to others with more potential. These changes show how natural and social laws are working in coordination, and point to the All-mighty and All-knowing power behind physical and human developments.

It is God who has created the heavens and the earth, and who sends down water from the sky wherewith He brings forth [various] plant produce to be your sustenance; it is He who has made the ships subservient to you, so that they may sail through the sea at His command; and has made the rivers subservient to you [through His laws]. Besides, He has made subservient to you [through His laws] the sun and the moon both diligently pursuing their courses; and the night and the day have been serving you. He gives you of all that you ask Him, and if you [try to] count God's blessings, never will you be able to number them; behold, the human being is most persistent in wrongdoing, stubbornly ungrateful. [14:32-34]

ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضَ وَ أَنزَلَ مِنَ
ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَأَخْرَجَ بِهِۦ مِنَ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ
رِزْقًا لَّكُمْ ۖ وَ سَخَّرَ لَكُمُ ٱلْفُلْكَ لِتَجْرِىَ
فِى ٱلْبَحْرِ بِأَمْرِهِۦ ۖ وَ سَخَّرَ لَكُمُ ٱلْأَنْهَٰرَ
﴿٣٢﴾ وَ سَخَّرَ لَكُمُ ٱلشَّمْسَ وَ ٱلْقَمَرَ
دَآئِبَيْنِ ۖ وَ سَخَّرَ لَكُمُ ٱلَّيْلَ وَ ٱلنَّهَارَ
﴿٣٣﴾ وَ ءَاتَىٰكُم مِّن كُلِّ مَا سَأَلْتُمُوهُ ۚ
وَ إِن تَعُدُّوا۟ نِعْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَآ ۗ إِنَّ
ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ لَظَلُومٌ كَفَّارٌ ﴿٣٤﴾

The above verses refer again to the fascinating signs of God's creation in different ranges: in the atmosphere and space, and the heavens in its theological sense behind them, where "*the host on high*" or "*the exalted gathering*" exists [see 37:8, 38:69], in sending the water down from the skies and bringing forth plant produce for human sustenance, in making ships and rivers subservient to human beings, who are also served by the heat and/or light of the sun and moon, by the day and night in their succession, and by the differing lengths of the seasons. Moreover, God grants people all they ask of Him, and thus His bounty is beyond counting, whether it is offered for the entire human race, or for a particular individual who may ask Him for help in a time of hardship or to grant him/her some of His bounty and blessings. [2:186]. However, the human being may hastily forget or deny God's favors when he/she faces a difficulty or enjoys ease [e.g. 7:189-190; 10:12, 22-23; 17:83; 30:33; 31:32; 39:8, 49; 41:49-51]. Faith in God and the life to come aids the human being in having self-control and balance. According to a Prophet's tradition, whenever the believer meets with good in life, he/she does not waste his/her energy in arrogance and boasting but is grateful to the Lord, and whenever he/she faces difficulty he/she does not become paralyzed but is patient, firm and persevering in overcoming it [reported by Ibn Hanbal and Muslim]. Therefore, faith secures humanity with balance, stability and thus productivity.

And We let loose the winds that fertilize [plants and cause condensation in the clouds] and We send down water from the skies, which We let you drink, and you are not its treasurers [nor controllers of its sources]. [15:22]

وَ أَرْسَلْنَا ٱلرِّيَٰحَ لَوَٰقِحَ فَأَنزَلْنَا مِنَ
ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَأَسْقَيْنَٰكُمُوهُ وَ مَآ أَنتُمْ
لَهُۥ بِخَٰزِنِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾

The Arabic adjective *lawaqih* which is used to describe the winds in this verse means "impregnating" or "fecundating," and it refers to the role of the winds in helping the reproductive process of plants or the condensation of the accumulated vapor in clouds that develops into rain which provides water, the essential for life. People may store water in tanks or behind dams, but they have no control over its original factors and sources: the natural forces of evaporation and condensation which the winds facilitate. Thus water is in fact distributed over the world's surface according to certain laws and orders.

And it is He who has subjected to you the night and day, the sun and the moon [according to His laws], and the stars which are subservient to His command; surely, in these are signs for people who use their minds. And that which He has spread for you on earth with diverse hues; surely, in that is a sign for people who are mindful.
And it is He who has subjected to you the sea, so that you might eat of its meat that which is fresh and tender, and that you might bring forth out of it ornaments that you wear. And you see the ships therein ploughing through the waves, so that you might seek His bounty and so haply you will be grateful [to Him].
And He has set up on earth firm mountains, lest it should shake with you; and rivers and paths, so that you might find your way; and [other] landmarks and means of direction, and by the stars [also, people] are guided. Is He Who creates as one who creates not? Will you not then, be mindful? If you try to count up the blessings of God, never would you be able to number them; surely, God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious. [16:12-18]

وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ ٱلَّيْلَ
وَٱلنَّهَارَ وَٱلشَّمْسَ وَٱلْقَمَرَ ۖ وَٱلنُّجُومُ
مُسَخَّرَٰتٌۢ بِأَمْرِهِۦٓ ۗ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ
لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ وَمَا ذَرَأَ لَكُمْ فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ مُخْتَلِفًا أَلْوَٰنُهُۥٓ ۗ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ
لَءَايَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَذَّكَّرُونَ ﴿١٣﴾ وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى
سَخَّرَ ٱلْبَحْرَ لِتَأْكُلُوا۟ مِنْهُ لَحْمًا طَرِيًّا
وَتَسْتَخْرِجُوا۟ مِنْهُ حِلْيَةً تَلْبَسُونَهَا
وَتَرَى ٱلْفُلْكَ مَوَاخِرَ فِيهِ وَلِتَبْتَغُوا۟ مِن
فَضْلِهِۦ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ وَأَلْقَىٰ
فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ رَوَٰسِىَ أَن تَمِيدَ بِكُمْ
وَأَنْهَٰرًا وَسُبُلًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥﴾
وَعَلَٰمَٰتٍ ۚ وَبِٱلنَّجْمِ هُمْ يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٦﴾
أَفَمَن يَخْلُقُ كَمَن لَّا يَخْلُقُ ۚ أَفَلَا
تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ وَإِن تَعُدُّوا۟ نِعْمَةَ ٱللَّهِ لَا
تُحْصُوهَآ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَغَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٨﴾

The succession of night and day, and the state and activities of the sun, moon, and stars, all follow certain laws and orders which are beneficial to humanity, as has been repeatedly emphasized in previous verses. The earth has rocks, sand and soil of different colors and qualities and this same variety is found in minerals, gems, plants, and all creatures on land and sea. The earth has its high and low levels, its peaks and valleys, its mountains, rivers and paths, and its landmarks and other means of orientation. At night, people may also be guided by the stars. In all these, human beings find benefits, and they can also find signs that invite serious thinking if they use their reason and do not overlook these wonders of nature passively or thoughtlessly. Such a marvelous and useful creation points to a superiority and power which should make observant people think. However,

they may simply disregard it or submit themselves to some creation other than, or in addition to, the One Creator. This Creator, who can be recognized through serious thinking, must be thanked for His incalculable gifts and favors to the human being if that human being is reasonable and is blessed with good judgement. Nevertheless, the human being, who benefits most from God's bounty and favors, may fail to thank Him, but there is always a chance for self-correction, and God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious.

And it is God who has granted you shade out of what He has created, and has granted you in the mountains places of shelter [and protection]; and He has granted you garments to protect yourselves from heat [and cold], and others to protect yourselves from your own violence. Thus does He grant in full measure His blessings towards you, so that you might submit yourself to Him [and His guidance]. [16:81]

وَ ٱللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُم مِّمَّا خَلَقَ
ظِلَٰلًا وَ جَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنَ ٱلْجِبَالِ أَكْنَٰنًا
وَ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ سَرَٰبِيلَ تَقِيكُمُ ٱلْحَرَّ وَ سَرَٰبِيلَ
تَقِيكُم بَأْسَكُمْ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يُتِمُّ نِعْمَتَهُۥ عَلَيْكُمْ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تُسْلِمُونَ ﴿٨١﴾

Hills, mountains, caves and trees provide people with their natural shade and shelter, while the human mind, gifted by God, can design and build walls and roofs for shade and shelter. Similarly, people first used animal skins to protect themselves from heat and cold, then were able to make better clothing when they discovered how to make use of the wool of animals, the products of silkworms and plants, and how to spin and weave. They also learned how to make armor in order to shield themselves against the attacks of one another.

All these divine gifts and blessings, especially that of the human mind which continuously faces challenges and works out solutions, thus inspiring human development, should guide us to the One who gives and provides, and make us recognize and feel grateful to Him for His creation and care. He is in no need of our thanks, but our direction and devotion to Him will enable us to enjoy genuine freedom within ourselves, towards all others, and attain stability and peace through the varying and successive vicissitudes of life.

Have not those who stubbornly deny the truth, beheld that the heavens and the earth were [once] a mass joined together [as one entity of creation] before, then we parted them asunder? And We made out of water every living thing. Will they [still yet] not [contemplate and thus] reach faith?
And We have set on earth firm mountains lest it should shake with them, and We have made therein broad paths so that they might find

أَوَلَمْ يَرَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَ ٱلْأَرْضَ كَانَتَا رَتْقًا فَفَتَقْنَٰهُمَا ۖ
وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ ٱلْمَآءِ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ حَىٍّ ۚ أَفَلَا
يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ وَ جَعَلْنَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ
رَوَٰسِىَ أَن تَمِيدَ بِهِمْ وَ جَعَلْنَا فِيهَا
فِجَاجًا سُبُلًا لَّعَلَّهُمْ يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

their way.
And We have made the sky roof-like, well-secured; yet they [stubbornly] turn away from its signs.
It is He who has created the night and the day and the sun and the moon; all of them floating through space. [21:30-33]

وَجَعَلْنَا ٱلسَّمَآءَ سَقْفًا مَّحْفُوظًا ۖ وَهُمْ
عَنْ ءَايَٰتِهَا مُعْرِضُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾
خَلَقَ ٱلَّيْلَ وَٱلنَّهَارَ وَٱلشَّمْسَ
وَٱلْقَمَرَ ۖ كُلٌّ فِى فَلَكٍ يَسْبَحُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

And it is He who created the heavens and the earth in six [immeasurably long] periods, and his throne was upon the water [as He willed to create life] in order to test you as to who will act more righteously. And if you say, "You shall surely be raised up after death, those who are bent on stubbornly denying the truth will say, "This is naught but a clear delusion." [11:7]

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ فِى
سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ وَكَانَ عَرْشُهُۥ عَلَى ٱلْمَآءِ
لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ۗ وَلَئِن
قُلْتَ إِنَّكُم مَّبْعُوثُونَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ ٱلْمَوْتِ
لَيَقُولَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا۟ إِنْ هَٰذَآ إِلَّا سِحْرٌ
مُّبِينٌ ﴿٧﴾

The development of the human knowledge of the universe reveals how its creation and maintained order have been following well-designed and coordinated systems. We realize now that the earth was once within the mass of the sun and then split from it. Subsequently, the earth rotates in relation to the sun, as is implied in the verse [21:30], resulting in the alternation of day and night and the succession of the four seasons. The next verse [21:31] suitably refers to the mountains as a factor for maintaining relative stability for the earth, a speedily rotating planet, the interior of which undergoes cooling processes which lead to hardening of the crust. This cooling proceeds "from the surface to the center of the presumably molten or perhaps even gaseous matter of which the earth's interior seems to be compared," as Asad rightfully indicates. "It appears," in Asad's words, "that part of this interior is kept solid only by the enormous pressure of the overlaying material, of which the mountains are the most vivid evidence, and this explains the Quranic reference to mountains as pegs; *awtad* [78:7], i.e. symbols of the firmness and relative equilibrium which the surface of the earth has gradually achieved in the course of its geological history. Not withstanding the fact that this equilibrium is not absolute (as is evidenced by such phenomena as earthquakes and volcanic eruptions), it is the solidity of the earth's crust as contrasted with its very unstable interior which makes life on earth possible ...." In this way, Asad sees in the repeated reference in the Quran to the firmness of the mountains as keeping the earth from shaking and swaying with the human population living on it as "an allusion to the fact that the mountains owe their rise to the gradual balancing process to which the solid crust of the earth is subject" [note number 11 on the verse 16:15]. However, the mountains which have their effect on the relative stability of the earth's crust by the enormous pressure of their overlaying mass do not hinder the human beings from moving around the earth [17:70], since these mountains have paths

that enable people to pass through these huge material masses.

Just as the earth has a secure relatively stable surface, it also has a roof-like structure over it. The Quran uses the Arabic word "*sama'* " singular, "*samawat*" plural for both of what we call "skies" i.e. the atmosphere and space, which are visible, and what we call "heavens" in their spiritual significance. The "roof-like" structure that is referred to in the above verse can be understood as "the cosmic space in which the stars, the solar systems (including our own) and the galaxies pursue their course" [Asad, note number 4 on the verse 13:2]. The sun and the moon, like the earth, each float along their own orbits, and the human beings benefit from this intact order since it results in the advantageous sequence of day and night.

Have you not seen that God causes the clouds, to move onwards, then joins them together, then forms them as a mass, then you see rain coming forth from within it? And it is He who sends down from the skies [whatever He determines] out of mountainous masses [of clouds] wherein is hail, striking therewith whomever he wills and turns it aside from whomever He wills; the flash of its lightning well-nigh almost takes one's sight away. It is God who causes night and day to alternate. In [all] these there is surely a lesson for all those who have eyes to see. [24:43-44]

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُزْجِى سَحَابًا ثُمَّ يُؤَلِّفُ
بَيْنَهُۥ ثُمَّ يَجْعَلُهُۥ رُكَامًا فَتَرَى ٱلْوَدْقَ
يَخْرُجُ مِنْ خِلَٰلِهِۦ وَيُنَزِّلُ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ
مِن جِبَالٍ فِيهَا مِنۢ بَرَدٍ فَيُصِيبُ بِهِۦ مَن
يَشَآءُ وَيَصْرِفُهُۥ عَن مَّن يَشَآءُ ۖ يَكَادُ
سَنَا بَرْقِهِۦ يَذْهَبُ بِٱلْأَبْصَٰرِ ﴿٤٣﴾ يُقَلِّبُ
ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّيْلَ وَٱلنَّهَارَ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً
لِّأُو۟لِى ٱلْأَبْصَٰرِ ﴿٤٤﴾

This verse gives an image that is both artistic and scientific of the condensation of clouds, from the early stages until the provision of rain, a process that also holds the possibility of the emergence of clashing lightning or hail. Such a process of evaporation, condensation, and sometimes freezing, thunder and lightning, is representative of the dynamism of nature, with all its perpetually changing and transforming aspects that are going on every time a cloud is formed, in the same way as the daily change from the sunlight of day to the darkness of night. However, such changes and the intact laws and order behind them often pass unnoticed except by those who enjoy an observing eye and a fine esthetic and intellectual appreciation. These individuals can feel that such a fascinating, systemized, vast and compound creation that has been made subservient and beneficial for him/her, points directly to the Creator who is All-mighty, All-wise.

Have you not seen how your Lord does cause the shadow to stretch [towards the sunset], while had He willed, He could have made it stand still! We

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ كَيْفَ
مَدَّ ٱلظِّلَّ وَلَوْ شَآءَ لَجَعَلَهُۥ سَاكِنًا ثُمَّ

have made it connected with the sun in indication. Then We gradually draw it to Us [with our power and according to our laws].
And it is He who makes the night as a garment for you, and [your] sleep a repose, and makes the day a time for rising again.
And it is He who sends forth the winds bearing good tidings for His approaching grace and mercy, and we [subsequently] send down pure water from the sky so that We may bring life to a dead land thereby, and give to drink of it, many of what We have created: livestock and people. [25:45-49]

جَعَلْنَا ٱلشَّمْسَ عَلَيْهِ دَلِيلًا ﴿٤٥﴾ ثُمَّ
قَبَضْنَٰهُ إِلَيْنَا قَبْضًا يَسِيرًا ﴿٤٦﴾ وَهُوَ
ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلَّيْلَ لِبَاسًا وَٱلنَّوْمَ
سُبَاتًا وَجَعَلَ ٱلنَّهَارَ نُشُورًا ﴿٤٧﴾
وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَرْسَلَ ٱلرِّيَٰحَ بُشْرًۢا بَيْنَ يَدَىْ
رَحْمَتِهِۦ ۚ وَأَنزَلْنَا مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً
طَهُورًا ﴿٤٨﴾ لِّنُحْـِۧيَ بِهِۦ بَلْدَةً مَّيْتًا
وَنُسْقِيَهُۥ مِمَّا خَلَقْنَآ أَنْعَٰمًا وَأَنَاسِىَّ
كَثِيرًا ﴿٤٩﴾

We become so used to the various natural phenomena that we do not appreciate the marvelous intactness of the universal laws and the order behind them, the coordination of these natural phenomena and laws in their correlation, and the human benefits of any phenomenon. The occurrence of the shadow, with its different lengths during the day, is a daily phenomenon which is connected with the sun, and thus of the sun and the shadow each becomes an indicator of the other. In a hot land, like Arabia, the shade is of great benefit for the human being. Its change of length according to what appears to be the movement of the sun on the horizon, but which is really a result of the rotation of the earth around itself in front of the sun, is part of the cosmic dynamism. The shade is inseparable from the phenomenon of light just as the "echo" in relation to sound, and this correlation is basic in the study of the light - or the sound in case of the echo - in the fields of theoretical and applied physics. In the past, people tried to know the passing of time during the day by measuring the shadow of any particular object, and the times of noon and afternoon prayers were appointed in this way. The sundial was brought out to show the time of day by the shadow of a gnomon - a pointer - on a surface, usually horizontal. The position or length of the shadow of this object on the surface would serve as an indicator of the time - especially the hour - of the day.

The change of the length of the shadows according to the sun's place on the horizon, calls to mind the succession of day and night, and how the human being benefits from both: from the day in working and earning his/her living, and from the night in resting and sleeping. The darkness of the night may provide suitable circumstances for certain human activities that are easier to carry out in the absence of crowds and/or scorching sun, such as crossing the desert or constructing roads and bridges. The majority of people retire at night and get up in the morning to resume their work, and signs of human life can be seen again during the day after their substantial suspension at night.

The movement of winds is another phenomenon of universal dynamism. Winds' relations with evaporation and condensation make them, in certain cases, the carriers of good news about coming rain, which brings with it life to extensive land, with its plants,

different people, and thus can raise hope, with its ensuing rain as well as fear of possible damage to homes or lives, in the human being, who is challenged to find protection from the harm through the human intellect. As a result of the challenge to the human intellect to find protection from lightening, the lightning rod was invented in the eighteenth century. Through such contrasting messages, the human being ought to think deeply about the creation and the Creator, about this life with all its pleasures and insecurities as well as the eternal pleasures of the life to come. Nature in its various phenomena represents an open and comprehensive exposition of knowledge throughout the world for all those who may perceive and contemplate.

It is God who sends forth the winds that stir up clouds which He spreads in the sky as He wills, and shatters them and thus you see rain dropping out from within it and as soon as He causes them to reach whomsoever He wills of His servants, behold, they do rejoice; although just before it was sent down on them, they had been in full despair! Behold, then [O human being], these signs of God's grace, how He gives life to the earth after it was lifeless; surely, He is the same who will bring the dead back to life, and He has the power over everything. [30:48-50]

ٱللَّهُ
ٱلَّذِى يُرْسِلُ ٱلرِّيَٰحَ فَتُثِيرُ سَحَابًا
فَيَبْسُطُهُۥ فِى ٱلسَّمَآءِ كَيْفَ يَشَآءُ
وَيَجْعَلُهُۥ كِسَفًا فَتَرَى ٱلْوَدْقَ يَخْرُجُ مِنْ
خِلَٰلِهِۦ ۖ فَإِذَآ أَصَابَ بِهِۦ مَن يَشَآءُ مِنْ
عِبَادِهِۦٓ إِذَا هُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾ وَإِن
كَانُوا۟ مِن قَبْلِ أَن يُنَزَّلَ عَلَيْهِم مِّن قَبْلِهِۦ
لَمُبْلِسِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾ فَٱنظُرْ إِلَىٰٓ ءَاثَٰرِ
رَحْمَتِ ٱللَّهِ كَيْفَ يُحْىِ ٱلْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ
مَوْتِهَآ ۚ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ لَمُحْىِ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ ۖ
وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٥٠﴾

The above verses refer to the formation of clouds and the falling of rain, and how these natural phenomena of wind, evaporation and condensation result in rain which brings life to the earth and to people's hopes about their gains in agriculture and animal breeding, in addition to the preservation of human life through food and water. The Quranic logic in presenting the fact is obvious. Just as God has created life in this world and has constantly secured its continuation through such intact laws, He can bring people back to life through His power and according to His will, as He brings life to earth after being lifeless.

Nor are the two great bodies of water alike, the one: sweet, thirst quenching, and pleasant to drink, and the other: salty and 'bitter. Yet, from each do you eat fresh and tender meat, and bring forth out of it ornaments for you to wear; and you can see the ships therein ploughing through the waves, so

وَمَا يَسْتَوِى ٱلْبَحْرَانِ هَٰذَا عَذْبٌ فُرَاتٌ
سَآئِغٌ شَرَابُهُۥ وَهَٰذَا مِلْحٌ أُجَاجٌ ۖ
وَمِن كُلٍّ تَأْكُلُونَ لَحْمًا طَرِيًّا
وَتَسْتَخْرِجُونَ حِلْيَةً تَلْبَسُونَهَا ۖ وَتَرَى

that you might seek [thus] of His bounty and so haply you will be grateful.
He merges night gradually into day and He merges day gradually into night, and He has made the sun and the moon subservient [to His laws], each running its course for a stated term [by Him]. That is God, your Lord; to Him belongs all dominion, and those whom you call upon, apart from Him, possess not so much as the husk of a date-stone. [35:12-13]

اَلْفُلْكَ فِيهِ مَوَاخِرَ لِتَبْتَغُوا مِن فَضْلِهِۦ
وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ يُولِجُ ٱلَّيْلَ فِى
ٱلنَّهَارِ وَيُولِجُ ٱلنَّهَارَ فِى ٱلَّيْلِ وَسَخَّرَ
ٱلشَّمْسَ وَٱلْقَمَرَ كُلٌّ يَجْرِى لِأَجَلٍ
مُّسَمًّى ۚ ذَٰلِكُمُ ٱللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ لَهُ ٱلْمُلْكُ ۚ
وَٱلَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِۦ مَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِن
قِطْمِيرٍ ﴿١٣﴾

This is another reference to the two distinctive bodies of water, and the way they are of benefit to human beings, by providing drinking water, food, ornament and transportation that contributes to the quest of God's bounty and economic development. All these material benefits for human beings should lead them logically to be grateful to the One who provides these benefits. The next verse calls attention once again to the succession of day and night with their different lengths throughout the four seasons, and the relation of the sun and the moon to the earth and its population. Wherever one contemplates the cosmic phenomena, one sees that their perfect scientific order and their subsequent benefit for human beings, point to the One Creator and Lord of all dominion, and invoking any beside Him or with Him ought to be seen as senseless for all who are sensible.

Have you not seen that God sends down water from the sky, and therewith We bring forth plant produce of diverse hues, and in the mountains there are streaks of white and red of various shades, as well as [others] raven black. And so human beings and beasts and cattle, diverse are their hues. Of all His servants, those who feel truly in awe of God are those who have knowledge; surely, God is All-mighty, All-forgiving. [35:27-28]

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ
أَنزَلَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِۦ
ثَمَرَٰتٍ مُّخْتَلِفًا أَلْوَٰنُهَا ۚ وَمِنَ ٱلْجِبَالِ
جُدَدٌۢ بِيضٌ وَحُمْرٌ مُّخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَٰنُهَا
وَغَرَابِيبُ سُودٌ ﴿٢٧﴾ وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ
وَٱلدَّوَآبِّ وَٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَٰنُهُۥ
كَذَٰلِكَ ۗ إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى ٱللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ
ٱلْعُلَمَٰٓؤُا۟ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ غَفُورٌ ﴿٢٨﴾

The vast diversity in the universe and the intact coordination of its laws and phenomena provide a constant manifestation of God's power and oneness. The above verses refer to the diverse natural hues of rocks, plants, plant produce, and living creatures including human beings and all animals. The Quran requires for true faith in the One God, a proper observation and recognition of His creation. The Quran guides the human senses and wisdom to contemplate the various phenomena of this creation and to consequently develop the concept of, and belief in, a mighty power and wisdom behind the

whole universe in its vastness, diversity and coordination; "*Of all His servants, those who stand truly in awe of God are people who have knowledge*". There are those who may attack others' belief in God without genuine knowledge and serious thinking, and who suppose that it is only ignorant people who believe, but they are in reality the ones who are ignorant, or who restrict their powers of observation and thinking to the material benefits of the universe in spite of being exposed to its marvelous phenomena, laws and order.

And a sign for them is the night from which We gradually strip off the [light of] day, and, so, they are plunged into darkness.
And the sun runs through a determined course of its own, which is accurately designed by the All-mighty, the All-Knowing. And the moon, We have determined its phases [that it must go through] till it becomes like an aged palm bough [dried up and curved]. Neither may the sun overtake the moon, nor can the night outstrip the day, since each floats along in [its own] orbit through space [according to God's laws for the universe]. [36:37-40]

وَءَايَةٌ
لَّهُمُ ٱلَّيْلُ نَسْلَخُ مِنْهُ ٱلنَّهَارَ فَإِذَا هُم
مُّظْلِمُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾ وَٱلشَّمْسُ تَجْرِى
لِمُسْتَقَرٍّ لَّهَا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ ٱلْعَزِيزِ ٱلْعَلِيمِ
﴿٣٨﴾ وَٱلْقَمَرَ قَدَّرْنَٰهُ مَنَازِلَ حَتَّىٰ عَادَ
كَٱلْعُرْجُونِ ٱلْقَدِيمِ ﴿٣٩﴾ لَا ٱلشَّمْسُ
يَنۢبَغِى لَهَآ أَن تُدْرِكَ ٱلْقَمَرَ وَلَا ٱلَّيْلُ
سَابِقُ ٱلنَّهَارِ ۚ وَكُلٌّ فِى فَلَكٍ يَسْبَحُونَ
﴿٤٠﴾

The gradual change from day to night and vice versa, and the different lengths of the two in different seasons, are repeatedly referred to in the Quran as a daily sign exposed to every human being wherever he/she lives and whatever his/her intelligence and knowledge may be. Such a perfect order of nature manifests, over and over, the power of God and His wisdom in planning the universe and its interrelated and coordinated laws on one side, and His care for His creatures in these plans on the other. This daily phenomenon is often described as "*making the night gradually enter [or merge] into the day [and vice versa]*" or "*making the night grow longer by shortening the day, [and vice versa]*" [the verses 3:27, 22:61, 31:29, 35:13, 57:6]. In two other verses, the phenomenon is described as "*covering the day gradually with the night*" [7:54, 13:3]. In another verse [39:5] the covering of the day by the night and vice versa is described as occurring in a spherical way, a description that may refer to the spherical shape of the earth. As this phenomenon is connected with the sun and the place of the earth in relation to it during the day and night and throughout the year, it is usually followed in the Quran by a reference to the sun which gives light in the daytime and the moon which gives light at night.

In the above verse, the same phenomenon is presented as the taking, pulling or gradual withdrawing of one from the other, and the reference in the verse is specifically about gradually withdrawing the day and letting the night proceed, so that people are not suddenly thrust into towards the darkness of the night. The above verse [36:38] indicates both the swift motions and developments within the sun, as well as its stability in spite of these swift, ongoing evolvements. However, according to al-Zamakhshari, 'Abd Allah ibn

Mas'ud, the knowledgeable Companion of the Prophet, who is reliably reported to have read the Arabic phrase "*li-mustaqarrin laha*," which is interpreted above in a different way, as "*la mustaqarra laha*," which refers to a ceaseless running through its course without any stop. Just as the earth rotates around itself and around the sun, resulting in the succession of day and night and the change in their lengths, the moon goes through different phases in its monthly movements around the earth. Motion and change are obvious in the various phenomena of the universe, but the arrangements and coordination of these multifarious activities and their functioning cannot be secured except by the One Allmighty since "Had there been deities on earth or in heaven other than the One God, they would surely have gone to ruin" [21:22].

Certainly the creation of the heavens and earth is greater than the creation of human beings; yet most people recognize not [such a significant fact]. [40:57]

لَخَلْقُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ أَكْبَرُ مِنْ
خَلْقِ ٱلنَّاسِ وَ لَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا
يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾

The above verse puts the human being, as a phenomenon in perspective with regard to the gigantic cosmos with its huge galaxies, solar systems, stars and planets. Such an enlightenment gives the human being a balanced view of his/her place in the universe, since he/she may be inclined towards over-estimating himself/herself as a result of the natural forces which the Creator has made subservient to his/her human mind, although this is also a divine gift. The Quran refers to the creation of the whole cosmos and its perfect order, and to the human being and the spiritual, intellectual, moral and physical powers granted by God to him/her which have to be used in totality to develop the human being and maintain and further develop the resources of the universe made subservient to him/her. In this balance, a human-centered view of the world appears to be obviously nonsense. On the other hand, a view that sees the human being as a helpless creature in such a gigantic universe is no less mistaken. Through the belief in God and by following the guidance of His message, harmony is secured within the whole creation, and the human being can avoid both arrogance and defeatism.

And among His signs is the [very] creation of the heavens and the earth, and of all the living creatures which He has spread throughout them, and He is able to make them meet together whenever He wills. [42:29]

وَ مِنْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ خَلْقُ
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ وَ مَا بَثَّ فِيهِمَا
مِن دَآبَّةٍ ۚ وَ هُوَ عَلَىٰ جَمْعِهِمْ إِذَا يَشَآءُ
قَدِيرٌ ﴿٢٩﴾

Life may exist in any form and in any place in this gigantic cosmos, and it may not be only restricted to the earth. God is able to allow these various creatures from different places in the cosmos to be gathered whenever and wherever He wills. This is an early reference to the space era in which current space voyages may be constituting a modest beginning.

Surely, in the heavens and the earth, are signs for those who [are willing to] believe. And in the creation of your own selves, and in the spreading of living creatures [throughout the earth], are signs for those who [are willing] to reach certainty. And in the succession of night and day, and in what God sends down as sustenance from the sky, giving life therewith to the earth after being lifeless, and in the turning about [in different directions] of the winds, [in all these] are signs for those who use their minds. [45:3-5]

إِنَّ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَٱلْأَرْضِ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٣﴾ وَفِى
خَلْقِكُمْ وَمَا يَبُثُّ مِن دَآبَّةٍ ءَايَٰتٌ لِّقَوْمٍ
يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٤﴾ وَٱخْتِلَٰفِ ٱلَّيْلِ وَٱلنَّهَارِ
وَمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مِن رِّزْقٍ
فَأَحْيَا بِهِ ٱلْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا
وَتَصْرِيفِ ٱلرِّيَٰحِ ءَايَٰتٌ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٥﴾

The above verses sum up some signs of God's power, wisdom and grace which are manifested in the universe, in life in general and in the human life in particular, in the succession of day and night and their varying lengths throughout the seasons, and in the driving of the winds in different directions and the consequent sending down of rain that brings out life with it to all living creatures. All these natural phenomena and signs of divine power and grace have been repeatedly referred to in the previously mentioned Quranic verses.

The above verse [45:5, also 2:164] uses the phrase "*turning about or driving the winds [in different directions].*" The wind is driven in a certain direction according to the development of high and low air pressure. The distribution of land and water bodies has its effect on the wind and its dryness or wetness. Rain brings out different plants in different soils and climates. The Quran repeatedly stresses in various ways of expression how diverse the cosmos is, and how organized and coordinated.

It is God who has made the sea subservient to you, so that ships might run on it at His commandment [through His laws], and that you might seek of His bounty, haply so you will be grateful. And He has made subservient to you, what is in the heavens and what is on the earth, all together from Him; in that are signs indeed for people who reflect. [45:12-13]

ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى سَخَّرَ لَكُمُ
ٱلْبَحْرَ لِتَجْرِىَ ٱلْفُلْكُ فِيهِ بِأَمْرِهِۦ
وَلِتَبْتَغُوا۟ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ
﴿١٢﴾ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُم مَّا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مِّنْهُ ۚ إِنَّ فِى
ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

The above verses sum up the benefits of bodies of water, a subject that has been elaborated on in previously mentioned verses. Here, the first verse refers to the bodies of water provided to human beings all over the world with their potential for universal trade routes and means of economic exchange and exploration of world resources. The next verse refers to making subservient to the human beings "the heavens" in its general sense,

which may allude to enabling them to go through space and reach other planets, especially when one notices that the previous verse refers to making the bodies of water, on which human beings sail ships, subservient to people.

In addition to emphasizing universality in human relations and economic development in both verses, the last one states a highly significant principle in Islamic faith and law: that God "*has subjected to you [human beings], what is in the heavens and what is on the earth: all together from Him.*" Another verse states that God "*has created for you [human beings] all that is on earth*" [2:29]. The jurists have inferred an essential principle in Islamic law: that the general rule about any substance is that God has allowed its use, as long as no specific rule in the divine law has stated that it is forbidden. The divine laws in the Quran and Sunna are not comprehensive with regard to all that is allowed, but they comprehensively and specifically indicate what is forbidden. All what is not indicated in the divine sources as forbidden is considered allowed and lawful as long as it is not harmful, since whatever causes harm is forbidden. If anything shares the properties of something forbidden in the Quran and Sunna, it may be considered forbidden through a convincing analogy.

LIFE

NON-HUMAN: PLANTS, ANIMALS, BIRDS, AQUATIC, AND INSECTS

GENERAL CONCEPTS

And they say, "Why has no miraculous sign been sent down to him from his Lord?" Say, "Surely, God is able to send down one, but most of them know not. No creature is there [living and] moving on earth, nor a being that flies with its wings but [forms a part of] communities like you. Nothing has been neglected from [being pointed to] in the Book, and they [all] shall be gathered to their Lord in the end. Those who reject our signs and messages are deaf and dumb, in the midst of darkness profound; whomsoever God wills He lets go astray, and whomsoever He wills He places on a straight way. [6:37-39]

وَقَالُوا۟ لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ
عَلَيْهِ ءَايَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦ ۚ قُلْ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ قَادِرٌ
عَلَىٰٓ أَن يُنَزِّلَ ءَايَةً وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا
يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾ وَمَا مِن دَآبَّةٍ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ
وَلَا طَٰٓئِرٍ يَطِيرُ بِجَنَاحَيْهِ إِلَّآ أُمَمٌ
أَمْثَالُكُم ۚ مَّا فَرَّطْنَا فِى ٱلْكِتَٰبِ مِن
شَىْءٍ ۚ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾
وَٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا صُمٌّ وَبُكْمٌ فِى
ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ ۗ مَن يَشَإِ ٱللَّهُ يُضْلِلْهُ ۖ وَمَن
يَشَأْ يَجْعَلْهُ عَلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٣٩﴾

Signs which point to the Creator and His wonderful creation are all around people if they are keen to think and understand. However, there are those who keep their senses and minds shut off from all the marvelous natural phenomena around them with their intact order and coordination, and demand from God to have a supernatural and miraculous sign revealed to them particularly. The Quran repeatedly states that although God has the power to reveal a miraculous sign to prove His almightiness and the truth of His message, He has chosen in His message to Muhammad to refer people to the signs of His miraculous creation of the universe and His unmatchable Book of guidance, so that those who truly like to seek evidence for the truthfulness of His message revealed to Muhammad can see it in these signs.

Various living creatures on just our planet can offer convincing signs of God's oneness, power, grace and wisdom. Throughout the mountains, plains, deserts, valleys, forests, salt and sweet water areas, and the air there are living creatures which form various communities similar to the various human communities. Since life comes to an end, the destiny of all living creatures will ultimately be in God's hand. Those who close their senses from receiving and understanding the signs of nature and life in their enormous variety are choosing to block themselves from the light of reality, and are preferring to live in the deep darkness of ignorance and narrow mindedness. As God has created the human being with free will and choice, He lets go astray anyone who chooses so, and guides the one who chooses to listen to His guidance.

The seven heavens and the earth and all beings therein extol His ultimate glory; there is not a single thing but extols His glory and His praise, but you [human beings] fail to grasp how they glorify Him. Surely, He is All-clement, All-forgiving. [17:44]

تُسَبِّحُ لَهُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ ٱلسَّبۡعُ وَ ٱلۡأَرۡضُ
وَمَن فِيهِنَّۚ وَ إِن مِّن شَيۡءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ
بِحَمۡدِهِۦ وَ لَٰكِن لَّا تَفۡقَهُونَ تَسۡبِيحَهُمۡۚ
إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ حَلِيمًا غَفُورٗا ﴿٤٤﴾

Have you not seen that it is God whose glory all that is in the heavens or on earth extol, and [even] the birds as they spread out their wings? Each [creature] knows [in a certain way] how to pray to Him and to glorify Him, and God has full knowledge of all that they do.[24:41]

أَلَمۡ تَرَ
أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُۥ مَن فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَ ٱلطَّيۡرُ صَٰٓفَّٰتٖۖ كُلّٞ قَدۡ عَلِمَ
صَلَاتَهُۥ وَ تَسۡبِيحَهُۥۗ وَ ٱللَّهُ عَلِيمُۢ بِمَا
يَفۡعَلُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

All creation, be it living or non-living, and whether it is on the ground, in the air, in water or elsewhere, as well as angels and other types of creation beyond our senses or knowledge, manifests God's glory and His oneness both through its own particular intact laws and through the perfect order of creation as a whole [e.g. 67:3]. Every phenomenon in the cosmos or life reveals the existence of a Creative Will and Ultimate Wisdom. However, one who lacks deep observation and appreciation may not grasp this cosmic language or may ignore its divine significance [see also the verse 22:18].

And it is God who has created every animal out of water: of them there are some that crawl on their bellies, and some that walk on two legs: and some that walk on four. God creates whatever He wills, for verily, God has the power over everything. [24:45]

وَ ٱللَّهُ خَلَقَ كُلَّ
دَآبَّةٖ مِّن مَّآءٖۖ فَمِنۡهُم مَّن يَمۡشِي عَلَىٰ
بَطۡنِهِۦ وَ مِنۡهُم مَّن يَمۡشِي عَلَىٰ رِجۡلَيۡنِ
وَمِنۡهُم مَّن يَمۡشِي عَلَىٰٓ أَرۡبَعٖۚ يَخۡلُقُ ٱللَّهُ
مَا يَشَآءُۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖ قَدِيرٞ ﴿٤٥﴾

In the above verses 21:30 and 24:45, the Quran emphasizes the fact that every living thing has been made out of water. As Muhammad Asad wrote in *The Message of the Quran,* the Quranic statement "has a threefold meaning: 1) water - and specifically the sea - was the environment within which the prototype of all living matter originated; 2) among all the innumerable - existing or conceivable- liquids, only water has the peculiar properties necessary for the emergence and development of life; and 3) the protoplasm, which is the physical basis of every living cell - whether in plants or in animals - and represents the only form of matter in which the phenomena of life are manifested, consists overwhelmingly of water, and is thus utterly dependent on it." Asad refers to the first statement in the same verse [21:30] "that the heavens and the earth were one single entity",

a statement "which alludes to the unitary origin of the physical universe, and (reading both subsequent statements together) the emergence of life from and within an equally unitary element points to the existence of a unitary plan underlying all creation, and hence to the existence and oneness of the Creator." [note number 39 on the verse 21:30]. We may understand the verse 11:7, which states that God created the earth and the heavens, in the general sense, in six aeons or immeasurably long periods of time "*and His throne has been upon the water*" in this light; this is a statement that may indicate God's will to create life by creating its essential. This is directly followed by a reference to the creation of the human being and its purpose: "*in order to test you who will act more righteously*" [11:7].

Most of the living tissue of the human being is made of water; water constitutes about 92% of blood plasms, about 80% of muscle tissue, about 60% of red blood cells and over half of most other tissues. It is also an important component of the tissues of most other living things. Furthermore, water covers about 70% of the earth's surface either in its liquid form or in its solid form as ice *[The New Columbia Encyclopedia,* p. 2937]. Thus it represents the most familiar and abundant liquid on earth, and it is also present in varying amounts in the atmosphere. In general, one can see that water is the essential requirement for life for all living creatures on this planet.

The verses refer to living creatures that have life and can move spontaneously (the Arabic word "dabbah"), and these may include the whole animal world in its wider sense, including the human being. The verse points out certain kinds of living creatures, starting with those that crawl on their bellies, which may include worms and low forms of animal life as well as reptiles such as snakes. Fish and water animals may also be considered as crawling creatures. Birds and human beings are among those animals that walk on two legs, while most mammals walk on four and insects may fly, or walk on several legs. Since "God creates what He wills", even living creatures that can move by other means (e.g. one celled organisms, micro-organisms...) may be comprised in this Quranic reference. The verse explicitly mentions entities that could be perceived by human beings before or since the time of revelation, while at the same time it refers in some way to living entities that would only be known after progress in science and technology.

Have you not seen that God sends down water from the sky, and therewith We bring forth plant produce of diverse hues, and in the mountains there are streaks of white and red of various shades, as well as [others] raven black. And so human beings and beasts and cattle, diverse are their hues. Of all His servants, those who feel truly in awe of God are those who have knowledge; surely, God is All-mighty, All-forgiving. [35:27-28]

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ
أَنزَلَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِۦ
ثَمَرَٰتٍ مُّخْتَلِفًا أَلْوَٰنُهَا ۚ وَمِنَ ٱلْجِبَالِ
جُدَدٌۢ بِيضٌ وَحُمْرٌ مُّخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَٰنُهَا
وَغَرَابِيبُ سُودٌ ﴿٢٧﴾ وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ
وَٱلدَّوَآبِّ وَٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَٰنُهُۥ
كَذَٰلِكَ ۗ إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى ٱللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ
ٱلْعُلَمَٰٓؤُا۟ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ غَفُورٌ ﴿٢٨﴾

Within plants, flowers, fruits, animals and human beings there is enormous diversity in color and characteristics, even within a certain species. Just as human beings are divided into races and ethnicities with different skin colors and physical and cultural features, animals and plants are also divided into species and families, of which each comprises vast diversity in hues and properties. How are diversity and unity interwoven in this universe? Those who notice and think can go beyond the apparent features to the natural laws and universal order behind them. Such deep knowledge would lead the mind from the creation to the Creator who is All-mighty, yet All- forgiving. A genuine knowledge is the way to a genuine and strong faith, and the human physical, psychological, intellectual and spiritual powers are correlated and always interacting.

And among His signs is the [very] creation of the heavens and the earth, and of all the living creatures which He has spread throughout them, and He is able to make them meet together whenever He wills. [42:29]

وَمِنْ ءَايَـٰتِهِۦ خَلْقُ
ٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَثَّ فِيهِمَا
مِن دَآبَّةٍ ۚ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ جَمْعِهِمْ إِذَا يَشَآءُ
قَدِيرٌ ﴿٢٩﴾

This is a significantly eye opening verse that indicates explicitly that life is not confined to earth. The heavens in their wider sense have their living spiritual inhabitants, and other planets and galaxies may have any kind of life and living creatures. God has the power to let the living creatures spread in the huge cosmos meet together, as He has, in the first place, the power to create physical creatures in this universe, and most importantly the human beings, and to let them all -together with the spiritual beings - meet in the life to come in the heavens *"On the day when the earth shall be changed to other than the earth, as shall be the heavens; and they [all] sally forth unto God, the One, the Omnipotent"* [14:48]. The human being has recently been trying to find out about other planets and potential forms of life on them through the technology of satellites and space shuttles, fourteen centuries after the revelation of the Quran. However, the strength of the verse is that it is worded in a way that can have various interpretations and impressively address different minds through extensive centuries.

PLANTS AND ANIMALS

It is God who splits the seeds and the date stones, brings forth the living from the dead; and He brings forth the dead too from the living. This, then, is God; so, how are you perverted. [6:95]

إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ فَالِقُ ٱلْحَبِّ وَٱلنَّوَىٰ ۖ يُخْرِجُ
ٱلْحَىَّ مِنَ ٱلْمَيِّتِ وَمُخْرِجُ ٱلْمَيِّتِ مِنَ
ٱلْحَىِّ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمُ ٱللَّهُ ۖ فَأَنَّىٰ تُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٩٥﴾

And it is He who has sent down water from the sky, and thereby We have brought forth the shoot of every

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنزَلَ مِنَ

plant, and thus the green in it [appears]. Out of this We have brought forth close-compounded grain, and out of the date-palm trees, from their spathes, dates thickly clustered, ready to the hand, and gardens of grapes, and olive trees and pomegranates, each seems like to each yet each is really different [in itself from the other]. Look upon their fruits when they fructify and ripen. Surely, in all this are signs for people who [contemplate and thus] reach faith. [6:99]

ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَأَخۡرَجۡنَا بِهِۦ نَبَاتَ كُلِّ
شَيۡءٖ فَأَخۡرَجۡنَا مِنۡهُ خَضِرٗا نُّخۡرِجُ مِنۡهُ
حَبّٗا مُّتَرَاكِبٗا وَمِنَ ٱلنَّخۡلِ مِن طَلۡعِهَا
قِنۡوَانٞ دَانِيَةٞ وَجَنَّٰتٖ مِّنۡ أَعۡنَابٖ
وَٱلزَّيۡتُونَ وَٱلرُّمَّانَ مُشۡتَبِهٗا وَغَيۡرَ
مُتَشَٰبِهٍۗ ٱنظُرُوٓاْ إِلَىٰ ثَمَرِهِۦٓ إِذَآ أَثۡمَرَ
وَيَنۡعِهِۦٓۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكُمۡ لَأٓيَٰتٖ لِّقَوۡمٖ
يُؤۡمِنُونَ ٩٩

Life is a fascinating manifestation of God's power: its force generates the splitting force in all seeds including date-stones as well as the stones of other fruits, and thus a plant grown from inside any of these seeds may bring forth food for human beings or other living creatures. In a seed such as the stone of an apricot, a peach, a plum, a date etc. life is embodied in the embryo surrounded by various stored varying food materials (endosperm) and a protective outer coat. Seeds and the plants which grow out of them, are nourished with the components of the soil in which they grow and they receive their needed water from rain, irrigation or ground water; thus one can see that life emerges via non-living material also. It comes to an end after a certain time whose average differs from one living creature to another.

Life is a continuous manifestation of creation that points to the One All-mighty and All-wise Creator. However, there are always those who are warped from appreciating God's signs in His creation, in spite of what they see in the growth of the various kinds of plants and their fascinating appearance, development, form and benefits. The above verse mentions plants such as cereals, grapes, pomegranates, dates, and olives which were known to the Arabs of the time and on which they used to live. One can notice a similarity among all plants in their growth processes and their main organs and activities, as well as a further similarity among all fruits of one kind in their appearances. However, every single fruit has its distinctiveness in size, color and other proportions. The verse underlines the common feature of "green" in nearly all plants; this usually is essential in securing the plant's life through the process of photosynthesis in which the chlorophyll that gives the plant its green color enables it to utilize the energy of sunlight to provide carbohydrates from carbon dioxide and water [see also the verse 36:80]. However, despite their similarities, these plants, and fruits. have different characteristics in size, color and other properties even within one kind of them. This emphasis of "diversity within unity" among living creatures is a significant Quranic eye opener.

And it is He who has brought into being gardens, trellised and untrellised, and palm trees, and plantation with

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِيٓ أَنشَأَ جَنَّٰتٖ مَّعۡرُوشَٰتٖ وَغَيۡرَ
مَعۡرُوشَٰتٖ وَٱلنَّخۡلَ وَٱلزَّرۡعَ مُخۡتَلِفًا

produce of all kinds, and olives and pomegranates, each seems like each, yet each is different [in itself from the other]; eat of their fruits when they fructify and render the due thereof [unto the poor] on the day of its harvest. But do not waste [God's bounties]; surely, He loves not the wasteful.

أُكُلُهُۥ وَٱلزَّيْتُونَ وَٱلرُّمَّانَ مُتَشَٰبِهًا
وَغَيْرَ مُتَشَٰبِهٍ ۚ كُلُوا۟ مِن ثَمَرِهِۦٓ إِذَآ أَثْمَرَ
وَءَاتُوا۟ حَقَّهُۥ يَوْمَ حَصَادِهِۦ ۖ وَلَا
تُسْرِفُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُسْرِفِينَ
﴿١٤١﴾ وَمِنَ ٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ حَمُولَةً وَفَرْشًا ۖ
كُلُوا۟ مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا۟
خُطُوَٰتِ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ
﴿١٤٢﴾

And of the livestock [you get benefits as they] carry [your] load and provide [your] clothing and furnishing. Eat of what God has provided for you as sustenance, and follow not the footsteps of Satan, since he is your distinct foe. [6:141-142]

This is another Quranic reference to orchards of various fruits and farms that grow different plants, each seems alike to the other in botanic features, while the difference is clear from one kind to another, and within the one kind and even through the produce of a particular tree. In addition, the first of the above verses commands that a due share of the produce has to be given to the poor, as soon as it is harvested. The Quranic verse significantly describes the poor's share as a "right" in the farmer's yield or a "due" on it. One should avoid wastefulness in all the process of agricultural production, harvesting, transportation, storage and consumption. Islam stresses repeatedly the conservation of natural resources.

The second of the above verses refers to another kind of living creatures and points out its benefits to human beings in providing: transportation on one hand as well as clothing and furnishing from the animal's wool and skin on the other [see also 16:80]. They can also eat the meat of some animals, in addition to drinking their milk and using it in making dairy products [see the verse 16:66].

And it is He who sends the winds bearing good tidings of His coming grace,and when they are charged with heavy clouds, We drive them to a dead land, and therewith send down water and bring forth therewith all [kinds of] plant produce. In a similar way, We shall bring forth the dead, and haply you may be mindful. And, verily, the good land - its vegetation comes forth [in abundance] by the leave of its Lord, whereas from the bad it comes forth but distressing. Thus do We lay out the signs and messages in various ways to people who are grateful. [7:57-58]

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى يُرْسِلُ
ٱلرِّيَٰحَ بُشْرًۢا بَيْنَ يَدَىْ رَحْمَتِهِۦ ۖ
حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَآ أَقَلَّتْ سَحَابًا ثِقَالًا سُقْنَٰهُ
لِبَلَدٍ مَّيِّتٍ فَأَنزَلْنَا بِهِ ٱلْمَآءَ فَأَخْرَجْنَا
بِهِۦ مِن كُلِّ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ نُخْرِجُ
ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾ وَٱلْبَلَدُ
ٱلطَّيِّبُ يَخْرُجُ نَبَاتُهُۥ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِۦ ۖ
وَٱلَّذِى خَبُثَ لَا يَخْرُجُ إِلَّا نَكِدًا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ
نُصَرِّفُ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾

Have they not seen how we do drive the water to the dry land devoid of herbage and bring forth therewith plants of which their livestock and they themselves do eat? Can they not then see [God's creation and grace]? [32:27]

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا نَسُوقُ الْمَاءَ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ الْجُرُزِ فَنُخْرِجُ بِهِ زَرْعًا تَأْكُلُ مِنْهُ أَنْعَامُهُمْ وَأَنْفُسُهُمْ ۖ أَفَلَا يُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

The signs of God's creation in the universe are not merely presented in the Quran as scientific facts, but are mentioned to invite contemplation about the Creator of this huge cosmos with its magnificent and intact order, and about the end of this life and the coming of another, eternal life. The first of the above verses mentions again the possibility of the revival of dry land and the growth of edible plants or plant produce on it when such land receives water, and the verse uses this fact to support the belief in the life to come after death where the dead will also be brought back to some kind of life. The next verse calls the attention to the fact that one cannot expect growth in an area simply because water is coming to the soil where seeds have been sown; growth requires a favorable environment: composed of mainly a fertile soil, suitable weather, and in many cases human care. Just as a plant's growth requires a favorable environment so that the meeting of seeds and water can bring forth a flourishing plant, the spiritual and moral guidance of God requires a favorable psychological, intellectual and social environment that secures receptiveness and positive interaction. It is the hearts and minds of the people in a given time and place that can cause a message to develop and grow, or to be missed and die.

And on earth are tracts of land close to one another [yet different from one another], and [there are] gardens of grapes and fields of grain, and date-palm trees, growing out of single roots in pairs or otherwise, watered with the same water, yet some produce of them have We made better than others [in taste and other qualities]. Surely, in that are signs and measures for people who use their minds. [13:4]

وَفِي الْأَرْضِ قِطَعٌ مُتَجَاوِرَاتٌ وَجَنَّاتٌ مِنْ أَعْنَابٍ وَزَرْعٌ وَنَخِيلٌ صِنْوَانٌ وَغَيْرُ صِنْوَانٍ يُسْقَىٰ بِمَاءٍ وَاحِدٍ وَنُفَضِّلُ بَعْضَهَا عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ فِي الْأُكُلِ ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٤﴾

The previously mentioned verses 6:99, 141 point out the diversity in the plant kingdom in spite of their unity in the basic vegetative characteristics, and the diversity of different kinds of produce and even in each single plant or fruit of a certain kind. Here the Quran refers to the diversity of soil in the neighboring tracts of land, and how their difference would affect the taste of the fruit produced on each of them, even if the plant and the water are the same for the same kind of plant grown in these neighboring tracts. Diversity in the seeds, the soil, the weather and the whole environment brings forth diverse fruits. Diversity and particularity within unity and generality represent a natural law of life and living creatures, especially in the higher levels.

And livestock has He created for you, from them you derive warmth, and other various benefits, and from them you get food. And you find beauty in them as you drive them home in the evening, and as you lead them forth to pasture [or work] in the morning. And they carry your loads to a place that you would be unable [otherwise] to reach except with extremely tiring effort; for your Lord is indeed the Most Kind, the Most Gracious. And [it is He who has created] horses, mules and asses for you to ride, as well as for [their] beauty; and He has created [other] things of which you have no knowledge. And with God alone rests the guidance for the right way, and yet there are those who do swerve from it; had God so willed, He would have guided you aright all together. It is He who sends down water from the sky, from it you drink, and out of it [grows] the plants on which you pasture your herds. And thereby He brings forth for you crops and olives, and date-palm trees and grapes and all other kinds of plant produce. Surely, in that is a sign for people who reflect. [16:5-11]

وَٱلْأَنْعَٰمَ خَلَقَهَا ۖ لَكُمْ فِيهَا دِفْءٌ وَمَنَٰفِعُ
وَمِنْهَا تَأْكُلُونَ ﴿٥﴾ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا جَمَالٌ
حِينَ تُرِيحُونَ وَحِينَ تَسْرَحُونَ ﴿٦﴾
وَتَحْمِلُ أَثْقَالَكُمْ إِلَىٰ بَلَدٍ لَّمْ تَكُونُوا۟
بَٰلِغِيهِ إِلَّا بِشِقِّ ٱلْأَنفُسِ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ
لَرَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٧﴾ وَٱلْخَيْلَ وَٱلْبِغَالَ
وَٱلْحَمِيرَ لِتَرْكَبُوهَا وَزِينَةً ۚ وَيَخْلُقُ
مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨﴾ وَعَلَى ٱللَّهِ قَصْدُ
ٱلسَّبِيلِ وَمِنْهَا جَآئِرٌ ۚ وَلَوْ شَآءَ
لَهَدَىٰكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٩﴾ هُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنزَلَ مِنَ
ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً ۖ لَّكُم مِّنْهُ شَرَابٌ وَمِنْهُ
شَجَرٌ فِيهِ تُسِيمُونَ ﴿١٠﴾ يُنۢبِتُ لَكُم بِهِ
ٱلزَّرْعَ وَٱلزَّيْتُونَ وَٱلنَّخِيلَ وَٱلْأَعْنَٰبَ
وَمِن كُلِّ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ ۗ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً
لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿١١﴾

Have they not seen that we have created for them - among all things which Our hands have wrought - livestock that they own? And that We have subjected these [animals] to them and so some of them they may ride and some they may eat. And in them they may have [other] benefits, and they get [milk] that they drink. Will they not then be grateful? [36:71-73]

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ أَنَّا خَلَقْنَا لَهُم مِّمَّا
عَمِلَتْ أَيْدِينَآ أَنْعَٰمًا فَهُمْ لَهَا مَٰلِكُونَ
﴿٧١﴾ وَذَلَّلْنَٰهَا لَهُمْ فَمِنْهَا رَكُوبُهُمْ
وَمِنْهَا يَأْكُلُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾ وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا مَنَٰفِعُ
وَمَشَارِبُ ۖ أَفَلَا يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٧٣﴾

It is God who provides for you livestock, so that on some of them you may ride, and from some you may get what you eat; and in them you may find [other] benefits, and on them you may attain a need you feel in your hearts. It is upon them, as on ships, you are carried. And He shows you [always] His signs and wonders; then

ٱللَّهُ
ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلْأَنْعَٰمَ لِتَرْكَبُوا۟ مِنْهَا
وَمِنْهَا تَأْكُلُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَنَٰفِعُ
وَلِتَبْلُغُوا۟ عَلَيْهَا حَاجَةً فِى صُدُورِكُمْ
وَعَلَيْهَا وَعَلَى ٱلْفُلْكِ تُحْمَلُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾

which of God's signs and wonders do you [stubbornly] deny? [40:79-81]

وَيُرِيكُمْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ فَأَىَّ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ تُنكِرُونَ ﴿٨١﴾

The above verses emphasize again the benefits of livestock for human beings. They provide a primary means of transportation and load carrying that has been used since early times and which has helped the human being to fulfill one of his/her potential characteristics: movement from place to place; *"and We have borne them over land and sea"* [17:70]. Also, from these animals' wool, hair or skins, the human being can get warmth for his/her body and home. Furthermore, the milk of these animals may be a delicious and nutritive drink, which can be used to produce cheese, cream and butter which have their importance in human nutrition. Beside this utilitarian look at the livestock, the Quran underscores the esthetic side and elevates the believer's conception and taste so that one may go beyond the material benefits and feel the impressive "beauty" of livestock in general and of "riding" the animals that can be ridden in particular. Moreover, the extent and functioning of God's creation can always be beyond human knowledge at any given time, but the human senses and mind may gradually discover some information about nature and its forces and laws that was previously unknown to them, and the development of transportation especially in modern times about which the human being knew very little before is an example of this discovery as well as a catalyst for the future ones.

The moral dimension has to be clear to any owner or user of God's bounty such as the rider of an animal. One has to use God's bounty according to His guidance of justice and grace, and not merely to follow individual selfishness and shortsightedness; *"And with God alone rests the guidance for the way"* [see also the verses 91:7-10, 92:5-13]. It is the human responsibility to make all possible efforts in defining one's direction and purpose, and benefitting from God's guidance, since His will is to leave everyone to his/her own free choice for which he/she is accountable justly; *"Had God so willed, He would have guided you all together."*

The last two verses above refer to water on which all living creatures live. This water is provided by God for His whole creation, and it enables plants to grow naturally or to be cultivated by human effort for animal or human nutrition.

And God sends down water from the sky, and gives therewith life to the earth after it had been lifeless; surely in that is a sign and message for people who listen. And surely in the livestock [too] you find an instructive sign; We give you to drink of what is within their bellies between filth and blood, pure milk, pleasant to those who drink it. And from the fruit of the date-palm and the grape vine, you get out intoxicants, as well as

وَٱللَّهُ أَنزَلَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَأَحْيَا بِهِ ٱلْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَآ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَسْمَعُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾ وَإِنَّ لَكُمْ فِى ٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ لَعِبْرَةً ۖ نُّسْقِيكُم مِّمَّا فِى بُطُونِهِۦ مِنۢ بَيْنِ فَرْثٍ وَدَمٍ لَّبَنًا خَالِصًا سَآئِغًا لِّلشَّٰرِبِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾ وَمِن ثَمَرَٰتِ ٱلنَّخِيلِ وَٱلْأَعْنَٰبِ تَتَّخِذُونَ مِنْهُ سَكَرًا

wholesome sustenance; surely, in that [also] is a sign and message for people who use their minds. [16:65-67]

وَ رِزْقًا حَسَنًا ۗ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً لِّقَوْمٍ
يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾

The Quran repeatedly reminds human beings how God sends down water to secure the essence of life on earth and its living creatures, and thus they can visualize how God's messages secure their spiritual and moral life. The above verse refers specifically to the milk provided by the livestock out of their bodies from between their intestines and blood vessels, pure and delicious. It is produced in a quantity that exceeds the animal's need in nursing its babies, and thus people are given a chance to benefit from this nutritive fluid and all the products that can be made from it. Fruits also, especially dates and grapes, can be used in producing both intoxicants and wholesome products, and the Quran emphasizes here the contrast between the intoxicant and the wholesome, preparing the minds for a subsequent legal prohibition of intoxicants.

Have you not seen that God sends down rain from the sky, and causes it to be channeled through the earth [to come up] as springs? Then He brings forth therewith, plants of various hues; and then they wither and you see them turning yellow; and in the end He makes them crumble away? Surely, in that is a reminder for human beings who have minds. [39:21]

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ
ٱللَّهَ أَنزَلَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَسَلَكَهُۥ
يَنَٰبِيعَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ثُمَّ يُخْرِجُ بِهِۦ زَرْعًا
مُّخْتَلِفًا أَلْوَٰنُهُۥ ثُمَّ يَهِيجُ فَتَرَىٰهُ مُصْفَرًّا
ثُمَّ يَجْعَلُهُۥ حُطَٰمًا ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَذِكْرَىٰ
لِأُو۟لِى ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ﴿٢١﴾

The verse points out how falling rain may form underground water, and then refers to the life cycle of a plant: the process of growth and blossoming followed by that of withering and yellowing, then crumbling away in the end. While human beings benefit from the ripe cereals, fruits and other yield that they cultivate, animals may eat the green and dry plants as well.

In addition to the repeated but beautifully varied and rich references to life, the Quran calls the human attention to death that ends life in this world, in order to remove self-deception about an eternal existence on this earth. It also calls the human attention to the fact that a state of lifelessness can be followed by a return to life, in order to remove any doubt or denial about the resurrection and the life to come. The correlation and contradiction of life and death enlighten the human mind and give him/her a wide and profound perception of physical and intellectual dynamism and change.

And among His signs is that you see the earth terribly destitute; then when We send down water to it, it stirs and swells [with life]. Surely, He who brings it to life can give life to the [human] dead. He has

وَ مِنْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦٓ
أَنَّكَ تَرَى ٱلْأَرْضَ خَٰشِعَةً فَإِذَآ أَنزَلْنَا
عَلَيْهَا ٱلْمَآءَ ٱهْتَزَّتْ وَ رَبَتْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِىٓ
أَحْيَاهَا لَمُحْىِ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰٓ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ عَلَىٰ

power over everything. [41:39]

كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٣٩﴾

As the successive stages and signs of a dying plant are impressively portrayed in the previously mentioned verse [39:21], the above verse does the same for the revival of the lifeless land. It seems desolate and depressed when dry, but it is stirred up and swollen with life as soon as God sends down water to it. Such a revival happens to the human being spiritually when God's message reaches him/her, and it happens to the human being physically when the resurrection takes place and the eternal second life starts.

And it is He who sends down again and again water from the sky in due measure; and We raise dead land to life therewith; even so you shall be brought forth [from the dead]. And it is He who has created all parallels [complementary though maybe opposite], and has provided for you ships and animals on which you ride, so that you may well settle yourselves on their backs, and when you are well-settled over them you might remember your Lord's blessings and say, "Limitless in His glory is He who has subjected these to our use; we would not have been able to achieve this [on our own]. Surely unto our Lord we shall all be returning.[43:11-14]

وَ ٱلَّذِى نَزَّلَ مِنَ
ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءًۢ بِقَدَرٍ فَأَنشَرْنَا بِهِۦ بَلْدَةً
مَّيْتًا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ تُخْرَجُونَ ﴿١١﴾ وَ ٱلَّذِى
خَلَقَ ٱلْأَزْوَٰجَ كُلَّهَا وَ جَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنَ
ٱلْفُلْكِ وَ ٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ مَا تَرْكَبُونَ ﴿١٢﴾
لِتَسْتَوُۥا۟ عَلَىٰ ظُهُورِهِۦ ثُمَّ تَذْكُرُوا۟ نِعْمَةَ
رَبِّكُمْ إِذَا ٱسْتَوَيْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ وَ تَقُولُوا۟
سُبْحَٰنَ ٱلَّذِى سَخَّرَ لَنَا هَٰذَا وَ مَا كُنَّا لَهُۥ
مُقْرِنِينَ ﴿١٣﴾ وَ إِنَّآ إِلَىٰ رَبِّنَا لَمُنقَلِبُونَ
﴿١٤﴾

The first of the above verses refers to the revival of the dead land by the water coming down from the sky. The significant statement here is that falling rain or snow occurs in certain measure according to intact laws of nature and to a universal order. The eternal life to come is also planned thoroughly by God according to His knowledge, wisdom and justice. The next verse makes another significant reference to the creation of parallel "pairs" which complement one another even if they may be opposites, as is seen not only in the male and female of plants and animals, including human beings, but also in the negative and positive charges of magnetism and electricity, and in the high and low of air and water pressures which result in the blowing of wind and the moving of water currents. Even in the structure of the atom, we find the positive and negative charges of the protons and the electrons [see also the previously mentioned verse 36:36, and also the commentary on the verse 27:88].

The last two of the above verses emphasize the sound interaction and balance of material and spiritual which the human being has to observe in this life. One can try to obtain the available material benefits of this universe, but he/she should not overlook or disregard the true provider who is the Creator of the whole creation and who enables the human being to make use of His creation through the mind with which He has privileged

him/her. It is this equilibrium between the material and the spiritual that secures a balanced and thus vigorous development of the whole human being as well as of the resources of the universe. Success and failure should not interrupt the continuous hard work of a believer in developing the human self and the world, since he/she believes that all comes from God to test him/her, and any point in the long line of the individual's life is not the end, but just a point on a long curve with many ups and downs. The journey's end is only with God, and what really counts is one's destiny in the eternal life to come.

Then let the human being consider his [/her] own food: [how] We cause water to pour down in abundance, then We [thus] cause the earth to split [with new growth] in fissures, and therein We cause grain to sprout out of it as well as grapes and tender vegetation and olives and date-palms and dense- treed gardens, and fruits and pastures, [all provided] for you and your livestock to enjoy. [80:24-32]

فَلْيَنظُرِ
ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ إِلَىٰ طَعَامِهِۦٓ ﴿٢٤﴾ أَنَّا صَبَبْنَا
ٱلْمَآءَ صَبًّا ﴿٢٥﴾ ثُمَّ شَقَقْنَا ٱلْأَرْضَ شَقًّا
﴿٢٦﴾ فَأَنۢبَتْنَا فِيهَا حَبًّا ﴿٢٧﴾ وَعِنَبًا
وَقَضْبًا ﴿٢٨﴾ وَزَيْتُونًا وَنَخْلًا ﴿٢٩﴾
وَحَدَآئِقَ غُلْبًا ﴿٣٠﴾ وَفَٰكِهَةً وَأَبًّا ﴿٣١﴾
مَّتَٰعًا لَّكُمْ وَلِأَنْعَٰمِكُمْ ﴿٣٢﴾

The above verses trace the production of food, and how the successive steps in the process come one after the other in nature, well organized and correlated by the divine grace, to secure the life of the human beings and their livestock of which they benefit in transportation and nourishment. The verses point out how water is poured down from the atmosphere to meet the earth, and through the interaction of water, soil, seeds or other sources of plants and sometimes also through human effort, various plants grow. As the earth receives water and this water reaches the seeds, or other sources of plants through the soil, the growth process starts, and the growing plant cleaves the earth to sprout from the seed bed upwards. The human being, guided by the greatest divine gift to him/her: the human mind, may help the soil to cleave by ploughing it, an operation which began in a primitive way then was carried out through the use of a plough which used to be driven and in some places still is, by animals, and that has now been developed to be mechanical.

The Quranic verses mention various kinds of plants, especially those which were already known at the time of the revelation in many areas through the world. These vary from cereals which may grow in a relatively short time and with limited effort, to grapes which used to need a construction of trellis for growth, and to olive and date palm trees - all of which require a long time and continuous hard work to produce their fruits. Other kinds of plants may come under the categories of "dense treed gardens, and fruits" and "tender vegetation". God's omnipotence, care and grace secure the food of human beings, and the livestock dependent on them, in addition to that of all animals and birds, through the natural resources and the human physical and intellectual efforts "... *and He blessed it [the earth], and apportioned in four [four immeasurably long] periods of time its diverse means of sustenance, equally within reach of all who seek it*". [41:10]

And it is God who has secured for you rest and tranquility in your homes, and has provided for you, out of the skins of livestock, dwellings, easy for you to handle when you travel and when you stay and camp; and out of their wool, and their different kinds of hair, He has provided for you [what you use for] furnishings and commodities [that serve you] for sometime. [16:80]

وَٱللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنۢ
بُيُوتِكُمْ سَكَنًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُم مِّن جُلُودِ
ٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ بُيُوتًا تَسْتَخِفُّونَهَا يَوْمَ ظَعْنِكُمْ
وَيَوْمَ إِقَامَتِكُمْ ۙ وَمِنْ أَصْوَافِهَا
وَأَوْبَارِهَا وَأَشْعَارِهَآ أَثَٰثًا وَمَتَٰعًا إِلَىٰ
حِينٍ ﴿٨٠﴾

God provides human beings on earth with homes which are significantly characterized in the above verse as securing rest and tranquility for the residents, an essential requirement which has to be fulfilled in a human home. This implies all material and psychological needs, including necessary utilities, furniture, comforts, security and privacy. However, wandering people can have "portable" homes which are easily set up or dismantled and folded, and they can use animal skin, wool or hair in making and furnishing them, in a different way from the materials that settled people use in the homes they build. It is noticeable and meaningful that the verse preceding the above one, 16:79, refers to "flying" birds, while the next one, 16:80, talks about "wandering" human beings, underlining the characteristic movement in both cases.

BIRDS

Have they not regarded the birds, held poised in the midst of the air in the sky? None holds them up but [the power of] God. Surely, in that are signs and messages for people who [contemplate and thus] reach faith. [16:79]

أَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ إِلَى
ٱلطَّيْرِ مُسَخَّرَٰتٍ فِى جَوِّ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَا
يُمْسِكُهُنَّ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ
لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾

The above verse refers to the birds and how they are held balanced in the midst of the air, according to God's laws of nature, and by the merits that He created in their body structure, feathers and wings, which help them to counter the earth's gravity. According to *The New Columbia Encyclopedia,* "Birds have a relatively large brain, keen sight and acute hearing but little sense of smell... Birds are highly adapted for flight. Their structure combines lightness and strength. Body weight is reduced by the presence of a horny bill instead of heavy jaws and teeth and by the air sacs in the hollow bones as well as in other parts of the body. Compactness and firmness are achieved by the fusion of bones in the pelvic region and in other parts of the skeleton. The heavier parts of the body - the gizzard, intestines, flight muscles and thigh muscles - are all strategically located for maintaining balance in the flight. Feathers, despite their lightness, are highly protective against cold and

wet. The flight feathers, especially, have great strength." In such an amazing creation and function-design, birds are *"held poised in the middle of the air in the sky"* [16:79], spreading their wings and manifesting the wonders of the All-mighty All-wise Creator in their own way, each knows how *"to glorify Him"* [24:41]. Human beings obtain food from domestic birds, and from edible birds that they may hunt; "*and as for those hunting animals which you train with something that God has imparted to you, eat of what they seize for you, and mention God's name over it, and remain conscious of God; surely God is swift in reckoning*" [5:4].

AQUATIC CREATURES

And that which He has spread for you on earth of diverse hues [and qualities]; surely, in that is a sign for human beings who are mindful. And it is He who has subjected to you the sea, so that you might eat of its meat that which is fresh and tender, and that you might bring forth out of it ornaments that you wear. And you see the ships therein ploughing through the waves, so that you might seek His bounty and so haply you will be grateful [to Him]. [16:13-14]

وَمَا ذَرَأَ لَكُمْ فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ مُخْتَلِفًا أَلْوَٰنُهُۥٓ ۗ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ
لَءَايَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَذَّكَّرُونَ ﴿١٣﴾ وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى
سَخَّرَ ٱلْبَحْرَ لِتَأْكُلُوا۟ مِنْهُ لَحْمًا طَرِيًّا
وَتَسْتَخْرِجُوا۟ مِنْهُ حِلْيَةً تَلْبَسُونَهَا
وَتَرَى ٱلْفُلْكَ مَوَاخِرَ فِيهِ وَلِتَبْتَغُوا۟ مِن
فَضْلِهِۦ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

This is another reference to God's creations on earth with their various hues and qualities, be they living or non-living, gaseous or liquid or solid, insects or birds or land or water animals or other living creatures, small or large. Here also, the Quran combines the material benefits with the esthetic pleasure to let the believer feel always the beauty in God's creation, and maintain and develop beauty in the human life. From the sea the human being can obtain both food and ornament to meet his/her biological and psychological-intellectual needs. Besides this, there is another reference to ships: the means of transportation that God provides across water areas throughout the world and that enables the human being to fulfill his/her universality: "*and We have borne them over land and sea*" [17:70].

INSECTS

God disdains not to propound a parable, even of a gnat or of anything that is more [or less] than that. As for those who have attained to faith, they know it is the truth from their Lord; but as for those who are bent on denying stubbornly the

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَسْتَحْىِۦٓ
أَن يَضْرِبَ مَثَلًا مَّا بَعُوضَةً فَمَا فَوْقَهَا ۚ
فَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ فَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ ٱلْحَقُّ
مِن رَّبِّهِمْ ۖ وَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ فَيَقُولُونَ

truth, they say, 'What does God mean by this parable?' Thereby does He cause many to go astray, just as He thereby guides many to what is right; but none does He cause thereby to go astray, except the iniquitous. [2:26]

مَاذَآ أَرَادَ ٱللَّهُ بِهَٰذَا مَثَلًا ۚ يُضِلُّ بِهِۦ
كَثِيرًا وَيَهْدِى بِهِۦ كَثِيرًا ۚ وَمَا يُضِلُّ
بِهِۦٓ إِلَّا ٱلْفَٰسِقِينَ ﴿٢٦﴾

A "gnat" may seem at a quick look to be a small and very weak creature, but it has "life" with its various angles of power. Within its small body, it has the necessary systems for maintaining life and reproducing and it can hurt a human being with all his/her power and intelligence. God can refer to a gnat, a fly, an ant or a spider [i.e. 22:73, 27:18, 29:41], as all are His creation, and any may have a physical or moral significance in presenting His guidance. Some may not understand the scientific, aesthetic and moral significance, but the believer looks to God's creation in all its spectrum as the manifestation of a miraculous power and mind, and to God's message as a presentation of the infinite divine wisdom in finite words. Such parables about God's creation may cause those who dismiss righteousness and act unrighteously to mock and criticize God's message, but such people have already closed their senses and sensibility, and have deliberately chosen to reject the truth whatever its signs and representations may be.

And your Lord has inspired the bee to build dwellings [hives] in mountains, and through trees, and in what [people] may build; then to eat of all plant produce, and go easily through the paths ordained by your Lord. Then comes thereforth out of their bellies a [sweet] fluid drink of varying hues, wherein there is healthiness and healingness for people. Surely, in that is a sign and message for those who reflect. [16:68-69]

وَأَوْحَىٰ رَبُّكَ إِلَى
ٱلنَّحْلِ أَنِ ٱتَّخِذِى مِنَ ٱلْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا
وَمِنَ ٱلشَّجَرِ وَمِمَّا يَعْرِشُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾ ثُمَّ كُلِى
مِن كُلِّ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ فَٱسْلُكِى سُبُلَ رَبِّكِ
ذُلُلًا ۚ يَخْرُجُ مِنۢ بُطُونِهَا شَرَابٌ مُّخْتَلِفٌ
أَلْوَٰنُهُۥ فِيهِ شِفَآءٌ لِّلنَّاسِ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ
لَءَايَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

Among God's fascinating wonders in His creation, from which the human being gets a great benefit, is the production of honey by the bees. These bees are instructed by God to instinctively construct amazing honeycombs in the hills and trees or in what people may build for the bees as hives, and to follow such a fascinating organization of their collective life. Then they are directed to suck the nutrition out of different plants, and thus they provide honey of various hues and flavors, according to what they have been fed. The nutritive and healing merits of honey have been known for centuries, and are emphasized and augmented by modern scholars.

O human beings! A parable is set forth [herewith]; give your ear to it. Surely, those on whom you call apart from God, shall never create [so much as]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ ضُرِبَ مَثَلٌ
فَٱسْتَمِعُوا۟ لَهُۥٓ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِن
دُونِ ٱللَّهِ لَن يَخْلُقُوا۟ ذُبَابًا وَلَوِ

flies, even if they join all their efforts together for that end. And if flies should grab anything of theirs they cannot [even] rescue it from them. Feeble indeed alike are the seeker and the sought. They do not conceive God as He ought to be conceived; for God is Most Powerful, All-mighty. [22:73-74]

اجْتَمَعُوا لَهُ ۖ وَإِن يَسْلُبْهُمُ الذُّبَابُ
شَيْئًا لَّا يَسْتَنقِذُوهُ مِنْهُ ۚ ضَعُفَ الطَّالِبُ
وَالْمَطْلُوبُ ﴿٧٣﴾ مَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ
قَدْرِهِ ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٧٤﴾

God here is creating a parable about such little and weak beings of His creation, "flies," to make a certain fact obvious and evident: "God disdains not to profound a parable of a gnat or anything that is more [or less] than that" [2:26]. The above verses call the attention of those who believe in deities apart from the One God that all that they worship are not "creators", since they cannot create even little and weak flies. Furthermore, these so- called deities cannot keep for themselves anything that flies may take away from them, nor can they get it back, even if they join forces for such a purpose. How weak, then, are these false deities that cannot create or even defend themselves against little insects!

In God's plan, any of His creation has its place and role that can be understood through the totality and complexity of the whole creation. Little insects are a display of God's power just as much as huge animals, as they have, in their tiny bodies, the necessary systems for life and survival. What may seem harmful such as an insect, complements what may appear to be beneficial in order to test the human being and his/her endurance and intelligence in noticing and acquiring what is beneficial, and facing or avoiding what may be harmful. Now, we know a valuable thing that a fly can take from a human being; it can take his/her health through the germs and microbes that it may hold!

The parable of those who take to them supporters other than God is that of the spider that makes for itself a house; and surely the frailest of houses is the house of the spider, did they but realize. Surely, God does know of whatever they call upon other than Him; and He is the All-mighty, the All-Wise. And such parables We propound for people, but none can grasp what they really mean save those who have knowledge. [29:41-43]

مَثَلُ
الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ
كَمَثَلِ الْعَنكَبُوتِ اتَّخَذَتْ بَيْتًا ۖ وَإِنَّ
أَوْهَنَ الْبُيُوتِ لَبَيْتُ الْعَنكَبُوتِ ۖ لَوْ
كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤١﴾ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا
يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِ مِن شَيْءٍ ۚ وَهُوَ
الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٤٢﴾ وَتِلْكَ الْأَمْثَالُ
نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ ۖ وَمَا يَعْقِلُهَا إِلَّا
الْعَالِمُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

A spider exerts persistent efforts and spends a long time making its geometrically shaped house. An orb weaver spider begins its web by spinning a single thread, the bridge line, which is then carried by the wind until it attaches to a twig or other object. The spider then lays down other foundation lines: radial threads are connected between the

foundation lines and an attachment zone near the center of the web. Next, the spider lays down a non-sticky scaffolding spine that holds the radials in place. Finally, the spider spins a spiral of viscid or sticky threads and removes the temporary scaffolding, Several kinds of silk glands and spinnerets produce different kinds of silk; some of those can be used for constructing cocoons or egg sacs, spinning webs and binding prey; other light strands are spun out for ballooning or floating the spiders, especially the young ones, on air currents for long distances *[The New Columbia Encyclopedia,* p. 2595].

The spider's house seems perfect for its functions and purposes, but in comparison to nature as a whole with its strong forces and creatures, the spider's house is the frailest and weakest. However, the spider is wrapped up in its own world and it follows its instinct and cannot change what it has been instinctively constructing for generations. Those who have been following the beliefs of their forefathers in seeking the support of deities other than God, are trapped in the same way. They cannot see anything except through the beliefs of their traditions and what they have been used to generation after generation, although they are human beings who have minds and reason. Thus, they are not better than those little insects which can never initiate new attempts or experiences nor go beyond what their inborn instincts lead them to do. Such enlightening parables are propounded by God who *"disdains not to propound a parable, even of a gnat or of anything more [or less]"* [2:26]. However, it is only those who think and use their minds that can benefit from such parables *"whereas those who are bent on stubbornly denying the truth say, 'What does God mean by this parable?'"* [2:26].

HUMAN BEINGS

CREATION

And when your Lord said to the angels, "I am setting on earth one [of My creation] to whom, successively, I have granted supremacy on it," they said, "Will you set therein such as will do corruption therein and shed blood ? [In any case], we do extol your limitless glory and praise you and hallow your name." He said, "Verily, I know what you know not". And He imparted unto Adam [the ability of making things distinctive through giving them] the names, all of them; then He brought them to the reach of the angels, and said, "Now mention to Me the names of these, if you speak truly." They said, "Glory be to You! No knowledge have we save what You have imparted unto us. Surely, You are the All- knowing, the All-wise".
He said, "O Adam, tell them about the names of these [different] things." And when he had told them their names, God said, "Did I not say unto you that I alone know what is hidden in the heavens and the earth, and I alone know what you reveal and what you conceal?"
And when We said to the angels, "Prostrate yourselves before Adam," and they all prostrated themselves save Iblis [Satan], who refused and showed insolence, and became a stubborn rejector of the truth.
And We said, "O Adam! Dwell you and your wife in the garden, and eat thereof easefully wherever you may desire, both of you; but approach not this one tree, lest you be evil-doers". Then Satan caused them both to slip therefrom, and thus brought them out of that they had been in, and We said, "Get you all down, enemies to one another; and on earth you shall have your dwelling and a livelihood

وَ إِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ
لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ إِنِّى جَاعِلٌ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ
خَلِيفَةً ۖ قَالُوٓاْ أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَن يُفْسِدُ
فِيهَا وَ يَسْفِكُ ٱلدِّمَآءَ وَ نَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ
بِحَمْدِكَ وَ نُقَدِّسُ لَكَ ۖ قَالَ إِنِّىٓ أَعْلَمُ مَا
لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ وَ عَلَّمَ ءَادَمَ ٱلْأَسْمَآءَ
كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ فَقَالَ
أَنۢبِـُٔونِى بِأَسْمَآءِ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ إِن كُنتُمْ
صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٣١﴾ قَالُواْ سُبْحَٰنَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَآ
إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَآ ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْعَلِيمُ
ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٣٢﴾ قَالَ يَٰٓـَٔادَمُ أَنۢبِئْهُم
بِأَسْمَآئِهِمْ ۖ فَلَمَّآ أَنۢبَأَهُم بِأَسْمَآئِهِمْ ۖ
قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُل لَّكُمْ إِنِّىٓ أَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ وَ أَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ
وَ مَا كُنتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَ إِذْ قُلْنَا
لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ ٱسْجُدُواْ لِأَدَمَ فَسَجَدُوٓاْ إِلَّآ
إِبْلِيسَ أَبَىٰ وَ ٱسْتَكْبَرَ وَ كَانَ مِنَ
ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾ وَ قُلْنَا يَٰٓـَٔادَمُ ٱسْكُنْ
أَنتَ وَ زَوْجُكَ ٱلْجَنَّةَ وَ كُلَا مِنْهَا رَغَدًا
حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَ لَا تَقْرَبَا هَٰذِهِ ٱلشَّجَرَةَ
فَتَكُونَا مِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾ فَأَزَلَّهُمَا
ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ عَنْهَا فَأَخْرَجَهُمَا مِمَّا كَانَا
فِيهِ ۖ وَ قُلْنَا ٱهْبِطُواْ بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ
عَدُوٌّ ۖ وَ لَكُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَ مَتَٰعٌ

that you shall enjoy for a while."
Thereupon Adam received from His Lord certain words [of guidance], and He accepted his repentance; He alone is the Acceptor of Repentance, the Most Gracious.
We said, "Get you down out of it, all [three] together; yet there shall come to you guidance from Me, and those who follow My guidance should have no fear, nor shall they grieve. But those who stubbornly reject the truth and denounce as lies Our messages - they shall be inhabitants of the Fire, and therein they shall abide." [2:30-39]

إِلَىٰ حِينٍ ﴿٣٦﴾ فَتَلَقَّىٰٓ ءَادَمُ مِن رَّبِّهِۦ
كَلِمَٰتٍ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلتَّوَّابُ
ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٣٧﴾ قُلْنَا ٱهْبِطُوا۟ مِنْهَا
جَمِيعًا ۖ فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُم مِّنِّى هُدًى فَمَن
تَبِعَ هُدَاىَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ
يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ وَكَذَّبُوا۟
بِـَٔايَٰتِنَآ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ ۖ هُمْ
فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

The story of the creation of Adam and his wife, their dwelling in the garden, and their coming to earth, reflects various important physical, intellectual, and psychological-spiritual-moral phenomena of human nature. The Quran is not merely narrating a story of the past; it is presenting continuous guidance to every human being in all times and places about his/her own self in all of that self's dimensions, and with all its powers and weaknesses. Because this information is essential for the descendants of Adam - "the human species"- in its successive generations, it has been presented in six surahs (chapters of the Quran) [2:30-39, 3:59, 7:11-27, 172-173, 17:61-65, 18:50, 20:115-127]

The creation of Adam pointed out the characteristic human merit: the free will, which works through the use of the human intellect. The latter suggests options in the given circumstances, and the former chooses a certain option to carry out. Accordingly, human behavior is neither only dictated by instinct and biological laws as that of plants and animals, nor by physical laws as that of matter. Moreover, the human being is not like an angel who has to always follow God's commands [66:6], as such a disposition would contradict free will. Consequently, he/she has potentials for righteousness and wrongfulness *"And by the human self and how it is properly formed [in its complexity and equation], and how it is imbued with moral failings as well as with righteousness"* [91:7-8].

After seeing how the human being has been thus created differently from the angel, and that he/she may consequently do what is wrong and evil due to his/her free will, one can understand the angels' worry which they expressed in their question addressed to God about setting His creation with free will on the earth: *"Will you set therein such as will do corruption therein and shed blood?"* To emphasize that they are just asking, not objecting or making an observation which may seem inappropriate for their absolute devotion and obedience to the Lord, they stressed after their question their good faith: *"We do extol your limitless glory and praise you and hallow you"*.

The Quran refers to the "*accusing (or reproaching) voice of the human being's own self*" [75:2], and to the "*human self inciting to wrongdoing*" [12:53], as well as the "*self at peace*" [89:27]. This indicates the contradicting and conflicting forces within the human self, through which one can make his/her own choices, and achieve peace within his/her own self if he/she is enlightened with God's guidance since *"there shall come to you*

guidance from Me, and those who follow my guidance shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve". Sigmund Freud [d. 1939] in his psychoanalysis talked about such contradicting and conflicting forces in another way, which I may summarize here for the sake of clarification, and not because of similarity. He divided the human personality as a whole into three functional parts: the "id", the "superego", and the "ego". The "id" was the reservoir of the instinctual drives imbedded in the deepest level of the unconscious and dominated by the pleasure principle, the object of which was the immediate gratification of drives. On the other extreme, the "superego", developed through parental and social teachings, functions as an internal censor, embracing both a conscious and an unconscious conscience. Finally, the "ego" was considered by Freud to be the part of the "id" motivated by contact with the external world, and making up the bulk of what is commonly referred to as "consciousness", and it is seen as the mental agent equating and making a balance between three contending forces: the outside social demands or reality, the libiding demands (related to the "libido", the instinctive energy which Freud identified specifically with the sex drive but which is generalized to include both the various human instincts) for immediate satisfaction arising from the "id", and the claims of the superego [*The New Columbia Encyclopedia*, p. 2235]. In spite of the disagreements and even challenges with which psychoanalysis has met, which have been in part due to Freud's strong emphasis on sexual motivation, his theories have had, and are still having, great influence within psychology, child rearing, education, cultural and social sciences, medicine and arts.

Free will and choice is practiced through the use of the human intellect, which is also utilized during speech, another characteristic of the human merit that has led to the development of multitudinal languages all over the world throughout the ages. The Quranic information about the creation of Adam refers to this human unique linguistic merit as "*teaching Adam the names*". Language - according to T*he New Columbia Encyclopedia*, is a "systematic communication by vocal symbols ... a universal characteristic of the human species" [p. 1527]. The length of time that has passed since writing emerged, a period which is known to be 7900 years at the most, is trifling in comparison to the length of time during which human spoken languages have been used. Languages spoken now by people of the most primitive cultures, and the forms of languages known or hypothetically reconstructed from the earliest records, are as subtle in nature and as instinctive in use as those of the peoples of more complex civilizations. Human speech is a process which is different from that of mere production of sound that most animals share. Speech requires a resonance system for modulation and amplification of a particular sound and an articulation process for the shaping of that sound into the communally established word-symbols of meaning that constitute the language. The use of language is made possible by certain cerebral functions: the formation of thoughts, the comprehension, the storage and recalling of words, the selection of morphemes to express thoughts, and the arrangement of these morphemes in a sequence form that constitutes, or tries to constitute, intelligible communication ["Speech," *Academic American Encyclopedia,* vol. 18, p. 173].

Thus, the human intellect is essential in producing human speech and language. This expression of a human being's self represents a unique human physical and intellectual merit, and it may be further developed by the human being through the writing of literature. The Quran states that God *"has created the human being; He has imparted unto*

him [/her] how to [articulate his/her thought and express himself [/herself] well in speech" [55:3-4]. In general, it is said that the creation of language involves three processes: selection, equivalence and combination ["Languages and literature," *Academic American Encyclopedia,* vol. 12, pp. 196-197].

Such physical, intellectual, and psychological-spiritual-moral merits, and their correlations and interactions present the human personality in its totality, and manifest the human excellence within God's creation which was indicated by God's command to the angels to prostrate themselves before Adam. The disobedience of Iblis, "Satan," announces the beginning of the continuous enmity that the human being has to face with such an evil being, who tries persistently to undermine the human excellence that he hates, and whose efforts will always be directed at the weaknesses and moral failings with which the human self is imbued, side by side with the strength and righteousness [see as examples for Satan's persistence to seduce the human beings the verses 7:16-18, 17:61-65, 38:79-85]

The Satanic seduction started with the first couple who had been allowed to eat from all of the trees of the garden in which they had dwelled, except one: "*Then Satan whispered to them both [Adam and his wife] what led to make them conscious of their private parts of which they both had not been aware before; [in their earlier state of innocence]; and he said, 'Your Lord has but prohibited you from this tree lest you become angels, or lest you become immortals.' And he swore to them, 'Truly, I am one of the sincere advisers,' and in this way he led them on by delusion. And as soon as they both tasted [the fruit] of the tree, they became conscious of their private parts, and they began to cover themselves with pieced-together leaves from the garden. And their Lord called unto them, 'Did I not forbid you from that tree and tell you that Satan - verily - is for you an absolute enemy?' They both replied, 'O our Lord! We have wronged ourselves; and unless you grant us forgiveness, and bestow Your mercy upon us, we shall surely be among the lost.' Said He, 'Get down you enemies of one another, having on earth your dwelling and livelihood for a while.' Said He, 'Therein shall you live, and therein shall you die, and from there you shall be brought forth'* [7:20-25].

"And We made Our commandment to Adam before, but he forgot it and We found in him no constancy" [20:115].

"And then We said, 'Adam, surely this [Satan] is an enemy to you and your wife, so let him not drive you both out of the garden and thus bring you unhappiness. It is assuredly given to you here that you shall never go through hunger, nor nakedness, and you shall never suffer thirst nor the heat of the sun.' But Satan whispered to him saying, 'Adam! Shall I point out to you the tree of eternity and of dominion that never decays?' And so both ate of it, and then became conscious of their private parts, and began to cover themselves with pieced-together leaves from the garden. And Adam disobeyed his Lord, and so he erred. Thereafter his Lord chose him [for His grace] and accepted his repentance and bestowed upon him His guidance. Said He, 'Get down out of it all together [Adam and his wife and Satan], you enemies to one another! Yet if there comes to you from Me guidance, then whosoever follows My guidance shall not go astray, neither shall he [/she] be unhappy, and whosever fails to be mindful of Me, his [/her] life shall be a life of narrowness, and on the Day of Resurrection We shall raise him [/her] blind. He then shall ask, 'O my Lord!

Why have you raised me blind, whereas [in previous life] I had eyesight?' God shall say, 'Thus Our messages came to you, and you were oblivious of them; and likewise you are consigned to oblivion'" [20:117-126].

In the Quran both Adam and his wife were addressed by God as equal responsible human beings: *"And We said, 'O Adam! Dwell you and your wife in the Garden, and eat thereof easefully wherever you may desire - both of you; but approach not this one tree'"* Both thus share equally the responsibility of giving in to Satan's temptation and eating from the forbidden tree: *"Then Satan caused them both to slip therefrom, and thus brought them of that they had been in ..."* However, they both repented and were both forgiven, and thus there is no place in the Islamic beliefs for the so-called "original sin": *"They both replied, 'O our Lord! We have both wronged ourselves; and unless You grant us forgiveness and bestow Your mercy upon us, we shall most certainly be among the lost"* [7:23].

Adam was guided as to how to obtain God's forgiveness and acceptance, and the Acceptor of Repentance, the All-merciful made it clear to the human being whose self *"is imbued with moral failings as well as with righteousness"* [91:8] that wrongdoing is human, but that the wrong-doer should repent and cease from his/her wrongdoing in order to be forgiven, and that God alone is the All-forgiving, and the Acceptor of Repentance. Through the information about the first human couple, we are all taught about human failures and repentance, and about God's forgiveness. An authentic tradition of the Prophet teaches: "All human beings may do what is wrong, and the best of the wrongdoers are the repenters" [reported by Ibn Hanbal, al-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah and al-Hakim].

The Quranic reports about the first two human beings, from whom all humanity has descended, sharply underscore the human curiosity to know what is unknown, and the human zeal for long or eternal life, and dominion. These instinctive inclinations were - and still are - the points of weakness through which the human being may fall, and the Satanic seduction can work, supported by the efforts of other human wrongdoers who may form with the Satanic forces an evil coalition: *"... satans from among the humans as well as from among the invisible beings (jinn), whispering unto one another what may seem sparkling but is merely delusion"* [6:112, see also 6:128, 72:6] God's guidance deals, comprehensively, with the human weaknesses from the psychological- intellectual- spiritual and social angles, as it provides the human being with rightful knowledge about his/her human self, especially its spiritual side, for the life of this world, and the life to come with its true eternity and its opportunity for a fair excellence and distinction, and requires the society to morally support each other in confronting human weaknesses and Satanic seduction: *"And the foremost shall be [those who in the previous life were] the foremost [in faith and good deeds]; they are drawn close unto God, in gardens of bliss"* [56:10-12], *"and enjoin upon one another firm adherence to the truth and enjoin upon one another patience and endurance and steadfastness"* [103:3].

Every human being has to use his/her intellect in making his/her choices about responding in a sound way to his/her instinctive zeal. Human beings are brought down to earth, and entrusted with developing themselves, and developing the earth and the universe around them with their intellectual ability, which provides guidance for the human free will, the spiritual-psychological-moral potentials, and the instinctive motives towards

knowledge and superiority. These unique human merits are what entitled human beings to be the inheritors of the earth in their successive generations: *"He brought you into being out of the earth, and entrusted you with thriving therein and developing it"* [11:61].

Through this heavy responsibility and its requirements, there is always potential for the human will and choice, with all its positives and negatives, ups and downs. The Quran shows how sexual temptations may lead to human wrongdoing, and how the human self may be infiltrated by Satan through these weak points: *"O children of Adam! Let not Satan seduce you as he caused your foreparents both to be out of the garden, uncovering them of their garments [after their previous state of innocence] to make them aware of their private parts. Surely, he and his folk are watching you from where you cannot perceive them. We have made Satans supporters [and patrons] of those who have no faith"* [7:27].

Besides exposing the bodily attractions of women and men and being obsessed with sexual activities, human beings can be dragged into conflicts of power due to their superiority/inferiority complexes: *"And convey to them truthfully the story of the two sons of Adam: when each offered a sacrifice [for God], and it was accepted from one of them whereas it was not accepted from the other. 'I will surely kill you,' said one. [The other] said 'God accepts only of those who are conscious of Him. Even if you stretch out your hand to kill me, I will not stretch my hand to kill you; I fear God, the Lord of all the worlds. I want that you bear [alone the burden of] all the wrongs ever done by me as well as of the wrong done by you, and so you would be destined for the fire, and this is the requital of the evildoers.' But the other's own self prompted him to kill his brother, and thus he became one of the losers"* [5:27-31].

Having faith in God and the eternal life to come and following His guidance helps the human being to work in this worldly life, supported by other believers in God and morality, since it causes each person to be concerned with his/her position in the eternal life to come, and leads him/her to observe his/her relation with God in his/her relations with others in this life. For such believers, the development of the human self and the natural resources continues uninterrupted by the arrogance of success or the despair of failure: *"O you who have attained to faith! Be patient, and vie with one another in being persistently patient, and be steadfast and ever ready [to do what is right], and remain conscious of God, so that you might attain success and happiness"* [3:200].

We who have created you and then formed you, and then We said to the angels "Prostrate yourselves before Adam" and they [all] prostrated themselves, save Iblis (Satan); he was not of those who prostrated themselves. God said, "What has kept you from prostrating yourself when I commanded you?" He said, "I am better than he; You have created me out of fire, and him You have created out of clay." God said: "Get

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَٰكُمْ ثُمَّ
صَوَّرْنَٰكُمْ ثُمَّ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ ٱسْجُدُوا۟
لِـَٔادَمَ فَسَجَدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ إِبْلِيسَ لَمْ يَكُن مِّنَ
ٱلسَّٰجِدِينَ ﴿١١﴾ قَالَ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَلَّا
تَسْجُدَ إِذْ أَمَرْتُكَ ۖ قَالَ أَنَا۠ خَيْرٌ مِّنْهُ
خَلَقْتَنِى مِن نَّارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهُۥ مِن طِينٍ ﴿١٢﴾

قَالَ فَاهْبِطْ مِنْهَا فَمَا يَكُونُ لَكَ أَن
تَتَكَبَّرَ فِيهَا فَاخْرُجْ إِنَّكَ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰغِرِينَ
﴿١٣﴾ قَالَ أَنظِرْنِىٓ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ
﴿١٤﴾ قَالَ إِنَّكَ مِنَ ٱلْمُنظَرِينَ ﴿١٥﴾ قَالَ
فَبِمَآ أَغْوَيْتَنِى لَأَقْعُدَنَّ لَهُمْ صِرَٰطَكَ
ٱلْمُسْتَقِيمَ ﴿١٦﴾ ثُمَّ لَءَاتِيَنَّهُم مِّنۢ بَيْنِ
أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ وَعَنْ أَيْمَٰنِهِمْ وَعَن
شَمَآئِلِهِمْ ۖ وَلَا تَجِدُ أَكْثَرَهُمْ شَٰكِرِينَ
﴿١٧﴾ قَالَ ٱخْرُجْ مِنْهَا مَذْءُومًا
مَّدْحُورًا ۖ لَّمَن تَبِعَكَ مِنْهُمْ لَأَمْلَأَنَّ
جَهَنَّمَ مِنكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١٨﴾ وَيَٰٓـَٔادَمُ
ٱسْكُنْ أَنتَ وَزَوْجُكَ ٱلْجَنَّةَ فَكُلَا مِنْ
حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَٰذِهِ ٱلشَّجَرَةَ
فَتَكُونَا مِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٩﴾ فَوَسْوَسَ
لَهُمَا ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ لِيُبْدِىَ لَهُمَا مَا وُۥرِىَ
عَنْهُمَا مِن سَوْءَٰتِهِمَا وَقَالَ مَا نَهَىٰكُمَا
رَبُّكُمَا عَنْ هَٰذِهِ ٱلشَّجَرَةِ إِلَّآ أَن تَكُونَا
مَلَكَيْنِ أَوْ تَكُونَا مِنَ ٱلْخَٰلِدِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾
وَقَاسَمَهُمَآ إِنِّى لَكُمَا لَمِنَ ٱلنَّٰصِحِينَ
﴿٢١﴾ فَدَلَّىٰهُمَا بِغُرُورٍ ۚ فَلَمَّا ذَاقَا
ٱلشَّجَرَةَ بَدَتْ لَهُمَا سَوْءَٰتُهُمَا وَطَفِقَا
يَخْصِفَانِ عَلَيْهِمَا مِن وَرَقِ ٱلْجَنَّةِ ۖ
وَنَادَىٰهُمَا رَبُّهُمَآ أَلَمْ أَنْهَكُمَا عَن تِلْكُمَا
ٱلشَّجَرَةِ وَأَقُل لَّكُمَآ إِنَّ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ لَكُمَا
عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٢٢﴾ قَالَا رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَآ
أَنفُسَنَا وَإِن لَّمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا
لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾ قَالَ
ٱهْبِطُوا۟ بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ ۖ وَلَكُمْ فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمَتَٰعٌ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ ﴿٢٤﴾
قَالَ فِيهَا تَحْيَوْنَ وَفِيهَا تَمُوتُونَ

you down out of it, it is not for you to show insolence here; so go forth; surely you are but one who should degradedly be yielding. He said: "Grant me a respite till the day they shall be raised from the dead." God said: "Be you among those who are respited." He said, "Now that you have let me go astray [of the right way], I shall surely waylay them all along Your straight way, then I shall come on them from before them and from behind them, from their right and from their left; and most of them You will not find grateful." God said, "Go you forth from it, disgraced and expelled; and those of them that follow you, I shall assuredly fill hell with you all.

"And O Adam! Dwell you and your wife in the garden, and eat, both of you, from wherever you wish; but approach not this one tree, lest you become of the evildoers."

Then Satan whispered to them both [Adam and his wife] what led to make them conscious of their private parts of which they both had not been aware before; [in their earlier state of innocence]; and he said, "Your Lord has but prohibited you from this tree lest you become angels, or lest you become immortals." And he swore to them, "Truly, I am one of the sincere advisers," and in this way he led them on by delusion. And as soon as they both tasted [the fruit] of the tree, they became conscious of their private parts, and they began to cover themselves with pieced-together leaves from the garden. And their Lord called unto them, "Did I not forbid you from that tree and tell you that Satan - verily - is for you an absolute enemy?" They both replied, "O our Lord! We have wronged ourselves; and unless you grant us forgiveness, and bestow Your mercy upon us, we shall surely be among the lost." Said He, "Get down you enemies of one another, having on earth your dwelling and livelihood for a while." Said He, "Therein shall you live, and therein shall you die, and from there you shall be brought forth."

O Children of Adam! We have sent down to you garments as a cover for your nakedness and as a beauty; but the garment of God-consciousness is the best; that is one of God's messages; haply they will keep it in mind.
O Children of Adam! Let not Satan tempt you as he caused your foreparents both to be out of the garden, uncovering them [after their previous state of innocence] to make them aware of their private parts. Surely, he and his folk are watching you from where you cannot perceive them. We have made Satan's supporters [and patrons] of those who have no faith. And when they commit a shameful deed, they say: "We found our forefathers doing it;" and "God has commanded us thus." Say: "Behold, never does God command what is shameful; do you attribute to God what you know not?" Say: "My Lord has commanded justice; and that you set your whole selves [to Him] at every act [and in every place] of worship, and to call upon Him, sincere in your faith in Him alone. As it was He who brought you into being in the first place, so also [to Him] you will return."
Some [who accept His message] He guides, while for some straying from the right path is unavoidable; for they take devils as their patrons and supporters in preference to God, thinking that they have found the right path!
O Children of Adam! Take your adornment at every place of worship; and eat and drink, yet do not go beyond natural and reasonable limits, for God loves not those who go beyond moderation. Say: "Who has forbidden the beauty that God has brought forth for His creatures, and the good things, among the means of sustenance?" Say: "They are [lawful] in the life of this world for all who have attained to faith, and they will be theirs alone on the Day of Resurrection." Thus, clearly do We spell out these messages to those who know.
Say: "Verily, my Lord has only forbidden

وَمِنْهَا تُخْرَجُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾ يَٰبَنِىٓ ءَادَمَ قَدْ
أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَاسًا يُوَٰرِى سَوْءَٰتِكُمْ
وَرِيشًا ۖ وَلِبَاسُ ٱلتَّقْوَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ ۚ
ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُونَ
﴿٢٦﴾ يَٰبَنِىٓ ءَادَمَ لَا يَفْتِنَنَّكُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ
كَمَآ أَخْرَجَ أَبَوَيْكُم مِّنَ ٱلْجَنَّةِ يَنزِعُ
عَنْهُمَا لِبَاسَهُمَا لِيُرِيَهُمَا سَوْءَٰتِهِمَآ ۗ
إِنَّهُۥ يَرَىٰكُمْ هُوَ وَقَبِيلُهُۥ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا
تَرَوْنَهُمْ ۗ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا ٱلشَّيَٰطِينَ أَوْلِيَآءَ
لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾ وَإِذَا فَعَلُوا۟
فَٰحِشَةً قَالُوا۟ وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهَآ ءَابَآءَنَا
وَٱللَّهُ أَمَرَنَا بِهَا ۗ قُلْ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَأْمُرُ
بِٱلْفَحْشَآءِ ۖ أَتَقُولُونَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا
تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾ قُلْ أَمَرَ رَبِّى بِٱلْقِسْطِ ۖ
وَأَقِيمُوا۟ وُجُوهَكُمْ عِندَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ
وَٱدْعُوهُ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ ٱلدِّينَ ۚ كَمَا بَدَأَكُمْ
تَعُودُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾ فَرِيقًا هَدَىٰ وَفَرِيقًا حَقَّ
عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلضَّلَٰلَةُ ۗ إِنَّهُمُ ٱتَّخَذُوا۟ ٱلشَّيَٰطِينَ
أَوْلِيَآءَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُم
مُّهْتَدُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ ۞ يَٰبَنِىٓ ءَادَمَ خُذُوا۟
زِينَتَكُمْ عِندَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَكُلُوا۟ وَٱشْرَبُوا۟
وَلَا تُسْرِفُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُسْرِفِينَ
﴿٣١﴾ قُلْ مَنْ حَرَّمَ زِينَةَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّتِىٓ
أَخْرَجَ لِعِبَادِهِۦ وَٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ مِنَ ٱلرِّزْقِ ۚ
قُلْ هِىَ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ
ٱلدُّنْيَا خَالِصَةً يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ
نُفَصِّلُ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾ قُلْ
إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّىَ ٱلْفَوَٰحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا

shameful deeds, whether outward or inward, and evil-doing and trespassing against justice and reason, and associating with God others for which He never sent down any warrant, and attributing to God that of which you have no knowledge."
And for every people a term has been set; so when [the end of] their term comes, they cannot put it back by a single moment, nor an hour can they nor can they put it forward.
O Children of Adam! If there should come to you conveyors of My messages from among you, reporting to you My messages, then all who are conscious of Me and live righteously, on them shall be no fear nor shall they grieve. But those who give the lie to Our messages and look to them with haughtiness, they are destined for the fire, therein to abide. [7:11-36]

وَ مَا بَطَنَ وَ ٱلْإِثْمَ وَ ٱلْبَغْىَ بِغَيْرِ ٱلْحَقِّ
وَ أَن تُشْرِكُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزِّلْ بِهِۦ
سُلْطَٰنًا وَ أَن تَقُولُوا۟ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا
تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَ لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ أَجَلٌ ۖ فَإِذَا
جَآءَ أَجَلُهُمْ لَا يَسْتَـْٔخِرُونَ سَاعَةً ۖ
وَلَا يَسْتَقْدِمُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾ يَٰبَنِىٓ ءَادَمَ إِمَّا
يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِّنكُمْ يَقُصُّونَ عَلَيْكُمْ
ءَايَٰتِى ۙ فَمَنِ ٱتَّقَىٰ وَ أَصْلَحَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ
عَلَيْهِمْ وَ لَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾ وَ ٱلَّذِينَ
كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا وَ ٱسْتَكْبَرُوا۟ عَنْهَآ
أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا
خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

The first fifteen of the above verses relate the story of the creation of Adam that one finds in the previously-mentioned verses [2:30-39], but with a different emphasis. While the earlier verses focus on the human being, the above verses give more information about the Satanic temptation, how it happened and its effects on human nature and in the human life on earth, after the first human couple and Satan were all sent down there. [For commentary on the verses 7:11-25 see the commentary on the earlier verses 2:30-39].

The lessons learned from the story of Adam about human merits and failures can be seen in the story in its various presentations in the Quran. First, the above verses warn against obsession with, and concentrated attempts of, sexual temptation physically and psychologically, especially through exposing the sexual attractions of the body. Human beings, whether male or female are reminded and warned, "O Children of Adam! Let not Satan tempt you as he caused your foreparents both to be out of the garden, uncovering them to make them aware of their private parts..." [7:27]. Second, the Quran underlines the fact that the devil is not an enemy that is physically and concretely seen by the human being; on the contrary, he is hidden and his plots are carried out through the human shortcomings and liabilities themselves. This means that he is working from inside the human self and this is the most dangerous form of fighting against anybody: "he and his folk are watching over you from where you cannot perceive them. We have made Satan's supporters [and patrons] of those who have no faith" [7:27].

Both the seen human and invisible satans assist the person in finding an excuse for following a tradition that involves wrong-doing through self-convincing that God must approve of his/her actions since he is allowing these actions to occur. The Quranic counter-

argument to this emphasizes the individual intellectual responsibility of judgement and the practice of free will and common sense. Blind following and imitation is not an excuse, since they violate the raison d'etre of the individual responsibility which is the basis for judgement on the Day of Judgement [see the verses 6:94; 19:80, 95; 52:21; 74:38; also 2:166-167, 170; 14:21; 31:21; 33:67-68; 34:31-33; 40:47-48]. Such a claim that God - in all His limitless glory and immeasurable attributes of perfection against common sense - does not enjoin wrongdoing by any means, and such an argument proves ignorance about God, as well as lack of sensibility. God enjoins only justice and righteousness and the worship of Him alone, and thus the human being should avoid submission to the damage and exploitation of false lords and human or invisible satans. In the life to come, everybody will be requited for all what he/she already did in the previous life. However, God's guidance does not aim to forbid human beings from enjoining the pleasures of this world's life, as long as these pleasures are not harmful or shameful (to the individual or to the society), unjust or against common sense, since God's guidance is for the benefit and constructive development of the human beings, not for suppressing their instincts and isolating them from this world's life. The legitimate pleasures of this life have never been prohibited by God, who is, after all, the One who created them in the first place and made them lawful for the human being [e.g. 2:29; 45:13]. Beautiful appearances, and delicious food and drink are thus lawful if they are wholesome, and used without waste. But although these pleasures are shared in this life by all human beings [11:15, 17:18-20], in the life to come they will be exclusively for those who have attained to faith and have done what is good.

Human beings are also reminded that civilizations, like individuals, come into existence, flourish, and then decline and fall. They live as long as they are capable of survival, and they deteriorate and fall when their failures become fatal. God sends His guidance to human beings in order to protect them against their own weaknesses and against the Satanic temptation that influences them through such weaknesses, especially sexual attractions and superiority complexes. Those who follow the divine guidance are protected by their faith against the shocking ups and downs of this life, and their adherence to God's guidance will benefit them in the eternal life to come. On the other hand, those who follow only the pleasures of this world, and reject God's guidance due to their selfishness, short-sightedness and arrogance, will be left to their own physical and psychological abilities, which may be overwhelmed and confused by the contrastive plethora of the positives and the negatives of this life.

(115) *And We made Our commandment to Adam before, but he forgot it and We found in him no constancy.*
(116) *And when We told the angels "Prostrate yourselves before Adam," they prostrated themselves, save Iblis [Satan]: he refused.*
(117) *And then We said, "Adam, surely this [Satan] is an enemy to you and your wife, so let him not drive you both out of the garden*

وَلَقَدْ عَهِدْنَآ إِلَىٰٓ ءَادَمَ مِن قَبْلُ فَنَسِىَ
وَلَمْ نَجِدْ لَهُۥ عَزْمًا ﴿١١٥﴾ وَإِذْ قُلْنَا
لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ ٱسْجُدُوا۟ لِـَٔادَمَ فَسَجَدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ
إِبْلِيسَ أَبَىٰ ﴿١١٦﴾ فَقُلْنَا يَٰٓـَٔادَمُ إِنَّ هَٰذَا
عَدُوٌّ لَّكَ وَلِزَوْجِكَ فَلَا يُخْرِجَنَّكُمَا مِنَ

and thus bring you unhappiness.
(118) *It is assuredly given to you here that you shall never go through hunger, nor nakedness,*
(119)and you shall never suffer thirst nor the heat of the sun."
(120) *But Satan whispered to him saying, "Adam! Shall I point out to you the tree of eternity and of dominion that never decays?"*
(121) *And so both ate of it, and then became conscious of their private parts, and began to cover themselves with pieced-together leaves from the garden. And Adam disobeyed his Lord, and so he erred.*
(122) *Thereafter his Lord chose him [for His grace] and accepted his repentance and bestowed upon him His guidance.*
(123) *Said He, "Get down out of it all together [Adam and his wife and Satan], you enemies to one another! Yet if there comes to you from Me guidance, then whosoever follows My guidance shall not go astray, neither shall he [/she] be unhappy,*
(124) *and whosoever fails to be mindful of Me, his [/her] life shall be a life of narrowness, and on the Day of Resurrection We shall raise him [/her] blind."*
(125) *He[/she] then shall ask, "O my Lord! Why have you raised me blind, whereas [in previous life] I had eyesight?"*
(126) *God shall say, "Thus Our messages came to you, and you were oblivious of them; and likewise you are consigned to oblivion."*
(127) *And so do We recompense one who wastes his [/her] own self and does not believe in his[her] Lord's messages; and the suffering [of such evil-doers] in the life to come is far more severe and far more lasting.*
(128) *Is it not a guidance to such people how many a generation before them We brought to an end, in whose dwelling places they [now] walk about? Verily, in this are signs for those who have active minds.* [20:115-128]

ٱلْجَنَّةِ فَتَشْقَىٰٓ ﴿١١٧﴾ إِنَّ لَكَ أَلَّا تَجُوعَ
فِيهَا وَ لَا تَعْرَىٰ ﴿١١٨﴾ وَ أَنَّكَ لَا تَظْمَؤُا۟
فِيهَا وَ لَا تَضْحَىٰ ﴿١١٩﴾ فَوَسْوَسَ إِلَيْهِ
ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ قَالَ يَٰٓـَٔادَمُ هَلْ أَدُلُّكَ عَلَىٰ
شَجَرَةِ ٱلْخُلْدِ وَ مُلْكٍ لَّا يَبْلَىٰ ﴿١٢٠﴾
فَأَكَلَا مِنْهَا فَبَدَتْ لَهُمَا سَوْءَٰتُهُمَا
وَطَفِقَا يَخْصِفَانِ عَلَيْهِمَا مِن وَرَقِ ٱلْجَنَّةِ ۚ
وَ عَصَىٰٓ ءَادَمُ رَبَّهُۥ فَغَوَىٰ ﴿١٢١﴾ ثُمَّ
ٱجْتَبَٰهُ رَبُّهُۥ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ وَ هَدَىٰ ﴿١٢٢﴾
قَالَ ٱهْبِطَا مِنْهَا جَمِيعًۢا ۖ بَعْضُكُمْ
لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ ۖ فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُم مِّنِّى هُدًى
فَمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَ هُدَاىَ فَلَا يَضِلُّ وَ لَا يَشْقَىٰ
﴿١٢٣﴾ وَ مَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِى فَإِنَّ لَهُۥ
مَعِيشَةً ضَنكًا وَ نَحْشُرُهُۥ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ
أَعْمَىٰ ﴿١٢٤﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ لِمَ حَشَرْتَنِىٓ
أَعْمَىٰ وَ قَدْ كُنتُ بَصِيرًا ﴿١٢٥﴾ قَالَ
كَذَٰلِكَ أَتَتْكَ ءَايَٰتُنَا فَنَسِيتَهَا ۖ وَ كَذَٰلِكَ
ٱلْيَوْمَ تُنسَىٰ ﴿١٢٦﴾ وَ كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِى مَنْ
أَسْرَفَ وَ لَمْ يُؤْمِنۢ بِـَٔايَٰتِ رَبِّهِۦ ۚ
وَلَعَذَابُ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ أَشَدُّ وَ أَبْقَىٰٓ ﴿١٢٧﴾
أَفَلَمْ يَهْدِ لَهُمْ كَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُم مِّنَ
ٱلْقُرُونِ يَمْشُونَ فِى مَسَٰكِنِهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ فِى
ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّأُو۟لِى ٱلنُّهَىٰ ﴿١٢٨﴾

The story of the forefather of the human race and his wife is dealt with in the Quran in several places from different angles, each emphasizing an element or more of human nature. The first of the above verses indicates an important characteristic of the human being: his/her forgetfulness and lack of adherence to commitments. Sometimes this happens unintentionally according to a memory failure, and such forgetfulness is forgiven by God, since reckoning and judgement are only for what the human being deliberately does or ignores. The serious forgetfulness is the intentional one, when a person neglects or disregards a commitment willfully since it would otherwise cause him/her to give up some ease or pleasure. God has granted the human being a free will to test him/her fairly, and the human will has to be trained to face different pressures and not to forgo a commitment that may be hard, as long as it is possible.

The subsequent verses indicate how this lack of constancy and firmness had its effect on Adam's behavior in the garden after Satan refused to prostrate himself before him. All the needs of Adam and his wife: food and drink, clothing and shelter, were provided for by God in the garden. Nevertheless, the human being, as indicated in the verses, is curious for knowledge and eager for immortality and domination, and through these inclinations, Satan was successful in tempting both of them to violate God's command. Adam and his wife had to go through the risk of free will and choice, and their hope to achieve unrealistic powers led these earliest human beings to lose their existing favors in the garden where they had been living at ease and enjoying happiness. Accordingly, by disregarding their commitment to God, they could neither achieve their ambitions nor maintain the advantages of their existing situation.

Furthermore, the eviction of Adam and his wife from the garden and their subsequent life on earth marked the starting point of the pressure of sex and livelihood faced by the human being, and his/her constant struggle with Satan. The human beings had to struggle to earn their living and develop the earth and go through reproduction to achieve a family life, while at the same time observing God's guidance in their whole behavior. God promised to help the human beings in their struggle while Satan had to use all his skills to tempt and seduce them, and it is up to the human intellect and free will to choose what to do. God's messages guide the human beings on earth in using His blessings for the best of themselves and the world around them. Those who benefit from the divine guidance will be happy in this world, as they will enjoy peace in their inner selves and spread justice and kindness in their relations with others, and they will receive the best rewards in the eternal life to come. Those who are isolated in their selfishness and shortsightedness will suffer a life of narrowness in this world, as they are always shaken by its ups and downs, and hurt by the consequences and reactions of their injustice to others. Such a spiritual and moral blindness in this life will be paralleled for these egomaniacal evil-doers by another blindness in the life to come, where their suffering, which resulted from the wasting of their own-selves and the stubborn rejection of God's guidance, will be more severe and ever lasting.

And when it is said to them, "Follow what God has sent down [to you], they say, 'No, but we follow [only] what we found our forefathers believing in and doing'." Even if their forefathers did not use their reason at all, and were lacking any sense of direction? The parable of those who stubbornly deny the truth [with regard to those who call them to follow it] is that of one who utters loudly [addressing] that which hears [and recognizes] nothing save [the sound of] calls and shouts; deaf, dumb and blind are they, and so they do not apprehend. [2:170-171]

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ
اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَا
أَلْفَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا ۗ أَوَلَوْ كَانَ
آبَاؤُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ
﴿١٧٠﴾ وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي
يَنْعِقُ بِمَا لَا يَسْمَعُ إِلَّا دُعَاءً وَنِدَاءً ۚ صُمٌّ
بُكْمٌ عُمْيٌ فَهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٧١﴾

The Quran repeatedly stresses individuality and condemns dependency, blind following and imitation of others. One who simply follows his/her forefathers in what they believed in and did, and refrains from thinking about anything else that is presented to him/her, is a person who is neglectful of his/her mind, by letting forefathers and/or communal traditions think for him/her. Such a person who limits his/her senses and intellect is like an animal which recognizes nothing of which it may hear except its shepherd's shout to call it. Those who stubbornly deny God's message without thinking and follow their forefathers blindly, are merely blocking their senses and reason. They hear only the voice of their forefathers, see only them and can never communicate with anyone else. They deliberately make themselves deaf, dumb and blind. What a pity, that a human being voluntarily does not use the highest merits that he/she possesses "... *they have hearts, with which they fail to grasp what is right, and eyes, with which they fail to perceive, and they have ears with which they fail to hear. They are like cattle; nay, rather they are more erratic; it is they who are [truly] the neglectful.*" [7:179].

So when you have performed your acts of worship, [continue to] bear God in mind, as you would bear your own fathers in mind, or with a yet keener remembrance; there are people who say, "O Our Lord! Give to us in this world!" And such shall not partake in the [eternal] life to come. But there are others who say,

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُم مَّنَاسِكَكُمْ فَاذْكُرُوا
اللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ آبَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا ۗ
فَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي
الدُّنْيَا وَمَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَاقٍ
﴿٢٠٠﴾

"O Our Lord! Give us good in this world and good in the life to come, and keep us safe from the suffering through the fire!" These shall have their portion [of happiness] in return for what they have earned, and God is swift in reckoning. [2:200-202]

وَ مِنْهُم مَّن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَآ ءَاتِنَا فِى
ٱلدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَ فِى ٱلْأَخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً
وَقِنَا عَذَابَ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿٢٠١﴾ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ
نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا۟ ۚ وَ ٱللَّهُ سَرِيعُ
ٱلْحِسَابِ ﴿٢٠٢﴾

The verses above begin by referring to the performance of pilgrimage, *hajj,* but they end by mentioning the proper goals of the believer which become more focused to him/her after this spiritual experience, and are thus represented by his/her prayer to God. Some people are only concerned with getting all that is good momentarily in this life, regardless of the more valuable gains of the future which they would lose. The true believer - according to the Quranic teachings - does not renounce this life, nor does he/she become so absorbed in it that he/she forgets the future life; his/her goal is in fact to gain the good of this life, while observing what is far more rewarding in the life to come. In this way, the believer earns good in this life legitimately, without aggression or fraud, and thus, his/her good work would bear fruit in this life and the life to come: *"... and God granted them the reward of this world's life as well as the good rewards of the life to come; and God loves the good-doers"* [3:148].

The good-doer in this life who is looking to the eternal life to come is persistent in his/her work; he/she is never deferred by ups and downs, nor does he/she waste his/her energy through the arrogance of success or the depression of failure. The ultimate goal makes the events of this life merely a test for the human will and endurance, and ensures that the true reward is secure with God in the eternal life to come, if the believer continues with his/her good work in this life, whatever temptations and pressures for deviation may be.

There is among people one whose words about this world's life may please you greatly and who calls on God to witness what is in his[/her] heart; yet such a one is most stubborn in dispute.
And when he[/she] turns his[/her] back, he[/she] goes about the earth, spreading corruption and destroying tillage and progeny, and God loves not corruption.
And whenever it is said to him[/her], "Be conscious of God," he[/she] becomes seized by evil arrogance. Hell would suit what he[/she] deserves, and how vile a resting-place.
But there is among people one who offers

وَ مِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ
مَن يُعْجِبُكَ قَوْلُهُۥ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا
وَيُشْهِدُ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا فِى قَلْبِهِۦ وَ هُوَ أَلَدُّ
ٱلْخِصَامِ ﴿٢٠٤﴾ وَ إِذَا تَوَلَّىٰ سَعَىٰ فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ لِيُفْسِدَ فِيهَا وَ يُهْلِكَ ٱلْحَرْثَ
وَٱلنَّسْلَ ۗ وَ ٱللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلْفَسَادَ ﴿٢٠٥﴾
وَ إِذَا قِيلَ لَهُ ٱتَّقِ ٱللَّهَ أَخَذَتْهُ ٱلْعِزَّةُ
بِٱلْإِثْمِ ۚ فَحَسْبُهُۥ جَهَنَّمُ ۚ وَ لَبِئْسَ
ٱلْمِهَادُ ﴿٢٠٦﴾ وَ مِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَشْرِى

his[/her] whole self for the goodly acceptance of God, and God is Most Kindly and Compassionate towards His worshippers.
O you who have attained to faith! Enter the peace, all of you, through submitting your whole selves to God, and follow not the footsteps of Satan; he is to you an evident enemy. But if you slip after the clear evidence of truth has come to you, then know that God is All-mighty All-wise. [2:204-209]

نَفْسَهُ ٱبْتِغَآءَ مَرْضَاتِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَ ٱللَّهُ
رَءُوفٌۢ بِٱلْعِبَادِ ﴿٢٠٧﴾ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱدْخُلُوا۟ فِى ٱلسِّلْمِ كَآفَّةً وَ لَا
تَتَّبِعُوا۟ خُطُوَٰتِ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَكُمْ
عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٢٠٨﴾ فَإِن زَلَلْتُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ مَا
جَآءَتْكُمُ ٱلْبَيِّنَٰتُ فَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ
عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٠٩﴾

Consistency and coherence in one's personality is psychologically healthy, as well as morally correct. A contradiction between impressive words and hateful deeds points to a shaky personality of one who is neither courageous enough to openly say what he/she actually follows in his/her behavior, nor consistent and self-controlling enough to let his/her deeds represent what he/she says. Such a person always talks about goodness, righteousness and helpfulness, but he/she spreads corruption on earth and destroys life represented in both plants or animals. While this kind of people speak about consciousness of God and piety, their actions cause damage and harm which are never accepted by Him. When they are advised by one who witnesses their actions to be conscious of God and refrain from wrongdoing, they show overwhelming haughtiness, which will have the requital it deserves in the life to come.

On the other hand, there are those whose words and deeds are consistent and coherent, since their goal is to please God, not people, and God knows and hears everything, as well as seeing a person's actions. Such a God-conscious person offers his/her whole self to attain His acceptance even though God does not require anything that is beyond common human ability, since He is All-merciful, All-kind, and Most Compassionate towards His worshippers.

In the above last two verses, the Quran invites the believers to achieve peace within themselves and with others, and to avoid splits and contradictions when they are distracted by selfish and short-sighted whims that are increased by Satanic insinuation. Those who have attained to faith are to be ever conscious of God, and ever aware of the human weakness to Satanic seduction. Thus, if they may stumble after the awareness and guidance of God, they will still experience God's might and justice, whereas those who offer their whole selves to achieve God's acceptance experience His compassion and grace.

God does want to make [His teachings] clear to you, and to guide you to the [righteous] ways of life of those who preceded you, and to turn towards you in

يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ وَ يَهْدِيَكُمْ
سُنَنَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ وَ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ ۗ

His mercy, and God is All-knowing, All- wise. And God wants to turn to you in His mercy, whereas those who follow [only] their own lusts want to deviate tremendously from the right path. God wants to lighten your burdens, for the human being has been created with certain weaknesses. [4:26-28]

وَ ٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٦﴾ وَ ٱللَّهُ يُرِيدُ أَن
يَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَ يُرِيدُ ٱلَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ
ٱلشَّهَوَٰتِ أَن تَمِيلُوا۟ مَيْلًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٢٧﴾
يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ أَن يُخَفِّفَ عَنكُمْ ۚ وَ خُلِقَ
ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ ضَعِيفًا ﴿٢٨﴾

Whatever the physical, intellectual and psychological powers of a human being may be, he/she may not always be decisive about choosing the right way. Therefore, God has sent His guidance to people through many prophets concluding with Prophet Muhammad. The Quran repeatedly stresses, through successive prophets, the essence of God's messages: belief in the oneness of God which is affirmed by adherence to moral values in dealing with others. Divine guidance enlightens the mind to make the right decisions, and strengthens the human will to follow the right path, resisting any temptation to deviate following a short-lived whim.

God's guidance is essential to the mind and morality as it draws a boundary in what may have been a grey and confusing area. God is not biased with or against anyone, and His guidance represents as well His absolute justice for all, combined with His mercy and grace. There are always those people who follow their own whims and lusts and persuade others to do similarly and make it appear appealing to others in the very short term, while in the long term they are really hurting their own selves, as well as others. On the other hand, there are those who follow their inclinations then advocate stern asceticism and extreme rigidity. God's guidance in its totality does not support either of these extremes of sternness or permissiveness, teaching only what is good but moderate and within the ability of the common person.

A human being may sometimes deviate from righteousness since he/she, by nature, has limitations and shortcomings, but as long as one realizes his/her wrong doing and corrects himself/herself and repents, God turns towards him/her, in His grace and mercy, as He turns towards everyone through His guidance beforehand, then by His acceptance of true repentance and forgiveness after wrongdoing has been committed. God's guidance presents a fair equation in applying the moral ideals to the human realities: *"God wills to lighten your burdens, for the human being has been created with [limitations and] weaknesses."* As the Quran further states: *"Doesn't He know whom He has created; and He is the All-subtle, the All-aware"* [67:14].

No good is there in much of their private conversations, except such as are meant to enjoin charity, or an act of righteousness, or setting things right between people. Whoso does that, seeking God's accep-

لَّا خَيْرَ فِى كَثِيرٍ
مِّن نَّجْوَىٰهُمْ إِلَّا مَنْ أَمَرَ بِصَدَقَةٍ أَوْ
مَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ إِصْلَٰحٍ بَيْنَ ٱلنَّاسِ ۚ وَ مَن

tance, We shall surely grant him [/her] a mighty reward. [4:114]

يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ ٱبْتِغَآءَ مَرْضَاتِ ٱللَّهِ فَسَوْفَ
نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١١٤﴾

Secrecy is often connected with evil and suspicious purposes, while openness creates self-confidence and develops trust. However, confidentiality may be needed when one is arranging charity for someone whose feelings would be hurt if such an arrangement were known. Secrecy may also be needed for other efforts with good intentions, such as setting matters right among people, be they individuals, groups, countries, etc, since premature publicity in such cases may hinder the process. In a legitimate defense of human rights against a formidable aggressor, secrecy in discussion and planning is the only way to avoid aborted efforts and suicidal effects. In all such delicate situations, secret approaches and talks may be necessary and thus are allowed as an exception to the ideal of openness. Here once again, God's guidance applies the moral ideals to human realities.

And to you We have sent the Book, setting forth the truth, confirming the truth of whatever remains of earlier revealed books, and watching over it; so judge between them [the People of the Book] according to what God has revealed, and follow not their whims, diverging from the truth that has come to you. To each of you We have appointed a law and a way of life. And had God so willed, He would have made you all one single people, but [He willed it otherwise] so as to test you through what He has given you. Vie, then, with one another, in good deeds; unto God you shall all return, and He will make you understand all on which you differed. [5:48]

وَأَنزَلْنَآ إِلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ
بِٱلْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ
وَمُهَيْمِنًا عَلَيْهِ ۖ فَٱحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَآ
أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ ۖ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَآءَهُمْ عَمَّا
جَآءَكَ مِنَ ٱلْحَقِّ ۚ لِكُلٍّ جَعَلْنَا مِنكُمْ
شِرْعَةً وَمِنْهَاجًا ۚ وَلَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ
لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً وَلَٰكِن لِّيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِى
مَآ ءَاتَىٰكُمْ ۖ فَٱسْتَبِقُوا۟ ٱلْخَيْرَٰتِ ۚ إِلَى
ٱللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ
فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

The Quran repeatedly stresses the variation in God's creation: in the earth and rocks, animals and plants, as well as in human beings. Human diversity is not only manifested in physical features [30:22, 49:13], but also in the understandings and judgements made by an individual at various times, as well as by different individuals or groups. Accordingly, human diversity with regard to beliefs is natural and to be anticipated, and God's messages to various communities differ in the particulars, although all call for worshipping the One God: "*To each of you We have appointed a law and a way of life. And had God so willed, He would have made you all one single people, but [He willed it otherwise] so as to test you through what He has given you*". The Quran was the final

message of God as the Muslims believe, *"confirming the book that came before it, and watching over it."* However, Muslims do not expect that all of humanity would unanimously believe in their message, since such conformity and uniformity would contradict the human nature of diversity: *"And had your Lord willed, He would have made all humankind one single people; but [He willed it otherwise, and so] they continue to have their differences [to test them as to how they tackle them], except those upon whom your Lord has bestowed His grace [through benefiting from His guidance] in resolving their differences. And to that end [of testing them] has He created them [all]"* [11:118-119].

Those who are blessed with God's grace do not change their human nature of diversity, but follow God's guidance in coping with their diversity and handling their differences ethically and practically. People are created with natural diversity to bring out the best of their potential through these challenging differences, and to allow them to decide how to settle their differences so that they can reach understanding rather than confrontation. The prevalence of the truth which is referred to repeatedly in the verses [9:33, 48:28, 61:9] does not necessarily mean that all or most of humanity will become Muslim, since geographical, psychological and cultural barriers will never completely disappear. Therefore, diversity of human nature will continue to exist. What these verses point out is that the truth of worshipping the One God would conceptually in time become obvious to most people, but they would not necessarily be psychologically ready to accept this truth for various reasons. Human beings will continue to have their differences as long as each of them has free will, and as long as there is diversity in their psychological and intellectual attitudes. Muslims are forbidden from any attempts to impose a uniformity in faith by force, since *"There is no coercion in matters of faith"* [2:256] and God does not accept belief in Him from an unwilling person who is forced to pronounce it. Thus, pluralism, in all human conceptual aspects, is the natural and divine law in this world. Muslims have to accept this and leave the judgement about who may be right or wrong in this human diversity to the One who knows the circumstances of every individual. Instead, people should cooperate, complement and compete with one another locally and universally in doing good: *"Vie, then, with one another, in good deeds; unto God you shall return, and He will make you understand all on which you differed."*

And when your Lord brings forth from the loins of the Children of Adam their offspring, and He calls upon them to bear witness about themselves: "Am I not your Lord?", they answer "Yes, indeed, we do bear witness thereto."
This has been the case, lest you should say on the Day of Resurrection, "Of this we were never mindful," or lest you say: "Our forefathers had previously associated others with God, and we were but their late offspring [that followed them]; will You, then, destroy

وَإِذْ
أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِنۢ بَنِىٓ ءَادَمَ مِن ظُهُورِهِمْ
ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَأَشْهَدَهُمْ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ أَلَسْتُ
بِرَبِّكُمْ ۖ قَالُوا۟ بَلَىٰ ۛ شَهِدْنَآ ۛ أَن
تَقُولُوا۟ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ إِنَّا كُنَّا عَنْ هَٰذَا
غَٰفِلِينَ ﴿١٧٢﴾ أَوْ تَقُولُوٓا۟ إِنَّمَآ أَشْرَكَ
ءَابَآؤُنَا مِن قَبْلُ وَكُنَّا ذُرِّيَّةً مِّنۢ

us for what the unrighteous had already done?"
And thus clearly do We spell out the messages, so that they may come back [to their minds].[7:172-174]

بَعْدِهِمْ ۖ أَفَتُهْلِكُنَا بِمَا فَعَلَ ٱلْمُبْطِلُونَ
﴿١٧٣﴾ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ ٱلْآيَٰتِ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ
يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿١٧٤﴾

Here is a very significant reference to what may be called "the spiritual compass" with which every member of humankind throughout the successive generations is equipped. Where is it located, and how does it function? Is it located in the brain? Are the numerous Quranic references to "the heart" as the center of the spiritual consciousness symbolic and allegorical or do they mean something concrete? [e.g. 2:7, 10, 97, 225; 3:154; 6:110, 113; 7:100, 179; 9:45, 64, 77, 87, 110, 125, 127; 13:28; 14:43; 16:22, 78, 106, 108; 17:36, 46; 18:28, 57; 22:46, 53-54; 23:78; 26:89; 40:35; 41:5; 42:24; 45:23; 46:26; 47:16, 20, 24, 29; 48:18, 26; 49:3; 50:33, 37; 53:11; 57:16; 58:22; 59:14; 61:5; 64:11; 67:23; 83:14]. No specific answer can be given. All that we know is that there has always been spiritual indication, even in the most ancient signs of human life, that have survived and that were traceable. The Quran refers to the divine source of the spiritual component of the human being: *"And when I have given him his final well-proportioned form and breathed into him of My spirit, fall you down [O angels] before him in prostration"* [15:29, 38:72].

Thus human spirituality, being correlated and interwoven with the human totality, probably also contributes to the sophisticated human intellectual and psychological merits. God's messages came to bring this instinctive spiritual component in the human being to its full capacity through divine guidance. It is the human's responsibility to maintain the soundness and functioning of his/her spiritual compass, and to let it reach its peak by developing it constantly as he/she nurtures and develops the physical and intellectual sides of his/her being. Since God has created the human being as a correlated totality, His guidance deals with spiritual development within the framework of a comprehensive plan of total balanced human development in which there are no splits or contradictions.

How evil is the example of people who are bent on stubbornly giving the lie to Our messages as they are wronging their own selves.
Whomsoever God does guide, he [/she] alone is truly guided, whereas those whom He lets go astray they are the losers.
And We have destined for hell many of the invisible beings [jinn] and human beings [as a result of evil-doing]; they have hearts [and minds] with which they fail to really comprehend, and they have eyes with which they fail

سَآءَ مَثَلًا ٱلْقَوْمُ ٱلَّذِينَ
كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا وَأَنفُسَهُمْ كَانُوا۟
يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿١٧٧﴾ مَن يَهْدِ ٱللَّهُ فَهُوَ
ٱلْمُهْتَدِى ۖ وَمَن يُضْلِلْ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ
ٱلْخَٰسِرُونَ ﴿١٧٨﴾ وَلَقَدْ ذَرَأْنَا لِجَهَنَّمَ
كَثِيرًا مِّنَ ٱلْجِنِّ وَٱلْإِنسِ ۖ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ
لَّا يَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ لَّا يُبْصِرُونَ

to perceive, and they have ears with which they fail to hear. They are like cattle; nay, they are more erratic; it is they who are [truly] the neglectful. [7:177-179]

بِهَا وَ لَهُمْ ءَاذَانٌ لَّا يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَآ ۚ
أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ كَالْأَنْعَٰمِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ ۚ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ
هُمُ ٱلْغَٰفِلُونَ ﴿١٧٩﴾

A human being who blindly follows others without thinking is doing his/her own self an injustice, since he/she is neglecting his/her own senses and intellect. He/she, like all human beings, has eyes and ears, a mind and heart, but all his/her divine gifts become valueless if they are not used. If the distinctive difference between the human being and the animal is that the former possesses intellect and spirituality, then an intentional suspension of these capabilities makes the human being worse than the animal that lacks them in the first place.

It is He who has created you [all] out of one living entity, and out of it brought into being its mate, so that one might find restfulness [and satisfaction] with the other. And so, when he has closely approached her, she conceives [what at first is] a light burden and passes by with it; then when she grows heavy, they [the couple] both call unto God their Lord, "If you give us a sound child, we shall assuredly be among the grateful."
As soon as He has granted them sound offspring, they assign to Him associates in that He has granted them, but God is high exalted above any that they associate. Do they associate [with God] that which creates nothing, and they themselves are created, and that which has no power to help them, and neither can they help themselves! [7:189-192]

هُوَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكُم
مِّن نَّفْسٍ وَٰحِدَةٍ وَ جَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا
لِيَسْكُنَ إِلَيْهَا ۖ فَلَمَّا تَغَشَّىٰهَا حَمَلَتْ
حَمْلًا خَفِيفًا فَمَرَّتْ بِهِۦ ۖ فَلَمَّآ أَثْقَلَت
دَّعَوَا ٱللَّهَ رَبَّهُمَا لَئِنْ ءَاتَيْتَنَا صَٰلِحًا
لَّنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلشَّٰكِرِينَ ﴿١٨٩﴾ فَلَمَّآ
ءَاتَىٰهُمَا صَٰلِحًا جَعَلَا لَهُۥ شُرَكَآءَ فِيمَآ
ءَاتَىٰهُمَا ۚ فَتَعَٰلَى ٱللَّهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ
﴿١٩٠﴾ أَيُشْرِكُونَ مَا لَا يَخْلُقُ شَيْـًٔا وَ هُمْ
يُخْلَقُونَ ﴿١٩١﴾ وَ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ لَهُمْ
نَصْرًا وَ لَآ أَنفُسَهُمْ يَنصُرُونَ ﴿١٩٢﴾

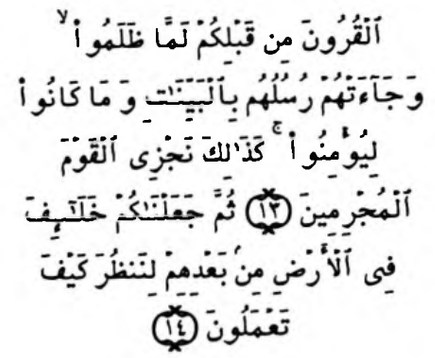
The male and female, who have been created from one living entity, find themselves attracted to one another, physically and psychologically, and each of them complements the other and finds comfort with him/her. Through such a sexual attraction, a family begins to be formed. This couple then begins looking forward to reproducing children, and the sexual pleasure becomes merely a means for the psychological fulfillment of parenthood. The reproductive process, in all its physical and emotional sides, represents a daily repeated miracle for any one who thinks about it. In their yearning for a child, who

they want to be healthy and well behaved, the parents-to-be call upon God to grant their wish become real, and they make an assured pledge that they will be ever grateful for God's grace. However, as soon as God answers their prayer and grants them the child, the parents forget their assured pledge to God and their natural expected gratitude to Him. They may think themselves or those who take care of the mother during her pregnancy and delivery as the creators of the baby. They may also believe that certain dead saints or living pious people could let God agree to grant them the child. What is especially underlined in the above verses is one's readiness to make promises to God when he/she is in need, and the subsequent swift forgetting of any bond, as soon as what one yearned for is fulfilled. The Quran repeatedly stresses that a believer in God ought to be more observant of his/her individual responsibility, and that he/she should keep his/her promises to God and to people at all times, however favorable or unfavorable the circumstances may be [e.g. 2:40, 177; 3:76; 6:152; 13:20; 16:91; 17:34; 23:8; 33:23; 70:32].

Surely those who expect not to meet Us, and are well-pleased with the life of this world, and are content with it, and those who are heedless of our messages, their abode is hell, in return for all that [evil] they have earned.
But, surely, those who have attained to faith, [and] do righteous deeds, their Lord guides them aright through their faith. [In the life to come], running waters will flow beneath them in gardens of bliss; and their call therein, "Limitless are You in Your glory, O God" and their greeting, "Peace," and they end their call saying, "All praise be to God, the Lord of All being!"
If God were to hasten for people the ill [they may deserve by what they have earned], as they [themselves would like to hasten the [coming of what they consider] good, their end would indeed come forth; but We leave those who expect not to meet Us groping along in their arrogant offensiveness. And when affliction visits a human being, he [/she] invokes Us: [in any situation], lying on his side, or sitting, or standing; but as soon as We have taken away his[/her] affliction, he[/she] passes on as if he[/she] never invoked Us to save him[/her] from an affliction! Thus, to those who waste their own selves their deeds look pleasing.

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا
يَرْجُونَ لِقَآءَنَا وَرَضُوا۟ بِٱلْحَيَوٰةِ
ٱلدُّنْيَا وَٱطْمَأَنُّوا۟ بِهَا وَٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ
ءَايَٰتِنَا غَٰفِلُونَ ۝٧ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ مَأْوَىٰهُمُ
ٱلنَّارُ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَكْسِبُونَ ۝٨ إِنَّ
ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ
يَهْدِيهِمْ رَبُّهُم بِإِيمَٰنِهِمْ ۖ تَجْرِى مِن
تَحْتِهِمُ ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ فِى جَنَّٰتِ ٱلنَّعِيمِ ۝٩
دَعْوَىٰهُمْ فِيهَا سُبْحَٰنَكَ ٱللَّهُمَّ وَتَحِيَّتُهُمْ
فِيهَا سَلَٰمٌ ۚ وَءَاخِرُ دَعْوَىٰهُمْ أَنِ ٱلْحَمْدُ
لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ۝١٠ ۞ وَلَوْ يُعَجِّلُ
ٱللَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ ٱلشَّرَّ ٱسْتِعْجَالَهُم بِٱلْخَيْرِ
لَقُضِىَ إِلَيْهِمْ أَجَلُهُمْ ۚ فَنَذَرُ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا
يَرْجُونَ لِقَآءَنَا فِى طُغْيَٰنِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ
۝١١ وَإِذَا مَسَّ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ ٱلضُّرُّ دَعَانَا
لِجَنۢبِهِۦٓ أَوْ قَاعِدًا أَوْ قَآئِمًا فَلَمَّا
كَشَفْنَا عَنْهُ ضُرَّهُۥ مَرَّ كَأَن لَّمْ يَدْعُنَآ إِلَىٰ
ضُرٍّ مَّسَّهُۥ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ زُيِّنَ لِلْمُسْرِفِينَ مَا
كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ۝١٢ وَلَقَدْ أَهْلَكْنَا

Generations before you We destroyed when they did evil, and the conveyors of the [divine] messages to them brought them clear evidence of the truth, but they were bent on rejecting them. Thus do We requite people who are evil-doers. Then We made you their successors on earth, to see how you would behave.
[10:7-14]


وَلَقَدْ أَهْلَكْنَا الْقُرُونَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَمَّا ظَلَمُوا
وَجَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُم بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَمَا كَانُوا
لِيُؤْمِنُوا كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الْقَوْمَ
الْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿١٣﴾ ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ خَلَائِفَ
فِي الْأَرْضِ مِن بَعْدِهِمْ لِنَنظُرَ كَيْفَ
تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

There are people who do not look beyond the pleasures of this life in which they are indulged. They may thus be satisfied momentarily, yet they are not attentive to the fact that this life could end suddenly for an individual without his/her reaching total fulfillment, and sometimes through enormous suffering of injustice. In their short-sightedness, these people may, therefore, only be concerned with gaining their own pleasures in this life, regardless of whether they earn them justly or by violating the rights of others. If this life and its pleasures are the end, then any means that achieves this goal would be acceptable, as long as one can escape the consequences of breaking the law. However, these short-sighted people will eventually be confronted with death, and will realize too late how short this life and its pleasures are, and how they will be deprived in the eternal life to come which they had completely disregarded. God allows every human being, whether he/she is a doer of good or evil, a period of time for sufficient thinking, rethinking and possible self-correction. Those who insist on paying no attention to the passing of time and the signs and laws of God in this life have to suffer the consequences of this inattention when they face the inevitable end.

The above verses stress how the human being is so short-sighted and hasty to the extent that he/she may not perceive natural phenomena and God's signs and messages. However, the Lord in His wisdom, mercy and grace allows such people an opportunity for repentance and self-reform, and He does not hasten the requital for their evil-doing in the manner that they themselves wish for when they want good for themselves or evil for others. Human short-sightedness and inconsistency can also be seen in the case of a person who feels very close to God in times of difficulty, but then runs far from Him during times of ease.

One may wonder how some human beings cannot see that however pleasant this life may be it comes to an end, as the end of previous generations proves. Evil-doers have been requited for their evil-doing in the long term in this life, and severe requital is waiting for them in the life to come. A generation has to keep in mind the lessons of those who passed before, and that every individual and society is tested in this life for an appointed term. The successor's life will come to its fixed end the same as the predecessor's, and no individual or society is ever immune from facing the end. Therefore, it is wise to expect and plan for passing the test successfully to win the rewards of eternity.

It is He who enables you [using His laws in the universe] to travel through land and sea; and when you are on ships and they sail on with them [who are on board] in a favorable wind, and they rejoice at it, there comes a severe storm and waves approach them from all sides, and they think they are encompassed, they call unto God, sincere [at that moment] in their faith in Him alone: "If you do save us from this, surely we shall be among the grateful."
Yet, when He has saved them, behold, they act outrageously on earth, in violation of all right. O people! All your outrageous deeds are bound to fall back against your own selves; it is [merely] an enjoyment of the life of this world [that you get]; then in the end to Us is your return, and whereupon We shall make you truly know all that you were doing before. The parable of the life of this world is but that of rain which We send down from the sky; with which mingle the plants of the earth that human beings and livestock eat; until, when the earth has taken on its glitter and has been embellished, and its inhabitants think they have full power over it, there comes down to it our command by night or by day, and We cause it to become [like] a field mown down, as if yesterday it flourished not. Thus clearly do We spell out these messages unto people who reflect. And God invites [people] to the abode of peace, and He guides whom He wills [according to one's free choice granted by Him] to a straight way. [10:22-25]

هُوَ
ٱلَّذِى يُسَيِّرُكُمْ فِى ٱلْبَرِّ وَ ٱلْبَحْرِ ۖ
حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا كُنتُمْ فِى ٱلْفُلْكِ وَ جَرَيْنَ بِهِم
بِرِيحٍ طَيِّبَةٍ وَ فَرِحُوا۟ بِهَا جَآءَتْهَا رِيحٌ
عَاصِفٌ وَ جَآءَهُمُ ٱلْمَوْجُ مِن كُلِّ مَكَانٍ
وَظَنُّوٓا۟ أَنَّهُمْ أُحِيطَ بِهِمْ ۙ دَعَوُا۟ ٱللَّهَ
مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ ٱلدِّينَ لَئِنْ أَنجَيْتَنَا مِنْ
هَٰذِهِۦ لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلشَّٰكِرِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾ فَلَمَّآ
أَنجَىٰهُمْ إِذَا هُمْ يَبْغُونَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ
ٱلْحَقِّ ۗ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ إِنَّمَا بَغْيُكُمْ
عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِكُم ۖ مَّتَٰعَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ
ثُمَّ إِلَيْنَا مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَنُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ
تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ إِنَّمَا مَثَلُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا
كَمَآءٍ أَنزَلْنَٰهُ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ فَٱخْتَلَطَ بِهِۦ
نَبَاتُ ٱلْأَرْضِ مِمَّا يَأْكُلُ ٱلنَّاسُ
وَٱلْأَنْعَٰمُ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَآ أَخَذَتِ ٱلْأَرْضُ
زُخْرُفَهَا وَ ٱزَّيَّنَتْ وَ ظَنَّ أَهْلُهَآ أَنَّهُمْ
قَٰدِرُونَ عَلَيْهَآ أَتَىٰهَآ أَمْرُنَا لَيْلًا أَوْ
نَهَارًا فَجَعَلْنَٰهَا حَصِيدًا كَأَن لَّمْ تَغْنَ
بِٱلْأَمْسِ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ
يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ وَ ٱللَّهُ يَدْعُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ دَارِ
ٱلسَّلَٰمِ وَ يَهْدِى مَن يَشَآءُ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ
مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٢٥﴾

The human being is a universal creature, and moving through the universe is one of his/her characteristic privileges. God has enabled the human being to use His laws in the universe to move through land and sea, and even through air and space [45:12-13]. These journeys, however, do not always go smoothly, and the travelers may go through some troubles. Feeling helpless when lost in the midst of a gloomy desert, caught in the atmosphere, or surrounded by the huge waves in a fierce storm, the travellers instinctively and humbly call upon God to save them, vowing that if they are saved they will be grateful to Him all their lives and will worship Him alone and follow His guidance. But once they are

saved, these people break their promises and commit aggression and damage on earth and violate the rights of others. Such as break their promises and are aggressors do not realize that their evil doing is but against their own selves, and that it is they who will bear the painful consequences in this life; furthermore, they will have formidable suffering when this short life with all its illusive pleasures comes to an end, and eternal life follows.

Such adherence to this life and subsequent selfishness, aggression and shortsightedness develop haughtiness, not only in individuals but in societies. Seeing their earth productive and adorned with varied beauty and their lives prosperous, people may come under the illusion that they have mastery over everything. They forget that they are merely working within the divine laws in the vast universe, in which they occupy a very tiny space, and of which they know very little. This narrow-minded and myopic haughtiness leads societies and civilizations to self-destruction, and their fall in the end comes either by their own hands, or through another power which replaces them. This world, whatever its prosperity and attraction may be, will come to an end and will be followed by another world of eternal justice and peace. That world of real fulfillment is significantly called by the Quran *"the abode of peace"* [see also 6:127] since its happy inhabitants will enjoy peace with themselves, extend it to others, and be met with it everywhere [e.g. 6:54; 7:46; 10:10; 13:24; 14:23; 15:46; 16:32; 19:62; 25:75; 33:44; 36:58; 39:73; 50:34; 56:26, 91]. The way to reach *"the abode of peace"* in the eternal life to come is to follow God's guidance to the straight path in dealing with yourself and with others, a path which the Quran calls *"the ways of peace"*: *"... there has come to you from God a light and a clear divine writ, through which God guides all who seek His goodly acceptance to paths of peace, and by His grace leads them out of the depths of darkness into the light, and guides them to a straight way"* [5:15-16].

Never would your Lord destroy cities unjustly, while as yet their people behave righteously [towards another]. And had your Lord willed, He would have made all humankind one single people; but [He willed it otherwise, and so] they continue to have their differences [to test them as to how they tackle them], except those upon whom your Lord has bestowed His grace [through benefiting from His guidance in resolving their differences]. And to that end [of testing them] has He created them [all]. But [as for those who refuse to resolve their differences rightfully and to benefit from the divine guidance], your Lord's words shall be fulfilled: "I shall assuredly fill hell with [the evil-doers from] the invisible beings (jinn) and the human beings as well."

وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ لِيُهْلِكَ ٱلْقُرَىٰ
بِظُلْمٍ وَأَهْلُهَا مُصْلِحُونَ ﴿١١٧﴾ وَلَوْ شَآءَ
رَبُّكَ لَجَعَلَ ٱلنَّاسَ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً ۖ وَلَا
يَزَالُونَ مُخْتَلِفِينَ ﴿١١٨﴾ إِلَّا مَن رَّحِمَ
رَبُّكَ ۚ وَلِذَٰلِكَ خَلَقَهُمْ ۗ وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَةُ
رَبِّكَ لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنَ ٱلْجِنَّةِ وَٱلنَّاسِ
أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١١٩﴾ وَكُلًّا نَّقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ

And all that We relate to you of the accounts of [earlier] conveyors of [God's] messages, [aim to] strengthen your heart; and in them there has come to you the truth, as well as an admonition and a reminder to those who believe. And say to those who do not believe: "Do whatever you are able to do in your situation; we shall also do our best in ours. And watch and wait [for what is coming], as we are also watching and waiting!" And to God belongs what is behind the human perception in the heavens and on earth, and to Him all matters return; worship Him, then, and place your trust in Him alone; and your Lord never loses perception of that which you do. [11:117-123]

أَنۢبَآءِ ٱلرُّسُلِ مَا نُثَبِّتُ بِهِۦ فُؤَادَكَ ۚ
وَجَآءَكَ فِى هَٰذِهِ ٱلْحَقُّ وَمَوْعِظَةٌ
وَذِكْرَىٰ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٢٠﴾ وَقُل لِّلَّذِينَ لَا
يُؤْمِنُونَ ٱعْمَلُوا۟ عَلَىٰ مَكَانَتِكُمْ إِنَّا
عَٰمِلُونَ ﴿١٢١﴾ وَٱنتَظِرُوٓا۟ إِنَّا
مُنتَظِرُونَ ﴿١٢٢﴾ وَلِلَّهِ غَيْبُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَإِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُ ٱلْأَمْرُ كُلُّهُۥ ۚ
فَٱعْبُدْهُ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَيْهِ ۚ وَمَا رَبُّكَ
بِغَٰفِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٢٣﴾

The above verses state very significant theological and social principles. Evil-doers are, in the long term, self-destructive. In their short-sightedness and ego-centrism they hurt their own interests which need good relations with others for mutual and collective benefits. Even those who received a direct punishment from God in this life [e.g. the communities of Noah, Hud, Salih, Shu'ayb, Lut ...], were not punished merely for not believing the messages of God, but for their evil-doing, as the prominent commentator on the Quran al-Razi points out in his comment on the above verse [11:117]. In addition to committing injustice and evil--doing, they insulted their prophets and threatened them with murder or expulsion, and persecuted the believers [e.g. 7:60, 66, 70, 74, 77, 80-82, 85-88, 127; 11:27, 32, 38, 53-54, 59, 78, 84-87, 91; 19:46; 21:68-70; 26:130, 151-154, 181-187; 28:4; 44:20-21]. Muslim jurists state that human obligations toward God will be judged with forgiveness and grace, while the human rights in mutual dealings should be strictly observed and they will be strictly judged.

The subsequent verses underline an essential reality which has serious implications in the relations of Muslims among themselves and with others, in their countries and throughout the entire world. Since the human being has a free will and choice, human differences in intellectual discretion and moral attitudes are inevitable. Belief in God and His message and the following of His guidance does not prevent human differences or turn the believers into angels or machines. The believers will continue to represent their human nature, and differences among themselves and with others will never cease to emerge. It is in fact a divine plan that human beings continue to have differences among themselves and with others, so that they can be tested as to how fair and honest they can be in their handling of these differences. Believers, through their faith and their following of God's guidance, are blessed with learning how to reduce the differences as much as possible by agreeing on the common beliefs, values, and principles, then discussing their differences in a constructive methodological [e.g. 4:59] and ethical [e.g. 16:125; 49:5-13] way until they

reach a decision. Accordingly, pluralism is inevitably the rule for Muslims in any area of human thinking, including the understanding and implementation of God's guidance. Had God willed He could have shaped all humanity into one pattern of thinking and behavior so that everyone would be a doer of good and would, therefore, be rewarded, but instead He willed that human beings have free will and choice, and be different in their judgement and behavior. Consequently, the doers of good will be rewarded in God's eternal bliss, while the evildoers, whether they are from among the human beings or the invisible beings "jinn," will suffer punishment.

In the end, the verses stress that historical events should not be isolated from the present, since one cannot ignore the thread that connects the actions and developments of humanity throughout all of its history, and that thread emphasizes God's laws in these human developments. Evil-doing has always been destructive for individuals, societies, and civilizations. Those who have attained to faith should learn the lessons of history, and should challenge those who do not believe that truthfulness and rightfulness will prevail in the end. They ought to have full confidence in themselves and place their trust in God, on Whom they should rely and to Whom all matters return.

And yet I do not claim the absolute innocence of my own inner-self; verily this human inner self does incite the person to evil, except in as much as my Lord bestows His grace: truly my Lord is All-forgiving, Most Gracious. [12:53]

وَمَآ
أُبَرِّئُ نَفْسِىٓ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلنَّفْسَ لَأَمَّارَةٌۢ
بِٱلسُّوٓءِ إِلَّا مَا رَحِمَ رَبِّىٓ ۚ إِنَّ رَبِّى
غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٥٣﴾

This verse reports the conclusion of the statement of the wife of the Aziz (a high official in ancient Egyptian administration) about what happened between her and Prophet Joseph, who had been raised at the Aziz's home. The Quran refers in different verses to three sides of the human inner-self or psyche: the inciting or the impelling one in the above-mentioned verse, the self -reproaching one [75:2], and the balanced and satisfied one [89:27]. This, as previously mentioned, may call to mind another different triple division of the psyche in the psychoanalytic theory: the "id" that is completely unconscious and the source of psychic energy derived from instinctual needs and drive, the "super ego" that is partially conscious and represents internalization of parental conscience and the rules of society and functions to reward and punish through a system of moral values, conscience and sense of guilt; and the "ego" that serves as the organized conscious mediator between the person and reality, especially by functioning both in the perception of and adaptation to reality. Both triads may be discussed by specialists to discover where they may coincide or differ, but such a discussion is beyond the purpose here.

It is all alike [to Him] whether any of you speaks in secrecy or openly, and

سَوَآءٌ
مِّنكُم مَّنْ أَسَرَّ ٱلْقَوْلَ وَمَن جَهَرَ بِهِۦ

whether one tries to hide [his/her deeds] during the night or walks forth overtly by day. Every one has attendants [angels] before him[/her] and behind him[/her] watching him[/her] by God's command. Verily, God does not cause the condition of people to change unless they themselves change what is in their own inner selves. And when God wills people to suffer [as a result of their own deeds], there is none who could turn this back; and they have none who could support or protect them from Him. [13:10-11]

وَمَنْ هُوَ مُسْتَخْفٍۭ بِٱلَّيْلِ وَسَارِبٌۢ بِٱلنَّهَارِ
﴿١٠﴾ لَهُۥ مُعَقِّبَٰتٌ مِّنۢ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ
خَلْفِهِۦ يَحْفَظُونَهُۥ مِنْ أَمْرِ ٱللَّهِ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا۟ مَا
بِأَنفُسِهِمْ ۗ وَإِذَآ أَرَادَ ٱللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ سُوٓءًا
فَلَا مَرَدَّ لَهُۥ ۚ وَمَا لَهُم مِّن دُونِهِۦ مِن
وَالٍ ﴿١١﴾

The verses stress that the All-knowing knows everything that is said or done regardless of whether it occurs secretly or openly, by the cover of night or by day. Those attendants before and behind the human being who guard and/or protect him/her may be angels or natural laws set "by" God's command. However, another view - according to al-Razi in his commentary - understands these attendants as made by the human being to protect himself/herself "from" God's command, a human illusion which is refuted by a following part of the verse: "*And when God wills people to suffer, there is none who could turn this back.*" In any case, the verse includes an essential law of social change: God changes people's conditions if they change their inner selves, whether to the better or to the worse. Human change, like the human personality, is multi-faceted, and thus submission of the whole self to the One God, has its conceptual, psychological, moral, and behavioral implications. A genuine belief in God and the life to come means a comprehensive change from a narrow egocentric perspective to a wide, human and universal one. But all these consequences often emerge through the natural law of cause and effect and do not imply any divine favoritism for certain people who believe in God. Every individual or group has to have the persistent will for change, and consequently turn this will into consistent and persistent actions, since wishful thinking and empty claims never lead to concrete accomplishments. *"And [know that] had God so willed, He could certainly have inflicted defeat on them [directly]; but [He wills you to struggle] so as to test you [all] by one another"* [47:4].

As a means of changing the believer's inner self, the human negatives and positives are underlined in the Muslim's prayers to God, in which he/she asks for the guidance and help of the Lord to gain strength and avoid weakness.These supplications crystallize the awareness of the believer and motivate him/her for continuous self-development. On the negative side in which the believer is reminded of the weaknesses he/she has to avoid, we find this supplication in the Prophet's traditions: "O God! Grant me Your support against wearying anxiety [about the future] or unremitting grief [about the past], and grant me Your support against [imposed] failure or [deliberate] inactivity, and grant me Your support against cowardice or miserliness, and grant me Your support against being overwhelmed by debt or suppressed by any people" [reported by Ibn Hanbal, al-Bukhari, Muslim, al-Tirmidhi, al-Nasa'i, Abu Dawud].

On the positive side, in which the human strengths that a believer ought to have or maintain are pointed out, one of the Prophet's traditions reads: "O God! I pray You to grant me ease and wholeness in the faith, in this world's life, and also in the life to come" [reported by Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah]. This tradition calls to mind the Quranic verse in which the believer prays to God for the good of this life as well as that of the eternal life to come [2:201], and thus removes any contradiction between the two stages of human life and emphasizes their coherence.

Through such supplications, the believer is reminded, and made fully aware, of what he/she should adhere to, and what he/she should avoid. One cannot look for God's answer of his/her prayer, unless he/she is serious in developing his/her own inner-self, and consistently in working for this goal, so as to be ready to receive aid for his/her own earnest efforts.

And He gives you of all that you ask Him, and if you [try to] count God's blessings, never will you be able to number them; behold, the human being is most persistent in wrongdoing, stubbornly ungrateful. [14:34]

وَءَاتَىٰكُم مِّن كُلِّ مَا سَأَلْتُمُوهُ ۚ
وَإِن تَعُدُّوا۟ نِعْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَآ ۗ إِنَّ
ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ لَظَلُومٌ كَفَّارٌ ﴿٣٤﴾

In many verses, the Quran educates the human being about his/her main weaknesses. This is not to humiliate him/her, nor to assure a human sinful origin, (since the early wrongdoing of Adam and his wife was forgiven by God when they repented), but to make the human being aware of these negatives in order to overcome them. The above verse underlines the human weakness of unfairness and ungratefulness, especially towards the Creator who has blessed all human beings with infinite blessings, essential to the human himself/herself and to human life on earth. In other verses, the human being is described as *"becoming quickly hopeless, and ungrateful, as well"* [11:9], *"acting excessively in cases of contention"* [16:4, also 36:77], *"ever hasty"* [17:11], and *"ever tightfisted"* [17:100]. However, God's blessings and favors for the human being in this world's life never cease, whatever a person's attitude may be [17:20]. A significant blessing of God for all human beings is that which secures the relations and continuation of humankind. The sexual and parental instinctive inclinations, created by God, are fulfilled through the institutions of marriage and family. The spouse and offspring are truly "a joy to the eye" and represent a "model" unit for the whole society [25:74]. If such a contented family is provided from God's bounty with "sustenance out of the good things of life" [e.g. 17:70], then any sensible person ought to meet these blessings with gratitude to the Creator and All-giver. However, there are always those who ignore these obvious blessings, acting ungratefully towards them.

And it is God who has brought you forth from your mothers' wombs knowing nothing; but He has endowed you with hearing and eyesight and hearts; haply this causes you to be grateful. [16:78]

وَ ٱللَّهُ أَخۡرَجَكُم مِّنۢ
بُطُونِ أُمَّهَٰتِكُمۡ لَا تَعۡلَمُونَ شَيۡـٔٗا وَ جَعَلَ
لَكُمُ ٱلسَّمۡعَ وَ ٱلۡأَبۡصَٰرَ وَ ٱلۡأَفۡـِٔدَةَ ۙ
لَعَلَّكُمۡ تَشۡكُرُونَ ٧٨

The human senses which are created in a new-born undergo a process of growth and interaction with the material and social environment. Without these initial faculties and their interacting abilities, the merits and qualities which distinguish the human creature from other animals would be missing. However, the fact that one "knows nothing" when one is born does not necessarily contradict the other Quranic statement that the human self *"is imbued with moral failings as well as with righteousness"* [91:8], since each verse is referring to different kinds of information and two different ways of receiving them. Human development from childhood to maturity may comprise all the human features in their totality: physical, intellectual and psychological, moral and spiritual. Such development points to the dynamism in God's creation, and to the human responsibility for developing the human powers according to God's guidance, *"Verily, one is accountable for one's hearing, eyesight and heart, all of them"* [17:36]. The Quran repeatedly mentions the heart after the hearing and eyesight [see in addition 23:78, 32:9, 46:26, 67:23], and refer to it as an organ of appreciation [e.g. 2:88; 6:25, 110, 113; 7:179, 13:28; 16:22, 108; 17:46; 18:28, 57; 22:46; 33:4; 41:5; 45:23; 47:24]. Is such a repeated reference to the heart meant to be metaphorical, or does it allude to the physical heart? Is it merely following the literary tradition in Arabic and other languages of considering the heart to be the center of feelings and emotions, as its beating is affected by emotions and excitement, or has it another significance? And if the word is used metaphorically does it mean precisely "the mind," or more, or less? Has the heart some relation to human spirituality [i.e. 15:29; 17:85; 32:9; 38:72]? All these questions invite more research from physiologists and psychologists, as well as from scholars of Arabic, comparative linguistics and literature, and Muslim scholars naturally have the primary obligation in this respect.

And the human being prays for evil, as fervently as he [/she] prays for good, and the human being is ever hasty. [17:11]

وَ يَدۡعُ ٱلۡإِنسَٰنُ
بِٱلشَّرِّ دُعَآءَهُۥ بِٱلۡخَيۡرِ ۖ وَ كَانَ ٱلۡإِنسَٰنُ
عَجُولٗا ١١

This verse underlines a serious human weakness: hastiness. When hastiness is added to the human limitations of knowledge about all aspects of a matter, especially in relation to the persons, time or place of which he/she has no knowledge, wrong judgements are expected. Accordingly, one may pray to God for something that he/she thinks to be good while it proves to be bad, as the Quran indicates in another verse: *"Yet it may happen that you hate a thing which is good for you; and it may happen that you like a thing which is bad for you; and God knows, whereas you know not"* [2:216]. Besides, in a moment of

anger, one may pray that a close person - such as a spouse, a child, a friend or even his/her own self - be punished, while, when one thinks calmly he/she would never want such a person to suffer any harm. One's relation to God and his/her prayers to Him should not be used for punishing anybody except in cases of serious aggression and evil-doing against which one is unable to defend himself/herself. One can always pray for God's support according to His own will, but he should not ask God to punish anybody without a serious need that justifies calling upon the All-mighty, the All-powerful, the Whole-justice. God's support may be in enabling a wrong-doer to repent and make up for his/her past wrongdoing. However, owing to God's grace and mercy, He does not hasten His punishment to those who deserve it in this life, since He has appointed a term for every human being in it, and on the inevitable return to the Lord, everyone will have his/her account with God's judgement and requital- [see e.g. 10:11; 16:61; 20:129; 29:53-54; 35:45; 42:14]. Yet, wrong-doing actually has its effects on the wrong-doer himself/herself and in his relations with others in this world's life, especially in the long term.

وَكُلَّ إِنسَٰنٍ أَلْزَمْنَٰهُ طَٰٓئِرَهُۥ فِى
عُنُقِهِۦ ۖ وَنُخْرِجُ لَهُۥ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ كِتَٰبًا
يَلْقَىٰهُ مَنشُورًا ﴿١٣﴾ ٱقْرَأْ كِتَٰبَكَ كَفَىٰ
بِنَفْسِكَ ٱلْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكَ حَسِيبًا ﴿١٤﴾

And every human being's destiny We have tied to his [/her] own neck; and on the Day of Resurrection We shall bring forth for him [/her] a record which each will find spread wide open. [It will be said to him//her]: "Read your own record; sufficient is your own self to-day as a reckoner against you." [17:13-14]

A true believer does not see human destiny as depending upon birds or omens or stars as the Arabs before Islam or others may have superstitiously believed. It is only one's direction and deeds, good or evil, which determine his/her destiny in this world and in the life to come. Our responsibility is tied to our own behavior, not to casual or accidental events. On the Day of Judgement, the record of each person's deeds, good or evil, will be exposed to him/her, and thus everyone will be given a reckoning of his/her own deeds. Personal accountability is fundamental in Islam and repeatedly stressed in the Quran [e.g. 52:21; 53:38-41; 74:38] for it is not only the accountability before people in this world where one can hide or change facts, but the accountability before God the All-knowing, the All-aware, where one's own record will be the evidence against himself/herself.

وَإِذَا مَسَّكُمُ ٱلضُّرُّ فِى ٱلْبَحْرِ ضَلَّ مَن
تَدْعُونَ إِلَّآ إِيَّاهُ ۖ فَلَمَّا نَجَّىٰكُمْ إِلَى
ٱلْبَرِّ أَعْرَضْتُمْ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ كَفُورًا
﴿٦٧﴾ أَفَأَمِنتُمْ أَن يَخْسِفَ بِكُمْ جَانِبَ

And whenever harm befalls you at sea, any that you may call upon - except Him - fails to do anything [helpful] for you. However, when He brings you safe to land, you turn away [forgetting His favor and help]. Surely, the human being is awfully ungrateful.
Can you, then, ever feel sure that He will not cause a tract of land to swallow you up, or let

loose upon you a pebble-carrying storm, then you will find for yourselves no protector. Or can you feel sure that He will not cause you to come back to the sea again, and then cause a smashing storm to hit and drown you in requital of your ingratitude, and there you will find none to be on your side against Us. [17:67-69]

ٱلْبَرِّ أَوْ يُرْسِلَ عَلَيْكُمْ حَاصِبًا ثُمَّ لَا
تَجِدُوا۟ لَكُمْ وَكِيلًا ﴿٦٨﴾ أَمْ أَمِنتُمْ أَن
يُعِيدَكُمْ فِيهِ تَارَةً أُخْرَىٰ فَيُرْسِلَ عَلَيْكُمْ
قَاصِفًا مِّنَ ٱلرِّيحِ فَيُغْرِقَكُم بِمَا كَفَرْتُمْ
ثُمَّ لَا تَجِدُوا۟ لَكُمْ عَلَيْنَا بِهِۦ تَبِيعًا ﴿٦٩﴾

We have conferred dignity on the children of Adam, and carried them on land and sea, and provided for them sustenance out of the good things of life, and favored them far above many of Our creation. [17:70]

وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِىٓ ءَادَمَ وَحَمَلْنَٰهُمْ فِى
ٱلْبَرِّ وَٱلْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَٰهُم مِّنَ ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ
وَفَضَّلْنَٰهُمْ عَلَىٰ كَثِيرٍ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا
﴿٧٠﴾

Human weaknesses become obvious through the challenging vicissitudes of life in which the person's will and endurance are tested. People often call upon God in times of hardship, and as soon as the hardship passes and they become at ease they forget Him and follow their short-sighted egocentrism and expediency [e.g. 10:12; 17:67, 83; 39:8, 49; 41:51; 53:16; 96:6-7]. On the other hand, there are people who may be rebellious in times of hardships as they think that God has let them down and humiliated them even though they are believers in Him [e.g. 11:9; 41:49; 42:48; 89:15-16]. True faith in God enables the human being to steadfastly face the ups and downs of this life in a balanced way, without arrogance or helplessness and thus leads him/her to avoid ingratitude to God in both cases [e.g. 11:9-11]. As the Prophet teaches: "The believer is always in a good condition: whenever he [/she] is at ease he [/she] thanks God and this is good for him [/her], and whenever he [/she] meets a hardship he [/she] is patient and this is good for him [/her]" [reported by Ibn Majah].

The distinctions and favors granted by God to the human being are repeatedly stressed throughout the Quran so as to be appreciated, maintained and developed, and meanwhile, met with gratitude to the All-giver. The human being is favored physically, intellectually and spiritually over many of God's creations. Human dignity is the cornerstone of God's messages which aims to secure in the depth of human minds and hearts, through faith in the One God, following His guidance, and believing in individual accountability, human rights and justice in all their dimensions, and to forbid any violation or aggression in human relations. God is in no need of acknowledgement and worship from His human creatures, but He wants them to avoid and resist, from among themselves, false gods that exploit and suppress them in this life and turn the people into passive or submissive animals or machines. Human dignity has been conferred by God equally on all the children of Adam, regardless of the differences in their beliefs, gender, race, color, ethnicity or wealth. This human dignity encompasses both rights and duties, since concern about

one's rights without a parallel commitment to one's duties will not foster dignity in its true sense nor secure real progress for the individual and society. Fulfilling one's obligations provides the essential material and moral base for enjoying one's rights; conversely, enjoying the rights motivates the person to fulfill his/her duties. Human dignity could, therefore, not be achieved and completed without both components.

Good sustenance is secured for the privileged and dignified human being to maintain and develop the human physical, intellectual and spiritual merits, and to keep up and further the human excellence in this world's life. Since the human being is a universally moving creature, His creator has provided for him/her means of transportation on land and sea, and even through air and space: *"It is God who has subjected the sea to you, that ships may sail through it by His command, and that you may seek of His bounty and that you may be grateful. And He has subjected to you, as from Him, all that is in the heavens and on earth, behold, in that are signs indeed for those who reflect"* [45:12-13]. In general, Islamic law and the Islamic state aim to provide the means to maintain human dignity practically in daily life, to protect the human merits, and to develop the potential which the humankind enjoys as a blessing from God. The spiritual, moral and intellectual faculties, that represent the greatest of these divine blessings, raise the human being far above most of God's creation. Those who have attained to faith should be fully aware of what human dignity means for every human being and how it supports him/her in every time and place as an essential divine blessing and law.

And When We grant Our favors to a human being, he[/she] turns away arrogantly and keeps aloof, but when he[/she] is touched by something ill, he [/she] loses heart. Say: "Everyone acts according to his [/her] own manner; and your Lord is fully aware whose choice of the way is the most right."
And they ask you concerning the spirit. Say: "The spirit is of the bidding of my Lord. You have been granted of knowledge only a little." [17:83-85]

وَ إِذَآ أَنْعَمْنَا عَلَى
ٱلْإِنسَٰنِ أَعْرَضَ وَ نَـَٔا بِجَانِبِهِۦ ۖ وَ إِذَا
مَسَّهُ ٱلشَّرُّ كَانَ يَـُٔوسًا ﴿٨٣﴾ قُلْ كُلٌّ
يَعْمَلُ عَلَىٰ شَاكِلَتِهِۦ فَرَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ هُوَ
أَهْدَىٰ سَبِيلًا ﴿٨٤﴾ وَ يَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ
ٱلرُّوحِ ۖ قُلِ ٱلرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّى وَ مَآ
أُوتِيتُم مِّنَ ٱلْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٨٥﴾

In spite of the human's intellectual merits, his/her thinking may be confined to the present moment only, and thus he/she is seen to be haughty and selfish in times of ease, and hopeless and seriously depressed in times of hardship. Faith in God provides the believer with a wider perspective, so that he/she does not feel trapped at any certain point in life. Ups and downs are inevitable, and no success or failure means the end of the world. In any case, this life is relatively short, and every human is entitled to what he/she is worthy of in the eternal life to come.

The Quran stresses the implications of faith in the human psychological and behavioral balance: *"If some harm touches you, a similar harm has touched the others as well;*

and such days [of happiness and distress] We deal in turn among people, and [this] to the end that God might [test and] mark out those who have [truly] attained to faith" [3:140], *"If it happens that you suffer pain, the others suffer as you suffer, and you are hoping [to get] from God what they cannot hope for"* [4:104], *"and do not lose hope of God's inspiring grace; none but people without faith lose hope of God's inspiring grace"* [12:87; see also 15:56]. However, the Quran also states that people represent different patterns of thinking and behavior according to their goals, values and abilities, and it is the Lord who is fully aware of all the circumstances of every individual, and only He can judge one's choice of what he/she considers to be the best.

The last of the above verses deals with a question addressed to the Prophet about "the spirit." Does this refer to the spirit that God breathed into the human being after forming the physical frame out of clay [15:29; 32:9; 38:72]? Or does it mean the "Holy Spirit" that refers in the Quran to the angel Jibril [Gabriel] who was sent with God's revelations to prophets [2:87, 253; 5:110; 16:2; 19:17; 26:193; 40:15; 70:4; 78:38]? The spirit that is breathed into the human being by God and which inspires human spirituality, or divine inspiration revealed to the prophet through a certain envoy, are both mysteries, and either of them may raise one's curiosity - or defiance - to ask about them. However, the Quran does not explain the nature of something that is too remote from human nature and is far beyond human understanding, indicating that "the spirit" is simply of the bidding of God and at His command, and that human knowledge has, by the nature of the senses and mind, certain limits that are not traversable. What human knowledge has been able to grasp since homo sapiens' existence on earth is, in spite of its advances in recent centuries, still very limited, and there are enormous material facts in this immense cosmos, let alone the huge unknown of the human spirit, that human knowledge has not been able to reach. Nevertheless, the effects caused by the spirit, whether the term refers to the spirit breathed by God into the human being or the divine inspiration of God's messages to prophets, are obvious and their significance is understandable, even if their nature is not. The same can also be said about concrete physical phenomena such as magnetism and electricity, the effects of which have been known, although their nature has not.

That which is on earth We have made as a[n attractive] beauty for it, in order to test them [all human beings] as to which of them are the best in deeds. [18:7]

أَنَّا جَعَلْنَا مَا عَلَى ٱلْأَرْضِ
زِينَةً لَّهَا لِنَبْلُوَهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ۝٧

The earth is endowed with a prosperity and beauty that secures livelihood for its human inhabitants, and provides various pleasures for them. If the human being enjoys these pleasures while keeping in mind that they will come to an end at any time for him/her personally and for all of humankind one day, and he/she thus seeks God's guidance and acceptance in using all with which he/she is endowed and tested in this world's life, then such a person will attain the best of the temporary pleasures of "prosperity" and "beauty" of this world, as well as the greatest of God's blessings and rewards in the bliss of the

life to come. In many cases such an essential balance is not kept, and one may be attracted to the beauty and pleasures of this life. Thus he/she becomes engulfed with the short-sighted accumulation of worldly goods regardless of the harm that he/she may promptly bring to others, as well as to his/her self in the long term. This is indeed a heavy test from God for the human intellect and will which are, after all, His unique privileges for humankind.

And thus, indeed, many facets [of guidance] have We given to people in this Quran, but the human being is above all else, always given to disputation. [18:54]

وَلَقَدْ صَرَّفْنَا فِي هَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانِ
لِلنَّاسِ مِن كُلِّ مَثَلٍ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ
أَكْثَرَ شَيْءٍ جَدَلًا ﴿٥٤﴾

The faculties of intelligence and speech can be used either excessively or wrongfully by an individual who may utilize them to waste time or to hide his/her stubbornness about a certain matter, or to defend an unfair or unreasonable standpoint. For in these cases the mind and tongue are used for nonsense, and such misuse betrays and contradicts sound human reason. Words are not utilized for a meaningful expression of ideas and a constructive exchange of thoughts, but for empty chatter and futile disputation. Those who misuse and abuse the greatest human privileges of thought and speech may argue about anything, however obvious it may be. Even God's guidance itself in the Quran may not stop such "chatter-boxes" from arguing for the sake of argument, and polemizing what seems clear and simple, in order to justify their wrong evil views and actions, or to make others go astray [see 2:26].

Every human being shall taste death; and We test you [all] through the ill and the good; then unto us you [all] shall be returned. [21:35]

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ
ذَآئِقَةُ ٱلْمَوْتِ ۗ وَنَبْلُوكُم بِٱلشَّرِّ
وَٱلْخَيْرِ فِتْنَةً ۖ وَإِلَيْنَا تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

This verse sums up the story of human life in this world. All its successive vicissitudes are meant to test every human being and he/she will be judged according to his/her behavior throughout these different events. A person's true belief in God and in the life to come will protect him/her against the arrogance of success and the despair of failure. He/she will have the strong will to carry on his/her work persistently, continuing and building on the successes while thanking God for His blessings, and making up for the failures patiently and enduringly as he/she faces God's test and prays for His guidance and assistance.

The human being is a creature of haste [and impatience]; assuredly, I shall make [in time] my signs and

خُلِقَ
ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ مِنْ عَجَلٍ ۚ سَأُوْرِيكُمْ ءَايَٰتِى

messages obvious to you; so do not ask Me to hasten them! [21:37]

فَلَا تَسْتَعْجِلُونِ ﴿٣٧﴾

Haste is in the nature of the human being who may rush to hurt others in order to benefit him/herself. In such haste, he/she often acts unfairly and unwisely. The human being may want God in His almightiness to act in the same haste by making manifest His signs of the end of this world and of the start of the life to come [see previously mentioned verses 10:11; 17:11 and the commentary on them] while in fact, this hastiness may actually speed up God's punishment if one only knew [e.g. 6:57-58; 10:11, 51; 22:47; 26:203-204; 27:46, 71-72; 29:53-54; 37:176; 42:18]. However, God in His perfect plan and justice has appointed the time for such an end, and this time shall never be changed according to any wish by human beings to hasten or delay it [e.g. 6:60; 11:3; 14:10; 16:61; 18:58; 20:129; 29:53; 35:45; 39:42; 40:67; 42:14; 71:4].

O human beings! If you are in doubt as to the resurrection, [think about that] We have created you out of dust, then of [each of] a [male] sperm [and a female egg], then out of a mixed suspension [of both], then of a[n embryonic] lump that has been developed but is yet incomplete and indistinct; and this [account] is meant to make [your origin] clear to you.
And whatever We will [to be born] We cause to rest in the [mothers'] wombs for an appointed term; then We bring you forth as infants; then you may come of age; and some of you die [young], while some are kept alive until they reach a most abject stage, in which they know nothing after knowing somewhat. [And further] you see the earth dry and lifeless, then when we send down water to it, it quivers and swells, and puts forth every kind of lovely plant in a[n inborn] pair. All this points out that God alone is the Ultimate [Originator and Eternal] Truth, and that He alone brings the dead to life, and it is He who has power over everything. [22:5-6]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ
إِن كُنتُمْ فِى رَيْبٍ مِّنَ ٱلْبَعْثِ فَإِنَّا
خَلَقْنَٰكُم مِّن تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ
عَلَقَةٍ ثُمَّ مِن مُّضْغَةٍ مُّخَلَّقَةٍ وَغَيْرِ مُخَلَّقَةٍ
لِّنُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ ۚ وَنُقِرُّ فِى ٱلْأَرْحَامِ مَا نَشَآءُ
إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ثُمَّ نُخْرِجُكُمْ طِفْلًا ثُمَّ
لِتَبْلُغُوٓا۟ أَشُدَّكُمْ ۖ وَمِنكُم مَّن يُتَوَفَّىٰ
وَمِنكُم مَّن يُرَدُّ إِلَىٰٓ أَرْذَلِ ٱلْعُمُرِ لِكَيْلَا
يَعْلَمَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ عِلْمٍ شَيْـًٔا ۚ وَتَرَى ٱلْأَرْضَ
هَامِدَةً فَإِذَآ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْهَا ٱلْمَآءَ ٱهْتَزَّتْ
وَرَبَتْ وَأَنۢبَتَتْ مِن كُلِّ زَوْجٍۭ بَهِيجٍ ﴿٥﴾
ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلْحَقُّ وَأَنَّهُۥ يُحْىِ
ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ وَأَنَّهُۥ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ
﴿٦﴾

And We have created the human being originally out of clay, then We cause him/her to settle firmly as a drop of male sperm [or a female egg] in a

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ مِن سُلَٰلَةٍ مِّن طِينٍ ﴿١٢﴾

ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَٰهُ نُطْفَةً فِى قَرَارٍ مَّكِينٍ
﴿١٣﴾ ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا ٱلنُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا
ٱلْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا ٱلْمُضْغَةَ عِظَٰمًا
فَكَسَوْنَا ٱلْعِظَٰمَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ أَنشَأْنَٰهُ خَلْقًا
ءَاخَرَ ۚ فَتَبَارَكَ ٱللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ ٱلْخَٰلِقِينَ
﴿١٤﴾ ثُمَّ إِنَّكُم بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ لَمَيِّتُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ ثُمَّ
إِنَّكُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ تُبْعَثُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

receptacle secure; and then We create out of the male drop of sperm [and the female egg] a mixed suspension; and then We create out of the mixed suspension a[n embryonic] lump; and then We create within the [embryonic lump] bones; and then We clothe the bones with flesh; and then We develop out of [all] this a newly sprung creation; hallowed, therefore, is God the best of makers. And then, after all that you shall surely die; and then on the Day of Resurrection you shall surely be raised from the dead. [23:12-16]

هُوَ ٱلَّذِى
خَلَقَكُم مِّن تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ عَلَقَةٍ
ثُمَّ يُخْرِجُكُمْ طِفْلًا ثُمَّ لِتَبْلُغُوٓا۟ أَشُدَّكُمْ ثُمَّ
لِتَكُونُوا۟ شُيُوخًا ۚ وَمِنكُم مَّن يُتَوَفَّىٰ
مِن قَبْلُ ۖ وَلِتَبْلُغُوٓا۟ أَجَلًا مُّسَمًّى
وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾ هُوَ ٱلَّذِى يُحْىِۦ
وَيُمِيتُ ۖ فَإِذَا قَضَىٰٓ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ
لَهُۥ كُن فَيَكُونُ ﴿٦٨﴾

It is He who has created you out of dust, and then out of a drop of [a male] sperm [and a female egg] and then out of a mixed suspension [of both], and then He brings you forth as infants, and [by His grace] you come of age, and then you become old; and of you there are some who die earlier; and [in all this] you reach a term stated [by Him]; haply you are mindful of such facts. It is He who grants life and brings death; and when He wills a thing to be, He but says unto it, "Be", and it is there. [40:67-68]

The Quran sometimes deals with the physical aspects of the human being, as it deals at other times with the psychological and moral ones. The first of the above verses follows the physical development of the human being since the initial creation of Adam from dust or clay. Another verse of the Quran tells that God's spirit was breathed into Adam by God himself, and then that Adam and his wife, who were created from the same entity, were sent to reproduce on earth and develop it through the earning of living by successive generations. In the above verse 22:5, the Quran pursues the physical stages of human reproduction, first from the simple existence of the male's sperm and female's egg, to the mixed suspension of the two when sexual contact occurs during marriage, to the formation of an embryonic lump which has some form but is yet incomplete and indistinctive. After going through these stages a child may or may not be born according to God's will, and it is God alone who knows how the child will be physically, mentally and spiritually throughout his/her whole life, since He also knows the covert hereditary traits in a human being and the consequences of his/her interactions with all elements of the physical and social environment. God knows exactly how long he/she will live, and when and how he/she will die. Towards the end of the average life-span the curve of human development turns again to

gradual physical, intellectual and psychological weakness [see also 16:70 and the commentary, 36:68].

The stages of human physical growth as presented by the Quran can be understood in a simple way by the ordinary reader, while they can be conceived deeply and scientifically by biologists. This is the uniqueness of the Quranic style in its accuracy and beauty. It enriches the knowledge of the common person, while it opens the eyes of the specialists to look beyond the surface. When the Quran presents the physical stages of human reproduction, it puts them into perspective with those of life as a whole by turning from the description of human growth to that of plants. In this way the mind can relate the physical life with the spiritual life which is developed by consciousness of God and by following His guidance. The Quranic information about the universe and life is not meant to bring about scientists, but to educate people with the common basic knowledge, and to lead the reader from the creation to the Creator and from the origins to the Originator, since *"God alone is the Ultimate [Originator and Eternal] Truth, and that He alone brings the dead to life, and it is He who has power over everything."*

He who has made excellent all that He has created, and He originated the creation of the human being out of clay. And then He causes his[/her] progeny to come out from an extraction of a humble fluid. Then He shapes him [/her] in due proportion [in accordance with God's plan for human functions and activities] and breathes into him [/her] of His spirit; and He endows you with hearing and sight and hearts [and minds]; yet how seldom are you grateful. [32:7-9]

ٱلَّذِىٓ أَحۡسَنَ كُلَّ شَىۡءٍ
خَلَقَهُۥۖ وَبَدَأَ خَلۡقَ ٱلۡإِنسَٰنِ مِن طِينٍ
(٧) ثُمَّ جَعَلَ نَسۡلَهُۥ مِن سُلَٰلَةٍ مِّن مَّآءٍ
مَّهِينٍ (٨) ثُمَّ سَوَّىٰهُ وَنَفَخَ فِيهِ مِن
رُّوحِهِۦۖ وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلسَّمۡعَ
وَٱلۡأَبۡصَٰرَ وَٱلۡأَفۡـِٔدَةَۚ قَلِيلٗا مَّا تَشۡكُرُونَ
(٩)

God forms every creature in a way that makes that creature, in its general shape and particular parts and structural proportions, fit for its function and environment. The correlations within the cosmos, within the living creatures, and between the two manifest a fascinating natural order and point to the unique wisdom and power behind it. The first human being was created out of clay in due proportions that made him/her fit for the human functions in this world, and God breathed into him of His spirit. Did some time pass between originating the creation of the human being and giving this original creation the ability to reproduce then shaping it in due proportion in accordance with God's plan for the human functions, and breathing into this creation of God's spirit, as the above verses may suggest? Did the development of the human creation through these stages take long periods of time as may be understood from the use of the conjunctive particle "*thumma*," and the expression "*from an extraction [or through a process of extracting] from clay*" in verse 23:12? It is very difficult to obtain any definite answer about such a matter from the Quranic statements, which are meant to address all people in their successive generations,

whatever the level of their knowledge may be. The conjunction "*thumma*" which is usually used to mean "later on" or "after some time," may be used to simply mean the conjunctive "and," without indicating a break in time. The Quran states, "*I did not make them witnesses of the creation of the heavens and the earth, nor of the creation of their own selves*" [18:51].

An instant command from God for the creation of anything "*His command whenever He wills a thing to be, is just He says unto it, 'Be' and it is*" [36:82; also 2:117; 3:47; 6:73; 16:40; 19:35; 40:68], does not contradict the passing of the created thing through phases or taking time, for the creation has actually started the moment that it was originated. Creation is a dynamic continuous process as is obvious in the cosmos and the living creatures including the human being: "*He creates you in your mothers' wombs, one act of creation after another, in threefold depths of darkness*" [39:6], "*He adds to His creation whatever He wills*" [35:1]. The human being undergoes an unceasing process of creation after being born, through his/her growth and indeliberate and deliberate interactions with the material and social environments. In that way, God's name as the "Creator" is always valid and real, through the constant dynamic process of creation in this world's life: "*His is all creation and all command*" [7:54]. In the eternal life to come, God's creation continues in another form and direction: "*On the day when the earth shall be changed into another earth, as shall be changed the heavens*" [14:48]. In several verses, the Quran qualifies the life to come as the "*recreation*" by God [e.g. 10:34; 21:104; 27:64; 29:19; 30:11, 27]. In others it refers to the human beings after their resurrection as a new creation [e.g. 17:49, 98; 50:15]. God initially creates "*and then brings [His creation] forth anew*" [29:20]. Thus God is always creating and is always the Creator "*And your Lord [always] creates whatever He wills, and He chooses...*" [28:68].

The earliest male and female were given the reproductive system that secures the succession of the human species, and all their physical, intellectual and psychological-spiritual features have been inherited by their descendants, generation after generation. The distinctive human merits are not limited to physical fitness, however balanced and excellent it may be, but are also uniquely represented in intellectual and psychological-moral-spiritual faculties. Feeling, thinking, commitment and decision making characterize the human being who should be grateful to God for these blessings, although this is often not the case. Taking these wonderful blessings for granted and being absorbed in the daily fulfilling of physical needs may restrict or even obstruct intellectual and spiritual profundity and may allow the biological level to dominate human existence and actions.

It is He who has endowed you with hearing and sight, and hearts [and minds], yet, how seldom are you grateful! And it is He who has spread you over the earth, and to Him you shall be gathered back. And it is He who gives life and brings death; and to Him is due the alternation of night and day. Will you not, use your minds?

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنشَأَ لَكُمُ
ٱلسَّمْعَ وَٱلْأَبْصَٰرَ وَٱلْأَفْـِٔدَةَ ۚ قَلِيلًا مَّا
تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾ وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى ذَرَأَكُمْ فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ وَإِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾ وَهُوَ
ٱلَّذِى يُحْىِۦ وَيُمِيتُ وَلَهُ ٱخْتِلَٰفُ ٱلَّيْلِ
وَٱلنَّهَارِ ۚ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾ بَلْ قَالُوا۟

But nay, they speak as the earlier people did speak; they say, "What! After we are dead and become mere dust and bones, shall we be indeed raised from the dead? We have been promised, we and our forefathers before, this [very thing]! These are only legends of the ancients." [23:78-83]

مِثْلَ مَا قَالَ ٱلْأَوَّلُونَ ﴿٨١﴾ قَالُوٓا۟ أَءِذَا
مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا وَعِظَٰمًا أَءِنَّا
لَمَبْعُوثُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾ لَقَدْ وُعِدْنَا نَحْنُ
وَءَابَآؤُنَا هَٰذَا مِن قَبْلُ إِنْ هَٰذَآ إِلَّآ
أَسَٰطِيرُ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾

This is another Quranic argument for the life to come, based on the creation of this life and the whole universe with its intact order and great benefits for the human beings. The initial creation of human beings with their abilities of hearing, sight, feeling, thinking and movement all over the earth is not easier than bringing them back to life after death, and it cannot be without purpose. The human life and the cosmos are such a marvelous creation that they cannot evolve accidentally, and the inimitable planner of such a marvelous creation cannot be imagined to leave it to decay and reach a physical end without fulfillment, and with regard to human beings specifically, without attaining justice. The verses point out that denying the life to come is not a new way of thinking, but that the continuation of this denial does not give it any validity; on the contrary, such a denial represents a simplistic and superficial use of the physical senses, and a neglect of the high and deep intellectual and spiritual faculties of the human being. That is why the first of the above verses which highlights the human faculties granted by God does not limit them to the physical senses only, but goes beyond references to the "eyes" and the "ears" to mention the "hearts" which refer to feelings, thinking, motivation, determination and also intuition. Restricting one's knowledge to only the sensual deprives the human being of his/her unique merits, impoverishes his/her human conceptuality and diminishes his/her human intellectual ability in its totality.

Have you seen such a one who takes as his[/her] god his[/her] own whims? Could you, then, [O Prophet] be a guardian over such a person? Or think you that most of them listen or use their minds? They are but like animals; nay, they are even more erratic in their way. [25:43-44]

أَرَءَيْتَ مَنِ ٱتَّخَذَ إِلَٰهَهُۥ هَوَىٰهُ
أَفَأَنتَ تَكُونُ عَلَيْهِ وَكِيلًا ﴿٤٣﴾ أَمْ
تَحْسَبُ أَنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ أَوْ
يَعْقِلُونَ ۚ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا كَٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ ۖ بَلْ هُمْ
أَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا ﴿٤٤﴾

When a human being neglects his/her highest and unique intellectual and spiritual merits and allows momentary desires and whims always control his/her conduct, then he/she is behaving like an animals. An animal acts according to what it individually desires at a certain moment without thinking about how others may be affected by its act, or about what may occur later as a consequence of it. But, these animals are acting according to their natural abilities, and they cannot be blamed for their egocentrism or shortsightedness. It is the human being who should be blamed when he/she deliberately cuts off

his/her faculties of thinking, judging, and deciding, and reduces his/her existence and behavior to the animal level.

And it is He who has created of water the human being [as all living creatures]; and has enabled him[/her] to be kindred through descent and marriage, and your Lord is All powerful. [25:54]

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى
خَلَقَ مِنَ ٱلْمَآءِ بَشَرًا فَجَعَلَهُۥ نَسَبًا
وَصِهْرًا ۗ وَكَانَ رَبُّكَ قَدِيرًا ﴿٥٤﴾

The human being was sent to the earth endowed with the means for forming a family through marriage and reproduction. These marital and parental-filial relations provide the basis for human expansion. Since the human being is also endowed with the physical and intellectual abilities to move from place to place over the earth [see 17:70], humankind has spread all over the earth and developed it, thus giving opportunities to its offspring to form new families and populate and develop other parts of the earth. Endowed with all these abilities, human beings have been established on earth by God, and have inherited it in successive generations to develop it and themselves according to God's guidance [see the verses 2:30, 38-39; 11:61].

But seek, through what God has granted you, [the good of] the life to come, without forgetting, withal, your own [rightful] share in this world, and do good as God has done to you, and seek not to commit mischief on earth, for God loves not those who commit mischief. [28:77]

وَٱبْتَغِ
فِيمَآ ءَاتَىٰكَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلدَّارَ ٱلْأَخِرَةَ ۖ وَلَا
تَنسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَأَحْسِن كَمَآ
أَحْسَنَ ٱللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ ۖ وَلَا تَبْغِ ٱلْفَسَادَ
فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ
ٱلْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾

This verse gives the correct equation and balance between this life and the life to come, and explains how the human being can obtain the best from both. Following God's guidance does not by any means imply a withdrawal from this life or a severing of relations with other human beings. God has given the human being all his/her physical, intellectual, psychological and spiritual powers which, when used properly, create a balanced individual as well as a balanced society. The Quran teaches that one should spend from what God has given him/her, be it physical energy or knowledge or other blessings, on those who are in need, not limiting spending to material wealth.

In the above verse the Quran teaches that everyone should be broad-minded and far-sighted in using all gifts given to him/her by God. They should be used for the benefit of the individual and society, and in this way one secures the good of the eternal life to come while at the same time obtaining the best of this life. One should not forget the legitimate needs of this life, as some mistakenly believe a religious person should do. Enjoying the good things of this life according to the divine guidance, and avoiding both extremes

of excess and disregard strikes the balance between this interim world and the eternal life to come in the last Abode, between the body and the spirit, and between the individual and society. This balance characterizes the teachings of Islam which enjoins *"a faith in accordance with the nature which He has originated in human beings"* [30:30], *"And thus have We willed you to be a community of the middle way"* [2:143].

And among His wonders is that He created for you mates from among yourselves that you might find restfulness [and satisfaction], and He has engendered between you affection, and tenderness; surely, in that are signs for people who think. And among His signs [and wonders] is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the diversity of your tongues and hues; surely, in that are signs [and wonders] for those who really have knowledge. And among His signs [and wonders] is your sleep at night and in the daytime, and your [ability for] seeking of His bounty; surely in that are signs for people who listen.[30:21-23]

وَمِنْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦٓ أَنْ خَلَقَ
لَكُم مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَٰجًا لِّتَسْكُنُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهَا
وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُم مَّوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً ۚ إِنَّ فِى
ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ وَمِنْ
ءَايَٰتِهِۦ خَلْقُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ
وَٱخْتِلَٰفُ أَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَأَلْوَٰنِكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ فِى
ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّلْعَٰلِمِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾ وَمِنْ
ءَايَٰتِهِۦ مَنَامُكُم بِٱلَّيْلِ وَٱلنَّهَارِ
وَٱبْتِغَآؤُكُم مِّن فَضْلِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ
لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَسْمَعُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

Diversity within unity and cohesion is a general element in God's creation. Within the universe in general, and the earth in particular, there is an enormous diversity in structure, physiography, climate, length of day and night etc. Among the human beings, one finds two genders, and various human races, tongues and hues, and the human being is endowed with faculties to develop relations with others similar to or different from his/her own culture or race. He/she has the ability to cause change in his/her social and material environments, as well as to adapt and to change himself/herself to cope with these environments. The human being also has to earn his/her living through working on this earth and developing it in some way. The ability to develop one's own self, one's human relations with others, and the universe, represents the human dynamism and creativity in dealing with diversity. This in turn ought to develop in the human being, an earnest serious thoughtfulness about the power behind all this creation with its firm correlations within its enormous diversities, since these are signs for human beings who can see beyond the superficial sensory observation. If one also seriously considers sleep and dreams, one can realize their essential effect on human life and on the development of the world in general and human beings in particular. If the intellect recognizes in the diversity of the whole creation the wise power that originates it, but maintains at the same time its cohesion through intact correlations and order, it can indeed reach enlightening and enriching depths of knowledge. How enlightening can such physical and human diversity within unity be as a sign of God's power and care about the human race, for one who thinks and contemplates.

Corruption has appeared on land and sea as a result of what the human beings' own hands have earned to let them taste some of their doings that haply they may return [to what is right]. [30:41]

ظَهَرَ ٱلْفَسَادُ فِى ٱلْبَرِّ
وَٱلْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِى ٱلنَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُم
بَعْضَ ٱلَّذِى عَمِلُوا۟ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

God has created the human being with free will to do good or evil, and thus people can spread corruption and damage in this universe if they let themselves be led not by their minds but by some human negative and defective attitudes such as arrogance, selfishness, and shortsightedness. Environmental pollution, social ills, violence and wars prove how human beings can hurt themselves seriously in ways that may end in self-destruction. Through God's guidance, the human self and pleasures of this world are put into perspective, and a balance is established in a person's life and relations through belief in God and the accountability and requital of every human being in the eternal life to come. Suffering the long term consequences of evil doing in this life is one of God's laws for human societies, and thus people are punished for whatever evil actions their own hands may commit. This punishment is brought about by the very consequences of their evil-doing and according to the general natural laws of God, as opposed to a particular direct extraordinary action by Him.

It is God who creates you out of [original] weakness; then causes strength to follow weakness; then causes after strength [another] weakness and grey hair [in old age]; He creates what He wills, and He is All-knowing, All-powerful. [30:54]

ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكُم مِّن ضَعْفٍ ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِنۢ
بَعْدِ ضَعْفٍ قُوَّةً ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ قُوَّةٍ
ضَعْفًا وَشَيْبَةً ۚ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَآءُ ۖ وَهُوَ
ٱلْعَلِيمُ ٱلْقَدِيرُ ﴿٥٤﴾

Here is another reference to the rise and decline of strength during the human being's life-span [see the previously mentioned verses 16:70, 22:5 and the commentary]. The human being begins and ends life in this world in weakness, as a helpless infant who gradually sinks into old age. Yet such a development in every human does not open his/her eyes and heart, during his/her time of maturity, to the message of this change but instead behaves as though he/she would live forever. Change is the law of all God's creation, and the Eternal is God alone, who has granted eternity to the life to come. In all universal laws and order, the contemplating mind can discover the wisdom and justice of the Lord Creator day after day.

Have you not seen that God has subjected to you what is in the heavens and what is on earth [through His

أَلَمْ تَرَوْا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَخَّرَ لَكُم مَّا فِى
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَأَسْبَغَ

laws of nature] and has granted you generously His overwhelming blessings and favors, both visible and invisible. And yet among people there is such a one who argues about God, without knowledge or guidance, or a [divine] light- giving book. And when they are told to follow what God has sent down, they answer, "No, we but follow that which we found our forefathers believing and doing" What? Even though Satan was calling them to the suffering of the blazing fire? [31:20-21]

عَلَيْكُمْ نِعَمَهُۥ ظَٰهِرَةً وَبَاطِنَةً ۗ وَمِنَ
ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يُجَٰدِلُ فِى ٱللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ
وَلَا هُدًى وَلَا كِتَٰبٍ مُّنِيرٍ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَإِذَا قِيلَ
لَهُمُ ٱتَّبِعُوا۟ مَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ قَالُوا۟ بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ
مَا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ ءَابَآءَنَآ ۚ أَوَلَوْ كَانَ
ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ يَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ ٱلسَّعِيرِ
﴿٢١﴾

God has created the human being with the physical, intellectual, psychological and spiritual faculties that enable him/her to subject the forces of nature to his/her benefit according to their laws that are created by God. The human being has been able to reach, with his/her knowledge and exploitation, the depths of the earth and the heights of the atmosphere and space. God's bounties are not limited to what is physical or concrete: His wonders are revealed day after day in the human psychological and spiritual faculties. However, human beings are in great need of guidance to benefit from their abilities beyond the concrete material limits, and to overcome their shortsightedness, selfishness and other limitations, so that they may put every feeling and thought into perspective with proper measure. Such a comprehensive balanced and genuine guidance can be expected only from God, the All-knowing, the All-wise.

There are people who may argue against the divine guidance without any knowledge, logic or reliable source of information. Some believe that they should adhere to the traditions of their forefathers in belief and behavior. The Quran repeatedly condemns such blind imitation which humiliates the human being's intellect, and destroy the human individuality and initiative, giving this creature dignified by God the same status as an animal which simply follows the flock.

We did indeed offer the trust [of reason and free will] to the heavens and the earth and to the mountains; but they refused to bear it, and shrank from it; yet, the human being has accepted it; [however] he [/she] has been [,taking into account human beings as a whole, not individually] lacking righteousness and consciousness[of such great divine trust and human responsibility]. [33:72]

إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا
ٱلْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ
وَٱلْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَن يَحْمِلْنَهَا وَأَشْفَقْنَ
مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ
ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا ﴿٧٢﴾

This is a parable to enlighten the human being about how audacious, unfair and lacking in knowledge he/she may be, when he/she neglects the divine trust with which God has endowed him/her as the inheritor of earth, and his/her consequent human responsibility. Boasting of one's privileges and qualities while ignoring responsibilities represents inconsistency, egocentrism and shortsightedness. God has indeed granted a privileged position to the human being to whom He has given intelligence and free will, but he/she may reduce his/her role to the biological level as any animal, and thus he/she becomes content with fulfilling only his/her physical instincts and pleasures. The human responsibility, which is a fair consequence of human merits, is so serious that the universe and its components shrank from it. The human being ought to be fully aware of God's trust and his/her consequent responsibility to use God's blessings properly for a comprehensive development of life as well as of the world in which he/she lives and earns his/her living. How unfair and unmindful the human being would be if he/she neglected that with which the Creator honors him/her, and if he/she shirked a responsibility that the universe -as is represented in the Quranic verse- well appreciated but was able to avoid since it lacked the intellectual and volitional requirements which qualify humankind for such a responsibility.

وَمَن نُّعَمِّرْهُ نُنَكِّسْهُ فِى ٱلْخَلْقِ ۖ أَفَلَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾

And to whomsoever We give long life We cause him[/her] to decline in power and fall back to weakness [of childhood]; will they not then use their minds? [36:68]

This verse invites the human being to contemplate the physical, psychological and intellectual transformations that he/she undergoes during the different stages of his/her life. In childhood, physical and intellectual abilities of the human being have not yet reached their full potential, then as one grows and develops, certain psychological qualities of self-assertion unfold as well. Much later, in extreme old age, however, a second childhood appears with physical, intellectual and psychological weaknesses. Thus, long life may not be, as a whole, advantageous. The Prophet teaches that the believer has to pray "My God! Let my life always add to all that is good, and let my death be a repose from all evil" [reported by Muslim; see also the previously mentioned verses 16:70, 22:5 and the commentary]. The human being should always remain conscious of God, who is the only Eternal and All-powerful, and realize that his/her existence on earth is for a limited and fixed time, and that his/her full strength exists for an even shorter time within this life due to these periods of early and late weaknesses. Once one is aware of this, one should do one's best for himself/herself and others during one's time of strength. Collective efforts and cooperation are required to obtain the maximum benefit from every individual especially in such matters as helping the elderly and the disabled.

He has created you [all] out of one living entity; and out of it has made its mate; and He has sent you down [on earth] eight livestock in pairs [males and females]. He creates you in your mother's wombs, a stage of creation after another, in threefold depths of darkness. That is God, your Lord; to Him belongs all dominion; there is no god but He; how, then, are you distracted [from the truth]?[39:6]

خَلَقَكُم مِّن نَّفْسٍ وَٰحِدَةٍ ثُمَّ
جَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَ أَنزَلَ لَكُم مِّنَ
ٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ ثَمَٰنِيَةَ أَزْوَٰجٍ ۚ يَخْلُقُكُمْ فِى
بُطُونِ أُمَّهَٰتِكُمْ خَلْقًا مِّنۢ بَعْدِ خَلْقٍ فِى
ظُلُمَٰتٍ ثَلَٰثٍ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمُ ٱللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ لَهُ
ٱلْمُلْكُ ۖ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ فَأَنَّىٰ
تُصْرَفُونَ ﴿٦﴾

Here is another Quranic reference to the original creation of human beings, both male and female, from one living entity, followed by a monitoring of the process of human reproduction that secures the succession of generations and the continuation of the species. The verse states that the formation of the body undergoes various stages through which the changes that occur are so qualitative that each stage or development may be considered another creation; *"then We bring [all] this into being as a fresh creation"* [23:14]. The embryo or fetus develops in a receptacle secure [23:13], surrounded with threefold depths of darkness, according to the verse. These may refer to the amniotic sac -the membrane within which the embryo develops- the womb around which there is a ligament which extends to the pelvic wall for support, and the lower part of the abdomen.

The verse also reminds the human being of another group of living creatures: the livestock on which the human being, especially in a tribal and mainly pastoral society such as Arabia where the message of Islam started, relies for his/her essential needs such as food, drink, clothes, accommodation and transportation [see 16:5-8, 80]. The eight livestock in pairs that are dominant in most of the world and which are referred to in the verse may be the same mentioned in the verses 6:143-144, as classical commentators believe: namely sheep, goats, cows and camels. The human being with his high intellect ought to reflect how he/she is provided with the essentials of life through what God has made subservient to him/her, especially livestock, which have provided such basic needs for living, settling and moving. He/she should also deeply contemplate his/her origin and development. However, many people may not seriously use their intellect, and may pass by such clear signs of the Creator indifferently or superficially, and in this way they are actually doing injustice to their own minds.

And those who eschew any worship of the forces of evil and wholeheartedly turn unto God, for them there is good tidings [of peace of mind in this life and happiness in the life to come]. Give, then, good tidings to [those of] My servants who give ear [and listen earnestly] to what is said [in order to make a fair judgement] and [thus]

وَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱجْتَنَبُوا۟ ٱلطَّٰغُوتَ أَن
يَعْبُدُوهَا وَ أَنَابُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ لَهُمُ
ٱلْبُشْرَىٰ ۚ فَبَشِّرْ عِبَادِ ﴿١٧﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ
يَسْتَمِعُونَ ٱلْقَوْلَ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ أَحْسَنَهُۥ ۚ

follow the best of it; it is those whom God has guided, and it is those who truly have minds. [39:17-18]

أُولَٰئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ هَدَىٰهُمُ ٱللَّهُ ۖ
وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمْ أُولُوا۟ ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ﴿١٨﴾

The above verses state two essential principles for any sensible person. The first is to avoid any association with the forces of evil and injustice. The Arabic word used in the verse "*taghut*" - from the Arabic verb "*tagha*" meaning "to commit aggression - to burst beyond all limits" may not be restricted to the idols that the Arabs used to worship before Islam, as many classical commentators have stated, but may also refer to any forces of evil that may enjoy or seek power [see also 2:256-7; 4:76; 16:36]. However, the worship of idols and the acceptance of their unreasonably assumed power and commands is a grave offense to the human mind, and an evil humiliation that may lead to many other evils [e.g. 6:138-9, 148, 16:35, 116].

The following verse requires that the human being listen seriously to an idea or view that may be expressed, and make his/her own judgement about it after knowing it and thinking about it in order to avoid any a priori judgement or any individual or common bias. However, listening to different ideas and views should be followed by a moral commitment to follow and support the most convincing one according to its logical, moral and material merits. The Quran does not require the human being to rush to Islam, but to respect the human intellect and use it fairly, whatever the judgement and decision that one reaches may be. It is the sincere intention that counts in God's judgement in the life to come, as the Prophet teaches: "Actions are [not judged] but by intention, and every human being shall have but that which he [/she] intended" [reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi, al-Nasa'i, and Ibn Majah].

It is God [alone] who causes life [of all human beings] in this world to end at the time of death; and [causes to cease their daily activities and be for sometime as dead] during their sleep those who have not yet died. He withholds [from life] those on whom He has decreed death, and leaves the others for a stated term [by Him]. Surely, in this are signs and messages for people who reflect. [39:42]

ٱللَّهُ يَتَوَفَّى ٱلْأَنفُسَ حِينَ مَوْتِهَا
وَٱلَّتِى لَمْ تَمُتْ فِى مَنَامِهَا ۖ فَيُمْسِكُ
ٱلَّتِى قَضَىٰ عَلَيْهَا ٱلْمَوْتَ وَيُرْسِلُ
ٱلْأُخْرَىٰٓ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۚ إِنَّ فِى
ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

The Quran repeatedly refers to life and death, and to sleep and wakefulness [e.g. 3:145, 156; 7:25, 158; 10:56; 25:47; 30:23, 40; 40:11, 68; 45:26; 50:43; 78:9-11]. The above verse draws a parallel between physical death and sleep, since consciousness ceases completely and permanently in the former, while it halts partially and temporarily in the latter. During sleep, dreams occur, presenting what is beyond physical consciousness, but

death allows the soul to know what is beyond the sensory perception. Sleep and awakening may be an example that helps the human mind to realize - in spite of the obvious difference between the two states - that the return to life after death is possible, just as wakefulness after sleep is possible. God has the power to give life to the body in the first place, to suspend it partially and temporarily during sleep, and to withhold it completely from the body during death. If all these facts of life can be observed and grasped, the eternal life to come can be imagined and inferred by those who use their human reasoning and seriously think about what they sensually perceive.

And when some affliction befalls the human being, he [/she] calls unto Us; but when We bestow on him [/her] a blessing and favor from Us, he [/she] says, "I have been given it only by virtue of [my own] knowledge." It is really a trial, but most of them veritably know not. [39:49]

فَإِذَا مَسَّ
ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ ضُرٌّ دَعَانَا ثُمَّ إِذَا خَوَّلْنَٰهُ نِعْمَةً
مِّنَّا قَالَ إِنَّمَآ أُوتِيتُهُۥ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ ۚ بَلْ
هِىَ فِتْنَةٌ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ
﴿٤٩﴾

The most serious shortcoming of the human being is that he/she does not realize his/her own weaknesses. Hardships often bring one to his/her senses letting one realize his/her limitations thus becoming aware of the real power that controls humanity and the world. However, one may quickly forget the lessons of his/her own experience as time passes. When life begins to go smoothly again, one forgets that success or prosperity are from God, whom one should thank for His blessings as sincerely as one prays for His help in hard times, instead of boasting that it is his/her intelligence and knowledge that has lead to his/her success or prosperity. The keenness to thank God during times of ease ought not to be less than the eagerness to call unto Him in times of hardship [see the previously mentioned verses 10:12, 14:34, 33:72 and the commentary].

Have you seen one who has taken as his [/her] god his [/her] own whims, and whom God [thereupon] let go astray in spite of the knowledge he [/she] has, and whose hearing and heart He has sealed, and upon whose sight He has laid a covering. Who, then, shall guide him [/her] after God? Will you not then be mindful?
And they say, "There is nothing but our present world's life; we die as we come to life, and nothing but time destroys us." Of that they have no knowledge; they merely conjecture. [45:23-24]

أَفَرَءَيْتَ مَنِ ٱتَّخَذَ إِلَٰهَهُۥ هَوَىٰهُ
وَأَضَلَّهُ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ وَخَتَمَ عَلَىٰ سَمْعِهِۦ
وَقَلْبِهِۦ وَجَعَلَ عَلَىٰ بَصَرِهِۦ غِشَٰوَةً
فَمَن يَهْدِيهِ مِنۢ بَعْدِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ
﴿٢٣﴾ وَقَالُوا۟ مَا هِىَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا
ٱلدُّنْيَا نَمُوتُ وَنَحْيَا وَمَا يُهْلِكُنَآ إِلَّا
ٱلدَّهْرُ ۚ وَمَا لَهُم بِذَٰلِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ ۖ إِنْ هُمْ
إِلَّا يَظُنُّونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

The guidance of God is needed by the human nature of which He is the Creator and the All-knowing, and thus secures the benefit of the individual and the society in the long term. When the human being ignores the divine guidance and follows his/her own whims which may be shortsighted and egocentric, such a narrow perspective hurts the individual and society as a whole in the long term. The continuous abuse of the human intellect and free choice gradually develops the habit of erroneous judgements and behavior, which comes as a result of this abuse itself. Accordingly, it is abuse of the person's own physical, intellectual and psychological-moral-spiritual faculties that, by time, results in "sealing the hearing and heart and laying a covering over the sight." When the human being blocks all avenues given to him/her by God for gaining true knowledge and making good judgements, his/her own myopic vision and selfish behavior will lead him/her to self- destruction in the end, and who then can help such a person who is deprived of the guidance of his/her All-knowing Creator?

Some may justify their enclosure in this selfish and materialistic philosophy, and thus any belief in what is beyond this life does not make any sense! Here also they are following their own whims, wishful thinking, conjecture and superficial knowledge. The correlations and coordination of this cosmos, with its fascinating phenomena and intact laws and order, point to a supreme wisdom that would not create it in this miraculousness without purpose, and would not allow the human life to end without fulfillment and final justice: *"Did you think that We Created you in a meaningless play, and that you would not have to return to us? Highly exalted be God ..."* [23:115-116].

Has that [stubborn denier of the truth] never been told of what was [stated] in the scrolls of Moses and of Abraham who fulfilled [what he was charged with] that no bearer of a burden shall bear the burden of another; and that nothing shall be accounted to a human being but what he [/she] strives for; and that in time one's striving shall [accurately] come in sight, then he [/she] shall be requited for it in full; and that unto your Lord is the ultimate end. [53:36-42]

أَمْ
لَمْ يُنَبَّأْ بِمَا فِي صُحُفِ مُوسَىٰ ﴿٣٦﴾
وَإِبْرَاهِيمَ الَّذِي وَفَّىٰ ﴿٣٧﴾ أَلَّا تَزِرُ
وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَأَن لَّيْسَ
لِلْإِنسَانِ إِلَّا مَا سَعَىٰ ﴿٣٩﴾ وَأَنَّ سَعْيَهُ
سَوْفَ يُرَىٰ ﴿٤٠﴾ ثُمَّ يُجْزَاهُ الْجَزَاءَ
الْأَوْفَىٰ ﴿٤١﴾ وَأَنَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ
الْمُنتَهَىٰ ﴿٤٢﴾

The above verses set the principles of divine justice in this world's life through God's law, "*Shari'a*", and on the Day of Judgement in the life to come. These principles have been repeatedly stressed in the successive divine messages, of which those of Ibrahim (Abraham) and Musa (Moses) are specified. Abraham has his distinguished place in the history of prophethood as a persistent preacher of worshipping the One God wherever he went, and as the one who strongly established the tradition of "tawhid" through his sons Is-haq (Isaac) and Isma'il (Ishmael), and their descendants. Moses was known for the law revealed to him by God, of which the Ten Commandments were prominent.

An essential principle of this divine justice, as the above verses indicate, is that the burden and consequences of any action must be borne by the doer of that action, and that no other person shall bear any of this individual responsibility compulsorily or even voluntarily in this world or in the life to come. The human being is accountable for his/her intentions and what he/she is striving for, and it is one's deeds that count when a person is judged, not his/her claims or the deeds of others, however close to him/her the others may be. This is the divine justice which is applied in this life in the best way for the human abilities which are supported by the divine guidance. On the Day of Judgement God alone can see the human striving and intention in all its circumstances, in full, and accordingly He alone can judge and requite with all justice.

He has created the human being; He has imparted unto him [/her] how to [articulate thought and] express himself [/herself] well in speech. [55:3-4]

خَلَقَ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ ﴿٣﴾ عَلَّمَهُ ٱلْبَيَانَ ﴿٤﴾

Since the creation of Adam, God has granted the human being a linguistic faculty [see the verse 2:31 and the commentary] with the human intellect. Human free will contributes to these intellectual and linguistic powers by allowing the human being to freely choose from the thoughts that come to his/her mind, and then select the words with which he/she may express himself/herself. A strong relation may also exist between what God has breathed in the human being of His spirit and the human intellectual and linguistic abilities. The human being is accountable for what he/she chooses to say or do using this privilege of high level of thinking and linguistic self-expression [e.g. 50:18].

Truly the human being is born restless ever discontented; whenever evil touches him [/her], he [/she] is startled and panicked, and whenever good touches him [/her] , he [/she] selfishly withholds it [from others]; save those who [regularly and sincerely] pray, and those in whose possessions there is a due share, determined and recognized and acknowledged [by them], for one who asks [for help] and one who is deprived [of the needs of life]. [70:19-25]

إِنَّ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ خُلِقَ هَلُوعًا ۙ
﴿١٩﴾ إِذَا مَسَّهُ ٱلشَّرُّ جَزُوعًا ۙ ﴿٢٠﴾
وَإِذَا مَسَّهُ ٱلْخَيْرُ مَنُوعًا ۙ ﴿٢١﴾ إِلَّا
ٱلْمُصَلِّينَ ﴿٢٢﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَىٰ صَلَاتِهِمْ
دَآئِمُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ فِىٓ أَمْوَٰلِهِمْ حَقٌّ
مَّعْلُومٌ ۙ ﴿٢٤﴾ لِّلسَّآئِلِ وَٱلْمَحْرُومِ
﴿٢٥﴾

These verses shed light on some angles of the human self. Human limitations and weaknesses are reflected in facing the ups and downs of life. In times of adversity one is inclined to overreact and panic or feel desperate and incessantly complain about his/her hardship. During times of prosperity the same person becomes arrogant and forgetful of

other people's needs and his/her own shortcomings and failures, and instead thinks that he/she is always perfect, and deserves success because of his/her own special merits.

Those who keep up their prayers use the spiritual compass granted by God to every human being in order to reach balance and stability. Thus, with God's guidance, they become able to face the vicissitudes of life with a balanced self and mind. Keeping up prayers does not mean merely performing certain formal rituals, but involves a complete submission of one's being to God and His guidance, and a genuine realization of God's presence. Developing such a close relation with God through prayers will sustain the human stability and energy in success and failure. Such a God-conscious person would spread righteousness and beneficence among all whom he/she contacts and deals with, for "*prayer restrains the human being from loathsome deeds and from all that runs counter to common sense and reason*" [29:45]. The clear signs of righteousness and goodness, developed by a constant presence before God and communication with Him in prayers, is the recognition of the rights of others and the granting to those who ask for help or are deprived from their needs in life their full rights and due share in earnings if one can financially afford this [51:19; 70:24-5]. In any case, one can offer help to others physically or intellectually. Helping the poor and needy is repeatedly connected with keeping up prayers in about 26 verses of the Quran, and prayers are considered fruitless if they do not develop an attitude of concerted caring among people [e.g. 107: all verses].

And I swear by the [intrinsic] self-reproach. Does the human being think that We shall bring back his [lher] bones together again? Yes indeed [the same as] We are able to make whole in a balanced order the very tip of one's finger. [75:2-4]

وَلَآ
أُقْسِمُ بِٱلنَّفْسِ ٱللَّوَّامَةِ ﴿٢﴾ أَيَحْسَبُ
ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ أَلَّن نَّجْمَعَ عِظَامَهُۥ ﴿٣﴾ بَلَىٰ
قَٰدِرِينَ عَلَىٰٓ أَن نُّسَوِّيَ بَنَانَهُۥ ﴿٤﴾

The Quran, as previously mentioned, refers to three staked sides of the human self: the side inciting to evil, the self reproaching side, and the side urging the human being to reach rest and satisfaction [respectively 12:53, 75:2, 89:27]. Psychoanalytic theory indicates three other divisions of the human psyche: the "id" that is completely unconscious and is the source of psychic energy derived from instinctual needs and drives, the "super-ego" that is only partly conscious and represents the internalization of parental conscience and the rules of society, and which functions to reward and punish through a system of moral attitudes, conscience and a sense of guilt, and the "ego" that serves as the organized conscious mediator between the person and reality, especially as it functions both in the perception and adaptation of reality.

There are obvious signs to the wonders of God's creation in the human physical form as well as in human psychology and spirituality. The amazing formation and function of the finger has led, whether directly or indirectly, to enormous contributions in human civilizations. One can use the finger in holding and moving objects, and in artistic creativity. The sensitive touch of the finger can feel heat or other physical phenomena, and

can extend personal feelings and sentiments to other human beings or animals. The fingerprint, composed of lines on the finger tip, can be used for identification purposes. How significant is such a small part of the human body in manifesting the wonders of God's creation!

Nay, the human being is well aware of his [/her] own self [now and in the life to come] even though he[/she] brings out his [/her numerous and various] excuses. [75:14-15]

بَلِ ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِۦ بَصِيرَةٌ
(١٤) وَلَوْ أَلْقَىٰ مَعَاذِيرَهُۥ (١٥)

The human being is conscious of his/her real feelings, inclinations and intentions, although he/she uses intellectual and linguistic abilities to cite various excuses and hide the inner motives. However, self-deception and the deception of others cannot last. One day, what is inside a person betrays him/her and reveals the hidden reality directly or indirectly. On the Day of Judgement, the person will be an eyewitness against himself/herself: "..... *their hearing, their sight and their skins will bear witness against them as to [all] their deeds*" [41:20].

Does the human being think that he [/she] will be left to roam at will [without accountability]?
Was he [/she] not once a mere drop of sperm spilled?
Then he [/she] became a mixed suspension that He created and shaped [in due proportion and according to what the human being is meant to be]; and of it He fashioned the two sexes: the male and the female?
Has He not, then, the power to bring the dead back to life? [75: 36-40]

أَيَحْسَبُ
ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ أَن يُتْرَكَ سُدًى (٣٦) أَلَمْ يَكُ
نُطْفَةً مِّن مَّنِىٍّ يُمْنَىٰ (٣٧) ثُمَّ كَانَ عَلَقَةً
فَخَلَقَ فَسَوَّىٰ (٣٨) فَجَعَلَ مِنْهُ
ٱلزَّوْجَيْنِ ٱلذَّكَرَ وَٱلْأُنثَىٰٓ (٣٩) أَلَيْسَ
ذَٰلِكَ بِقَٰدِرٍ عَلَىٰٓ أَن
يُحْـِۧىَ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ (٤٠)

How can the human being, with his/her wonderful physical, psychological, intellectual and spiritual formation and multi-sided life, think that he/she, with all his/her powers, can do what he/she likes without accountability? God holds every human being accountable for his/her intentions and actions, and He will resurrect everyone after his/her death. If the sexual relationship between a male and female can reproduce a living human being with all his/her abilities, then one cannot doubt that God will bring an already created human being to life at the resurrection.

Has there come on the human being a while of time when he [/she] was not yet a thing to be mentioned?
Surely, We have created the human being out of a drop of sperm intermingled [with the female egg], trying him [/her]; and We made him [/her] hearing and seeing.
We have showed him [/her] the way: [either to be] grateful or ungrateful. [76: 1-3]

هَلۡ أَتَىٰ عَلَى ٱلۡإِنسَٰنِ حِينٞ مِّنَ ٱلدَّهۡرِ
لَمۡ يَكُن شَيۡـٔٗا مَّذۡكُورًا ۝١ إِنَّا خَلَقۡنَا
ٱلۡإِنسَٰنَ مِن نُّطۡفَةٍ أَمۡشَاجٖ نَّبۡتَلِيهِ
فَجَعَلۡنَٰهُ سَمِيعَۢا بَصِيرًا ۝٢ إِنَّا هَدَيۡنَٰهُ
ٱلسَّبِيلَ إِمَّا شَاكِرٗا وَإِمَّا كَفُورًا ۝٣

The human being can be viewed as an insignificant creature since the universe existed long before he/she was ever heard of or mentioned: "*Grater indeed than the creation of the human being is the creation of the heavens and the earth, yet most people really know not*" [40:57]. On the other hand, the creation of the human being is remarkable; in spite of his/her humble origin that was initially clay for the first couple and which then became a drop of male sperm and a female egg for successive generations, the human being has been granted characteristic physical, psychological, intellectual and spiritual faculties. He/she has been given the free will to use those powers in developing or destroying his/herself and the world around him/her. God's guidance and human spirituality can conduct the human towards the former option by leading a person's behavior towards righteousness and constructiveness, and saving him/her from destructiveness, egotism and shortsightedness.

O human being! What has lured you away from your bountiful Lord, who has created you and shaped you [in due proportion and according to what you are meant to be], and made you integrated [in your appearance and abilities]? In whatever form He wills, He puts you together. [82:6-8]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلۡإِنسَٰنُ مَا غَرَّكَ بِرَبِّكَ ٱلۡكَرِيمِ
۝٦ ٱلَّذِي خَلَقَكَ فَسَوَّىٰكَ فَعَدَلَكَ ۝٧
فِيٓ أَيِّ صُورَةٖ مَّا شَآءَ رَكَّبَكَ ۝٨

God has created the human being and shaped him/her in due proportions and in a balanced way, and has granted him/her various faculties and the means with which he/she can fulfill his/her high human responsibility and carry out his/her role in this world's life. With such multi-abilities and potential the human being can develop his/her own-self as well as his/her physical and social environments. Recognizing these balanced intellectual and psychological-moral-spiritual powers, the human being ought to be thankful to God who could have shaped him/her in another form had He willed, but has instead created him/her in such a balanced and capable form. The best way of expressing one's gratitude to Him is to use these human faculties for comprehensive human development, as well as for the material development of the whole world, without selfishness, shortsightedness or imbalance.

O human being! Surely, you have ever been laboring [in passing through this life] toward your Lord, and surely you shall meet Him. [84:6]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا
ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ إِنَّكَ كَادِحٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ كَدْحًا
فَمُلَٰقِيهِ ٦

This life can be perceived to be ever full of hardships if it is detached from its relation with the coming eternal and rewarding life, a hope that God's message gives us. Hence, although the literature of pessimism in poetry, stories and philosophy has been flowing from intelligent minds throughout all ages, these minds have severed their ties as human beings with the divine source of hope, and hence their pessimism has emerged. In this life, the good person may suffer while the evil one may flourish, and life is too short for all individual and collective potential to be fulfilled, or for all the dimensions of justice and peace to be secured all over the world. Another life should come to secure justice and fulfillment of human potential after the present frustration, during which those who are crying now because of their unjust suffering shall rejoice, and those who are rejoicing unfairly and undeservingly shall cry for their folly and narrow-mindedness. This is the meaningful hope offered and guaranteed by God's messages for the human fulfillment and fair requital on the Day of Judgement and in the eternal life to come.

[To the righteous will be said] "O you human self at peace! Return to your Lord, pleased [from within] and more pleased [by God's acceptance and rewards]. Enter you then, among My [true] servants, and enter you My paradise." [89: 27-30]

يَٰٓأَيَّتُهَا ٱلنَّفْسُ ٱلْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ ٢٧
ٱرْجِعِىٓ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً ٢٨
فَٱدْخُلِى فِى عِبَٰدِى ٢٩
وَٱدْخُلِى جَنَّتِى ٣٠

The righteous end of people's life journey is by returning to their Lord and Creator in a state of peace, and complete satisfaction. As previously mentioned, there are three sides to every human self: the inciting one, the reproaching one, and the one that leads to the enjoyment of inner peace which is referred to in the above verse. These three aspects may call to mind the three divisions of the psyche in psychoanalytic theory : the "id," the "superego" and the "ego" [see the previously mentioned verses 12:53, 75:2, and the commentary], but a specialist comparison is beyond the goal of this work.

Verily, We have created the human being for a life of toil and suffering. Does he [/she] think none has power over him [/her]? He boasts, "I have consumed wealth abundant!" Does he [/she] think that none has seen him[/her]?

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ فِى كَبَدٍ ٤
أَيَحْسَبُ أَن لَّن يَقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ أَحَدٌ ٥
يَقُولُ أَهْلَكْتُ مَالًا لُّبَدًا ٦ أَيَحْسَبُ أَن

Have We not given him [/her] two eyes? And a tongue, and two lips? And shown him [/her] the two tracks [of good and evil]? [90: 4-10]

لَمْ يَرَهُۥٓ أَحَدٌ ﴿٧﴾ أَلَمْ نَجْعَل لَّهُۥ عَيْنَيْنِ ﴿٨﴾ وَلِسَانًا وَشَفَتَيْنِ ﴿٩﴾ وَهَدَيْنَٰهُ ٱلنَّجْدَيْنِ ﴿١٠﴾

Life is full of struggles and suffering, and one has to practice self-control in order to be able to traverse life smoothly. However, one who reaches power or prosperity in this world may think that this is permanent state, and that he/she is not accountable for the means of acquisition or the subsequent use of this power or wealth. One tends to forget God's blessings which distinguish the human being from animals when one becomes used to them and - in arrogance - begins taking them for granted, including the eyes with which he/she sees, the tongue and lips with which he/she speaks, and most importantly, the intellectual and the moral-spiritual abilities with which he/she knows right from wrong.

The human being is accountable for his/her use of all these blessings of God, and he/she ought to keep in mind this accountability, however powerful or wealthy he/she may be. This life, with all its pleasures, will come to an end, and those who have enjoyed self-control throughout its vicissitudes, and were able to endure its hardships and obstacles, as well as overcome its temptations, using their power and wealth to help others, will be rewarded in this life and in the life to come. Others, whose power and wealth led them to arrogance and haughtiness, will ultimately be the losers.

By the human self and how it is formed [in due proportion and according to what is meant to be], and how it is imbued with moral failings, as well as with righteousness and consciousness of God.
Truly, to happiness and success shall attain one who causes this self to grow in purity, and truly lost is the one who buries it [in the darkness of ego-centrism and material self-interest]. [91: 7-10]

وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّىٰهَا ﴿٧﴾ فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَىٰهَا ﴿٨﴾ قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن زَكَّىٰهَا ﴿٩﴾ وَقَدْ خَابَ مَن دَسَّىٰهَا ﴿١٠﴾

By the night enshrouding; by the day as it rises bright; by creating the male and the female, surely, your striving is to diverse ends.
As for one who gives [to others in need] and is conscious of God, and believes in the truth

وَٱلَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَىٰ ﴿١﴾ وَٱلنَّهَارِ إِذَا تَجَلَّىٰ ﴿٢﴾ وَمَا خَلَقَ ٱلذَّكَرَ وَٱلْأُنثَىٰٓ ﴿٣﴾ إِنَّ سَعْيَكُمْ لَشَتَّىٰ ﴿٤﴾ فَأَمَّا مَنْ

of the ultimate good, We shall surely make easy for him[/her] the path towards [ultimate] ease [and self-peace now and in the life to come].
But as for one who is miserly, and thinks himself [/herself] self-sufficient, and calls the ultimate good a lie, We shall make easy the path [that he/she has chosen] towards hardship, and his[/her] wealth shall by no means help him[/her] out as he[/she] stumbles along. Surely, it is for Us to bring you the guidance, and Ours is [the dominion and power over] the life to come, as well as [over] this earlier life. [92:1-13]

أَعْطَىٰ وَ ٱتَّقَىٰ ﴿٥﴾ وَ صَدَّقَ بِٱلْحُسْنَىٰ
﴿٦﴾ فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُۥ لِلْيُسْرَىٰ ﴿٧﴾ وَ أَمَّا مَنۢ
بَخِلَ وَ ٱسْتَغْنَىٰ ﴿٨﴾ وَ كَذَّبَ بِٱلْحُسْنَىٰ
﴿٩﴾ فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُۥ لِلْعُسْرَىٰ ﴿١٠﴾ وَ مَا
يُغْنِى عَنْهُ مَالُهُۥٓ إِذَا تَرَدَّىٰٓ ﴿١١﴾ إِنَّ
عَلَيْنَا لَلْهُدَىٰ ﴿١٢﴾ وَ إِنَّ لَنَا لَلْأٓخِرَةَ
وَ ٱلْأُولَىٰ ﴿١٣﴾

God has created the human self in a capable form with effective functions, and has provided it with various physical, intellectual and psychological-moral-spiritual powers and potential in order to carry out the mission of developing the human being and the world in this life. The utmost of God's blessings to the human being are the free will and the intellectual-moral-spiritual abilities that allow him/her to know good from evil. However, a continuous effort is needed to develop the human self to its full potential of righteousness and to keep it pure, as it is always challenged by imbued moral failings and the temptation of evil, to which it is equally exposed due to the presence of free will. God's guidance, through His message, helps the human being in this continuous effort of developing his/her purity and morality, and guarding himself/herself against falling into the traps of evil.

We have indeed created the human being in the finest configuration, and thereafter We reduce him [/her] to the lowest of the low, except only those who attain to faith and do righteous deeds, and theirs shall be a reward never ending. [95:4-6]

لَقَدْ
خَلَقْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ فِىٓ أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ ﴿٤﴾
ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَٰهُ أَسْفَلَ سَٰفِلِينَ ﴿٥﴾ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا۟ وَ عَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ فَلَهُمْ أَجْرٌ
غَيْرُ مَمْنُونٍ ﴿٦﴾

God has created the human being with physical fitness for moving through and developing the earth and generating civilization. He has given him/her various powers and abilities which are balanced and correlated and which can help him/her carry out the human mission in this world's life. However, unless the human free will decides to properly use the human intellect and the moral-spiritual faculties, the human being may live at the biological level like any animal [see the previously mentioned verses 7:179, 25:44 and

the commentary]. God's guidance is sent to the human being to maintain and develop his/her distinctive merits that are granted to him/her by the Creator and to lead him/her in the human mission on earth in this world's life and to the noble destiny and ultimate goal in the life to come. Those who follow this guidance gain the rewards of inner peace and happiness and the love of others in this life, followed by the mighty and permanent rewards of God in the eternal life to come.

Recite, in the name of your Lord, who has created, has created the human being of a suspending mixture [of sperm and egg]. Read, and your Lord is the Most Bountiful, who has taught [the human being] through the pen, taught the human being what he did not know.
Nay, surely, the human being becomes grossly overweening whenever he [/she] believes himself [/herself] to be self- sufficient.
Surely, unto your Lord is the return [of all]. [96:1-8]

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ﴿١﴾ خَلَقَ
الْإِنسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ﴿٢﴾ اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ
الْأَكْرَمُ ﴿٣﴾ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ﴿٤﴾ عَلَّمَ
الْإِنسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ ﴿٥﴾ كَلَّا إِنَّ الْإِنسَانَ
لَيَطْغَىٰ ﴿٦﴾ أَن رَّآهُ اسْتَغْنَىٰ ﴿٧﴾
إِنَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ الرُّجْعَىٰ ﴿٨﴾

These were the first verses revealed to Prophet Muhammad about his message and his mission, and thus they represent the earliest declaration of the message of Islam and the beginning of the call of the Lord for the benefit of humanity. Here God is reminding the human being of his/her biological origin: the mixed suspension of the sperm and egg, which although little, has all the potential of the human merits, at the top of which are the human mind and free will. The human being has been endowed with the linguistic power that gives names to all that he/she experiences [see the previously mentioned verse 2:31 and its commentary]. He/she has been enabled by God to turn the spoken language into written symbols, and thus the human being has been able to record what he/she knows and extend this record to others, an achievement that has been essential in preserving the history of civilization. By enabling the human being to use the pen and to learn and spread knowledge, God has helped humankind exchange and extend information over the earth. The earliest Quranic verses stress this civilizational role of the humankind on earth, where it has been entrusted with being the successive agents of God.

The multi-faculties of the human being, including his/her intellect, knowledge, speech and writing, however, may lead him/her to experience illusions of power and self-sufficiency and thus transgress all bounds and deny others' rights. The verses remind a person with such a tyrannical attitude that regardless of the amounts of power that he/she may achieve in this wordly life, the return of all human beings to their Lord is inevitable, and the accountability and requital of every individual for all of his/her deeds in this life will certainly follow in the eternal life to come.

إِنَّ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ لِرَبِّهِۦ لَكَنُودٌ ﴿٦﴾
وَإِنَّهُۥ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ لَشَهِيدٌ ﴿٧﴾ وَإِنَّهُۥ لِحُبِّ
ٱلْخَيْرِ لَشَدِيدٌ ﴿٨﴾

Surely, the human being is to his [/her] Lord most ungrateful; and to this he himself [/she herself] indeed bears witness, and in the love of wealth he [/she] is vigorous. [100: 6-8]

The above verses underline the human inclination towards the wealth and pleasures of this world, an attitude which unfortunately is not connected with gratitude to the Gracious Giver and Donor of these pleasures. Instead, such an overwhelming attitude towards the pleasures of this life deprives one from thinking with any balance or justice, and through the accumulation of wealth and pleasures of this life the human being is oblivious of those who are in need, and forgets the Lord who is testing the wealthy to whom He has granted His bounty, as to how they use their wealth and how they deal with those who are in need of the essentials of life. However, in due time, probably in this life and definitely in the eternal life to come, the human being will admit his/her shortsightedness, selfishness and greed in failing God's test, ignoring others' rights and misusing the divine blessings. However, if self-condemnation comes only when this life comes to an end, it will be too late!

وَٱلْعَصْرِ ﴿١﴾ إِنَّ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ لَفِى خُسْرٍ
﴿٢﴾ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟
ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا۟ بِٱلْحَقِّ
وَتَوَاصَوْا۟ بِٱلصَّبْرِ ﴿٣﴾

By the [passing] time! Surely, the human being is in the way of loss, save those who attain to faith, and do righteous deeds, and enjoin upon one another firm adherence to the truth and enjoin upon one another patience [and steadfastness, in facing the vicissitudes of life]. [103:1-3]

Owing to human limitations and shortsightedness, one's hastiness, greed and selfishness lead to a complete loss in the long term: both in this life and in the eternal life to come. Faith in God and individual accountability extends the human's perspective, as he/she observes his/her relation with God when dealing with people, and looks to the life to come when working in this world's life. Such an extended vision guards the human being against his/her own myopic egocentrism, and inspires him/her to do what is righteous and to cooperate with others in maintaining and developing the moral values of truth and virtue. The truth is wide, and comprehensive, and the belief in and worship of the Creator and Lord of this universe and the observation of His guidance, represent the ultimate truth that sheds light on all avenues of life.

قُلِ ٱللَّهُمَّ مَٰلِكَ ٱلْمُلْكِ
تُؤْتِى ٱلْمُلْكَ مَن تَشَآءُ وَ تَنزِعُ ٱلْمُلْكَ
مِمَّن تَشَآءُ ۖ وَ تُعِزُّ مَن تَشَآءُ وَ تُذِلُّ مَن
تَشَآءُ ۖ بِيَدِكَ ٱلْخَيْرُ ۖ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ
شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٢٦﴾ تُولِجُ ٱلَّيْلَ فِى ٱلنَّهَارِ
وَ تُولِجُ ٱلنَّهَارَ فِى ٱلَّيْلِ ۖ وَ تُخْرِجُ
ٱلْحَىَّ مِنَ ٱلْمَيِّتِ وَ تُخْرِجُ ٱلْمَيِّتَ مِنَ
ٱلْحَىِّ ۖ وَ تَرْزُقُ مَن تَشَآءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ
﴿٢٧﴾

Say: "O God, Lord of all dominion! You grant dominion to whom You will, and take away dominion from whom You will, and You exalt whom You will, and bring low whom You will, in Your hand is all good. Surely, You have power over all things. You cause the night to approach smoothly the day, and You cause the day to approach smoothly the night; You bring forth the living out of the dead, and You bring forth the dead out of the living; and You provide beyond reckoning sustenance to whom You will". [3:26-27]

ان
يَمْسَسْكُمْ قَرْحٌ فَقَدْ مَسَّ ٱلْقَوْمَ قَرْحٌ
مِّثْلُهُۥ ۚ وَ تِلْكَ ٱلْأَيَّامُ نُدَاوِلُهَا بَيْنَ
ٱلنَّاسِ وَ لِيَعْلَمَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟
وَيَتَّخِذَ مِنكُمْ شُهَدَآءَ ۗ وَ ٱللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ
ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٤٠﴾

... and such days [of happiness and distress] We deal in turn among people... [3:140]

فَإِذَا لَقِيتُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ فَضَرْبَ ٱلرِّقَابِ
حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَآ أَثْخَنتُمُوهُمْ فَشُدُّوا۟ ٱلْوَثَاقَ
فَإِمَّا مَنًّۢا بَعْدُ وَ إِمَّا فِدَآءً حَتَّىٰ تَضَعَ
ٱلْحَرْبُ أَوْزَارَهَا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ وَ لَوْ
يَشَآءُ ٱللَّهُ لَٱنتَصَرَ مِنْهُمْ وَ لَٰكِن لِّيَبْلُوَا۟
بَعْضَكُم بِبَعْضٍ ۗ وَ ٱلَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا۟ فِى
سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ فَلَن يُضِلَّ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ ﴿٤﴾

... and [know that] had God so willed, He could certainly have inflicted defeat on them [directly]; but [He wills you to struggle] so as to test you [all] by one another.... [47:4]

The Quran points out that the political power and ruling regimes pertain to the dynamism which dominates all of creation, whether in the physical or biological spheres.

The change in the political and social powers is like the succession of day and night, or life and death [3:26-27]. Even Muslims are not an exception from the divine law of human societies which tests individuals and societies one with the other [47:4]. No one is immune from bearing the painful results of failure when the means of success have not been applied, since there is favoritism in God's conduct of His creation. No Muslim political power or ruling regime is eternal or immune from being tested by the others' counteractions. Differing views may emerge in Muslim society and state, in which everyone has the right and obligation to freely express his/her differences without violence or provocation, but in the best objective and moral ways [16:125]. Social and political organizations represent a cornerstone in the Islamic shura culture, and an essential means for fulfilling the right and duty of "enjoining the doing of what is right and forbidding the doing of what is wrong" [3:104; see the section on "Rulers-Ruled Relations in Chapter 5: Laws]. The Quranic precepts about social and political dynamism and change are meant to direct Muslim minds towards a vigilant observance of shura in all their behavior in general, and in politics in particular, but unfortunately this has not been the reality at all levels for centuries. In addition, an intelligent observation of social development to discover its dynamics should reflect the Quranic precepts in this respect. If the pioneering contribution of Ibn Khaldun [d.1406] had been followed up and developed by his successors, Muslims would have been, centuries ago, the genuine founders of an independent discipline and a significant school of sociology.

How many a community [settled in its place] have We destroyed, while it had been indulged in evil-doing, and now they are deserted with nobody under their roofs; and how many a well is now abandoned and a castle that [once] stood tall? Have they never journeyed about the earth, letting their hearts [and minds] be apprehensive, and their ears listening? Truly, it is not the eyes that have become blind, but blind have become the hearts which are in their chests!
And they challenge you [O Muhammad] to hasten the coming of [God's] chastisement! God never fails to fulfill His word; and surely, a day with your Lord is like a thousand years of your counting.
And to how many a community that was indulged in evil-doing have I given respite for a while, then I took them to task; and with Me is all journeys' end. [22:45-48]

فَكَأَيِّن مِّن قَرْيَةٍ
أَهْلَكْنَٰهَا وَهِىَ ظَالِمَةٌ فَهِىَ خَاوِيَةٌ
عَلَىٰ عُرُوشِهَا وَبِئْرٍ مُّعَطَّلَةٍ وَقَصْرٍ
مَّشِيدٍ ﴿٤٥﴾ أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ
فَتَكُونَ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ يَعْقِلُونَ بِهَآ أَوْ ءَاذَانٌ
يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا ۖ فَإِنَّهَا لَا تَعْمَى ٱلْأَبْصَٰرُ
وَلَٰكِن تَعْمَى ٱلْقُلُوبُ ٱلَّتِى فِى
ٱلصُّدُورِ ﴿٤٦﴾ وَيَسْتَعْجِلُونَكَ بِٱلْعَذَابِ
وَلَن يُخْلِفَ ٱللَّهُ وَعْدَهُۥ ۚ وَإِنَّ يَوْمًا
عِندَ رَبِّكَ كَأَلْفِ سَنَةٍ مِّمَّا تَعُدُّونَ ﴿٤٧﴾
وَكَأَيِّن مِّن قَرْيَةٍ أَمْلَيْتُ لَهَا وَهِىَ ظَالِمَةٌ
ثُمَّ أَخَذْتُهَا وَإِلَىَّ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿٤٨﴾

The rise, decline and fall of political powers and civilizations are a significant phenomenon of history, and so the laws of social change are being gradually appreciated by the human mind that has realized that these laws are not less perpetual than the laws of physical change [note how both kinds of change are connected in the two successive Quranic verses [3:26- 27]. The Arabic word *qaryah,* meaning an urban center or place where people are permanently settled, has been mentioned in the Quran in its plural form *qura* more than fifty times. The Quran indicates socio-economic justice and the irresponsible and immoral behavior of the wealthy as a reason for the self-destruction and fall of a society or a settled population [e.g. 7:96; 16:112; 17:16, and see the section on Socio-Economic Justice in Chapter 6: Laws]. Military invasion and occupation of another country would seriously affect settled people materially and socially [e.g. 27:34]. Because of the importance of such urban populations, God cares to present His guidance about justice and morality to them [e.g. 6:92, 131; 12:109; 25:51; 26:208; 28:59; 42:7; 43:23].

God's punishment of an evil-doing individual or group is left in general to the natural laws of cause and effect [see the previously mentioned verse [13:11] and the commentary on it]. According to the Quran, the quick punishment of certain people by God in this life such as that which occurred during previous messages, did not occur merely because of the rejection of God's messages by these people, but owing to an overwhelming evil-doing of a community, such as oppression or exploitation of people [e.g. 7:74-76, 80-82, 85-88; 11:59, 84-88, 91-92, 102, 117; 16:112; 18:59; 21:11; 28:59] Furthermore, these evildoers that were punished had often threatened the conveyors of God's messages in their time that they would kill them or throw them and the believers out of their towns [e.g. 7:88; 11:91; 14:13; 16:12; 18:20; 19:46; 36:18; 44:20-21]. With regard to the message of Muhammad, the Quran states clearly that people are left to the regular natural laws: *"And had God so willed, He could indeed defeat them [the enemies of the message, directly Himself]; but He wills to test you [all] by means of one another"* [47:4].

The remnants of previous communities and civilizations may be obvious to anyone, but many do not go beyond the surface in order to reflect on that decline and fall, and figure out their reasons. The Arabic word for heart refers to the human faculty of emotional interaction with the mind that brings out motivation, commitment and decisiveness. Those who reject God's message may possess organs of physical sight and hearing, but they lack the intellectual and emotional interaction with sensually felt realities. If their faculties of conception and commitment had been functioning, they would have received the message and noticed the laws of social change in history and remnants of the past. However, even if such previous quick punishments may not be taking place now, God's natural laws have never ceased to make evildoers suffer for their evil in the long term, even if it seems that they are left unaccountable in the short term.

What people may conceive of as "time," such as a day or a month or a year, is meaningless with regard to the divine eternity and timelessness. People measure their time according to their existence on this earth and use the relation between the earth and the sun or the moon to count it, but all this is irrelevant for God and His laws and commands for this world and its end. Our time is relative to us, not to the timeless divinity, and what may be a "day" to Him can by no means be the 24 hours that the earth takes in its rotation around the sun. It may be like a thousand years or fifty thousand years [70:4] in our

counting of time and its "relative" length depends on what God wills to do through the so called "divine day." We now know that a "light year" - the distance that light travels in one year in a vacuum - is about 5,878 billion miles, and it is used in astronomy for measuring interstellar and intergalactic distances, such as distance between our solar system and the nearest stars, Alpha Centauri and Proxima Centauri, which is about 4.3 light years. If time as measured by the traverse of light is so long and its speed so fast, then, what about the divine time? All that is certain is that God's laws with regards to the cosmos and human societies are carried out incessantly in this world regardless of the "relative" time that any occurrence or development may take according to our time; with God alone are all journeys' end, and human accountability and requital are sure in the life to come.

O human beings! We have created you all out of a male and a female, and made you into [various] peoples and tribes so that you may come to know one another. Surely, the most honored of you in the sight of God is the one who is most conscious of Him. Behold, God is All-knowing, All-aware. [49:13]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ إِنَّا
خَلَقْنَٰكُم مِّن ذَكَرٍ وَ أُنثَىٰ وَ جَعَلْنَٰكُمْ
شُعُوبًا وَ قَبَآئِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوٓاْ ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ
عِندَ ٱللَّهِ أَتْقَىٰكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ
﴿١٣﴾

This verse lays the Islamic foundation for global pluralism, and states that human diversity is meant to encourage universal interaction, cooperation and complementation, not isolation or conflict. All of humanity in different places and times is equal in terms of human rights and dignity, and they are one before God, whatever their physical and cultural differences may be. Tribes, nations and races, as well as languages and cultures [see 30:22] may represent a convenient categorization for practical or scientific considerations, but they should never conceal the equal human essence and rights of different individuals or groups, or become barriers among them. Peoples of the whole world should know, not just the names of each other's countries on the map, but the whole material and cultural circumstances of various human groups, so that they may be mutually enriched with their positive characteristics and mutually supported against the negative ones. This is the real and fruitful "knowing" and recognition of one another which leads to universal cooperation and solidarity.

A UNIVERSAL CREATURE

O Human beings! Be conscious of your Lord, who has created you [all] out of one living entity[that He initially created], out of which He has created its mate, and out of the two He has

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ ٱتَّقُواْ رَبَّكُمُ ٱلَّذِى
خَلَقَكُم مِّن نَّفْسٍ وَٰحِدَةٍ وَ خَلَقَ مِنْهَا
زَوْجَهَا وَ بَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا

spread widely a multitude of men and women. And remain conscious of God, by whom you demand [your rights] from one another, and of your ties of kinship. Verily, God is Ever Watchful over you. [4:1]

وَنِسَآءً ۚ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ٱلَّذِى تَسَآءَلُونَ
بِهِۦ وَٱلْأَرْحَامَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ
رَقِيبًا ﴿١﴾

This is an essential declaration of the equality of all human beings in all their different races and ethnicities , and in both their sexes, in the name of God the Creator of the whole creation, the Lord of the whole universe, the Whole Justice and the Most Just of all judges. Furthermore, it is a declaration of the universality of the human race which has spread in multitudes all over the world.

Behold, those whom the angels gather in death, while they are wronging their own-selves, will be asked [by the angels], "Under what circumstances were you [during your life on earth]?" They say, "We were weak and oppressed on earth". They [the angels] say, "Was not God's earth wide enough for you to move [from your place] to another place on it?" Such people's end is hell, and how evil a journey's end.
But excepted are the oppressed - be they men, women or children - who cannot help it nor find a way of deliverance; and these may God pardon their wrongdoing; and God is All-pardoning, All-forgiving.
And whoever forsakes his [/her] home [and property] for the cause of God, shall find on earth many refuges and plenty, and whoever goes forth from him [/her] home migrating for the cause of God and the conveyor of His message, and then death overtakes him [/her], his [/her] reward is with God, and God is indeed All-forgiving, Most Gracious.[4:97-100]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ
تَوَفَّىٰهُمُ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ ظَالِمِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ
قَالُوا۟ فِيمَ كُنتُمْ ۖ قَالُوا۟ كُنَّا مُسْتَضْعَفِينَ
فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ قَالُوٓا۟ أَلَمْ تَكُنْ أَرْضُ ٱللَّهِ
وَٰسِعَةً فَتُهَاجِرُوا۟ فِيهَا ۚ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ
مَأْوَىٰهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۖ وَسَآءَتْ مَصِيرًا ﴿٩٧﴾
إِلَّا ٱلْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ ٱلرِّجَالِ وَٱلنِّسَآءِ
وَٱلْوِلْدَٰنِ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ حِيلَةً وَلَا
يَهْتَدُونَ سَبِيلًا ﴿٩٨﴾ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ عَسَى
ٱللَّهُ أَن يَعْفُوَ عَنْهُمْ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَفُوًّا
غَفُورًا ﴿٩٩﴾ ۞ وَمَن يُهَاجِرْ فِى سَبِيلِ
ٱللَّهِ يَجِدْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مُرَٰغَمًا كَثِيرًا
وَسَعَةً ۚ وَمَن يَخْرُجْ مِنۢ بَيْتِهِۦ مُهَاجِرًا
إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ ثُمَّ يُدْرِكْهُ ٱلْمَوْتُ
فَقَدْ وَقَعَ أَجْرُهُۥ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ
غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿١٠٠﴾

The above verses impressively stress that the human being, whose dignity has been granted by God and has been secured by His guidance, should leave his/her own homeland if he/she suffers oppression and cannot defend his/her rights in it. The human being should move throughout the world seeking justice: on the one side any land should be open to the oppressed, and on the other any human being should be ready to leave a land of oppression even if it is his/her beloved homeland so as to secure his/her rights and dignity

wherever this is possible. Those who accept humiliation although they are able to move are wronging their own selves, and if they die in a place where they were deprived from the human dignity granted by God they are the only ones to be blamed since they had no excuse for accepting such humiliation. As for those who are unable to move from their place, God knows their real circumstances, and he forgives human weakness if such weakness is not merely an excuse for inaction.

We have conferred dignity on the children of Adam, and carried them on land and sea, and provided for them sustenance out of the good things of life, and favored them far above many of Our creation. [17:70]

وَ لَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِىٓ ءَادَمَ وَ حَمَلْنَٰهُمْ فِى
ٱلْبَرِّ وَ ٱلْبَحْرِ وَ رَزَقْنَٰهُم مِّنَ ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ
وَ فَضَّلْنَٰهُمْ عَلَىٰ كَثِيرٍ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا
٧٠

The above verse states clearly that human dignity is granted equally to all human beings by the Creator Himself and that this "dignity" encompasses both enjoying rights and fulfilling duties. The human being has been created with physical, intellectual and psychological-moral- spiritual merits which enable him/her to develop himself/herself and make the world in which he/she lives prosper. Thus, he/she has been enabled, since early times, to move from place to place by land, sea, air, and recently through space, and he/she can seek the means for sustenance out of the good things of life which are provided by God all over the world, in order to maintain and develop all of the human potential, which raises the human being above many of God's creation. The human being, then, is a universal creature, and movement throughout the world by any means of transport is one of God's many gifts to him/her that should be used and secured by all who believe in human dignity and universality.

And among His signs [and wonders] is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the diversity of your tongues and hues; surely, in that are signs [and wonders] for those who really have knowledge. [30:22]

وَ مِنْ
ءَايَٰتِهِۦ خَلْقُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ
وَ ٱخْتِلَٰفُ أَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَ أَلْوَٰنِكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ فِى
ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّلْعَٰلِمِينَ ٢٢

Here is another emphasis on the equality of all human beings, whatever their physical, linguistic and cultural differences may be. The universal diversity and pluralism is the human reality and destiny, and it is among the signs and wonders of the Lord that should be recognized by those who are aware of the natural facts and conduct their life accordingly.

And among His signs is the [very] creation of the heavens and the earth, and of all the living creatures which He has spread throughout them, and He is able

وَ مِنْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ خَلْقُ
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ وَ مَا بَثَّ فِيهِمَا

to make them meet together whenever He wills. [42:29]

مِن دَآبَّةٍ ۚ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ جَمۡعِهِمۡ إِذَا يَشَآءُ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٢٩﴾

Does the verse refer to the gathering of human beings and other living creatures from earth and other living creatures from other places through space and the "heavens" on the Day of Resurrection, or is it talking about a possible gathering in this life? If it is the latter then it may be inferred that the universality of the human being may become one day inter-planetary or inter-galaxial! Only God knows the truth.

It is God who has made the sea subservient to you, so that ships might run on it at His commandment [through His laws], and that you might seek of His bounty, haply so you will be grateful. And He has made subservient to you, what is in the heavens and what is on the earth, all together from Him; in that are signs indeed for people who reflect. [45:12-13]

ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى سَخَّرَ لَكُمُ ٱلۡبَحۡرَ لِتَجۡرِىَ ٱلۡفُلۡكُ فِيهِ بِأَمۡرِهِۦ وَلِتَبۡتَغُواْ مِن فَضۡلِهِۦ وَلَعَلَّكُمۡ تَشۡكُرُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُم مَّا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلۡأَرۡضِ جَمِيعًا مِّنۡهُ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَأٓيَٰتٍ لِّقَوۡمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

The first of the above verses refers to the sea that has been subjected to the human being as a way of transportation through the use of ships, and the second refers to what God has subjected to the human being in the heavens and on earth in general. If this verse refers also to transportation as does the previous one, it may be the first allusion to the human traverse of air and space. How favored by God is the human being, and how extensively he/she is enabled to travel!

O human beings! We have created you all out of a male and a female, and made you into [various] peoples and tribes so that you may come to know one another. Surely, the most honored of you in the sight of God is the one who is most conscious of Him. Behold, God is All-knowing, All-aware. [49:13]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقۡنَٰكُم مِّن ذَكَرٍ وَأُنثَىٰ وَجَعَلۡنَٰكُمۡ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَآئِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوٓاْ ۚ إِنَّ أَكۡرَمَكُمۡ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ أَتۡقَىٰكُمۡ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٣﴾

The above verses speak of the human universality and pluralism. The existence of different races, peoples, and tribes with different physical, linguistic and cultural characteristics is meant to develop universal knowledge, recognition and cooperation with one another so that people can benefit from such richness and variety. However, such human universal cooperation cannot be achieved and maintained unless full equality of all human individuals and groups is recognized legally and practically all over the world.

CREATURES BEYOND THE REACH OF HUMAN PERCEPTION

THE ANGELS, THE INVISIBLE BEINGS "JINN", THE SATANIC BEINGS "SHAYATIN"

"... [those] who believe in [the existence of] that which is beyond the reach of human sensory perception..."

ٱلَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱلْغَيْبِ وَ يُقِيمُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ
وَ مِمَّا رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ﴿٣﴾

[2:3]

The Quran refers to the concrete creations of God such as the cosmos with its enormous galaxies, stars and planets, and the numerous living creatures such as the various kinds of fungi, bacteria, plants, insects, animals and sea creatures, and on top of all these is the human being with his/her sophisticated and multi-sided abilities: biological, intellectual and psycho-moral-spiritual. In addition, the Quran refers to God's creation "which lies beyond the range of human perception." As Muhammad Asad has put it in his commentary on the above verse, such a part of God's creation "cannot therefore be proved or disproved by scientific observation ... as the existence of God, and of a definite purpose underlying the universe, life after death, the existence of spiritual forces and their interaction and so forth. Only a person who is convinced that the ultimate reality comprises far more than our observable environment can attain to belief in God and, thus, to a belief that life has meaning and purpose" [*The Message of the Quran*, note 3 on verse 2:3]. The existence of God and the coming of an eternal afterlife can be reached by logical inference and intellectual abstraction from the flawless creation and the intact laws and order of the cosmos and life. But the existence of God's spiritual creation such as the angels, the invisible beings [*jinn*] and the satanic beings or devils [*shayatin*] and their relations to the human beings remain beyond the range of human senses and even beyond the human perception. However, they are present in the divine revelation in its only sources, the Quran and the authentic Sunna, and this excludes any chance for mere guessing or superstition. The information given by the Quran in this area is basic, and can appeal to the human thinking, even if it cannot be concrete and sensory.

(A) THE ANGELS

Worshippers of God and close to Him, but not His partners

And when your Lord said to the angels, "I am setting on earth one [of My creation] to whom, successively, I have granted supremacy on it," they said,

وَ إِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ
لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ إِنِّى جَاعِلٌ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ

خَلِيفَةً ۖ قَالُوٓا۟ أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَن يُفْسِدُ
فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ ٱلدِّمَآءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ
بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ ۖ قَالَ إِنِّىٓ أَعْلَمُ مَا
لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ وَعَلَّمَ ءَادَمَ ٱلْأَسْمَآءَ
كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ فَقَالَ
أَنۢبِـُٔونِى بِأَسْمَآءِ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ إِن كُنتُمْ
صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٣١﴾ قَالُوا۟ سُبْحَٰنَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَآ
إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَآ ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْعَلِيمُ
ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٣٢﴾ قَالَ يَٰٓـَٔادَمُ أَنۢبِئْهُم
بِأَسْمَآئِهِمْ ۖ فَلَمَّآ أَنۢبَأَهُم بِأَسْمَآئِهِمْ ۖ
قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُل لَّكُمْ إِنِّىٓ أَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَأَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ
وَمَا كُنتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَإِذْ قُلْنَا
لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ ٱسْجُدُوا۟ لِـَٔادَمَ فَسَجَدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ
إِبْلِيسَ أَبَىٰ وَٱسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ
ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾

"Will you set therein such as will do corruption therein and shed blood? [In any case], we do extol Your limitless glory and praise you and hallow your name."
He said, "Verily, I know what you know not". And He imparted unto Adam [the ability of making things distinctive through giving them] the names, all of them; then He brought them to the reach of the angels, and said, "Now mention to Me the names of these, if you speak truly." They said, "Glory be to You! No knowledge have we save what You have imparted unto us. Surely, You are the All-knowing, the All-wise".
He said, "O Adam, tell them about the names of these [different] things." And when he had told them their names, God said, "Did I not say unto you that I alone know what is hidden in the heavens and the earth, and I alone know what you reveal and what you conceal?"
And when We said to the angels, "Prostrate yourselves before Adam," and they all prostrated themselves save Iblis [Satan], who refused and showed insolence, and became a stubborn rejector of the truth. [2:30-34; see also 7:11; 15:28-31; 17:61; 18:50; 20:116]

مَا كَانَ
لِىَ مِنْ عِلْمٍۭ بِٱلْمَلَإِ ٱلْأَعْلَىٰٓ إِذْ
يَخْتَصِمُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾ إِن يُوحَىٰٓ إِلَىَّ إِلَّآ
أَنَّمَآ أَنَا۠ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٧٠﴾ إِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ
لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ إِنِّى خَٰلِقٌۢ بَشَرًا مِّن طِينٍ
﴿٧١﴾ فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُۥ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِن
رُّوحِى فَقَعُوا۟ لَهُۥ سَٰجِدِينَ ﴿٧٢﴾ فَسَجَدَ
ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ كُلُّهُمْ أَجْمَعُونَ ﴿٧٣﴾ إِلَّآ
إِبْلِيسَ ٱسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ
﴿٧٤﴾

[Say, O Muhammad:] "No knowledge would I have had of the gathering on high when they argued [about granting Adam and his successors certain power on earth]; it has been revealed to me that I am but a conveyor of a clear warning."
When your Lord said to the angels, "I shall be creating a human being out of clay; and when I have fully formed him and breathed into him of My spirit, fall you down before him in prostration". Then the angels prostrated themselves all together, save Iblis who was haughty and became a stubborn rejector of the truth. [38:69-74]

The above verses give some information about the relation between God the Creator and His created angels. Although they are a select group who are always close to Him, they are unable to independently acquire knowledge of anything, and they know only what God Himself may convey to them or allow any of them to know through what they are ordered to do by Him. However, the angels seem to be allowed to express themselves in certain circumstances, as they argued about what God planned with regard to granting Adam and his successors a certain power on earth [2:30; 38:69], although they always "*extol God's limitless glory and praise Him and assure His holiness*" in the beginning and in the end.

How does the communication go on between God and the angels? We do not know, just as we cannot know or imagine, how God's revelation of a certain message to His prophets who spoke different languages occurred in cases of direct communication [e.g. talking to Moses 4:164; 7:143-144; 20:11-36; 27:8-11; 28:29-35; and to Muhammad in the event of the accession "Mi`raj" ; see also 42:51]. The angels do not seem to be granted the intellectual and linguistic faculties of the human being, and therefore they were unable to specify names for different things, while Adam and the human beings have been granted by God such a faculty. Moreover, the angels are by nature obedient to God [e.g. see 66:6], whereas the human being has been granted free will and choice, and thus the angels were worried about the consequences of such an ability when it is practiced to cause and spread evil doing [2:30].

For these privileges granted by the Creator to His human creatures, His angels whom He selected to be close to Him on high were ordered by Him to prostrate themselves before Adam, as a declaration of their appreciation of God's mighty power of creation and their full submission to His will.

And he [a conveyor of God's message or a prophet] would never order you to take the angels and the prophets as your lords; would he order you to deny the truth after you have submitted yourselves unto God? [3:80]

وَلَا يَأْمُرَكُمْ أَن تَتَّخِذُوا
ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةَ وَٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ أَرْبَابًا ۚ أَيَأْمُرُكُم
بِٱلْكُفْرِ بَعْدَ إِذْ أَنتُم مُّسْلِمُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾

Never did the Christ disdain to be a worshiper of God, nor do the angels who are near unto Him; and whosoever disdains to worship Him and becomes haughty, He will assuredly gather them all unto Him .[4:172]

لَّن يَسْتَنكِفَ ٱلْمَسِيحُ أَن يَكُونَ عَبْدًا لِّلَّهِ
وَلَا ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ ٱلْمُقَرَّبُونَ ۚ وَمَن يَسْتَنكِفْ
عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِۦ وَيَسْتَكْبِرْ فَسَيَحْشُرُهُمْ إِلَيْهِ
جَمِيعًا ﴿١٧٢﴾

And on the Day when He shall gather them all together, and He shall say to the angels, "Are these the ones who were worshipping you?" They shall answer,

وَيَوْمَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ يَقُولُ
لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ أَهَٰٓؤُلَآءِ إِيَّاكُمْ كَانُوا يَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

قَالُوا۟ سُبْحَٰنَكَ أَنتَ وَلِيُّنَا مِن
دُونِهِم ۖ بَلْ كَانُوا۟ يَعْبُدُونَ ٱلْجِنَّ ۖ
أَكْثَرُهُم بِهِم مُّؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

"Limitless are You in Your glory! You [alone] are our Supporter and Protector, not any of them! Nay, they were rather worshipping the invisible beings [jinn], most of them believed in them." [34:40-41]

وَلِلَّهِ
يَسْجُدُ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ مِن دَآبَّةٍ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ وَهُمْ
لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾ يَخَافُونَ رَبَّهُم مِّن
فَوْقِهِمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

And before God prostrates itself all that is in the heavens and all that is on earth, every moving creature, and the angels: all are never haughty. They fear their Lord high above them, and they do whatever they are commanded to do. [16:49-50]

أَفَأَصْفَىٰكُمْ
رَبُّكُم بِٱلْبَنِينَ وَٱتَّخَذَ مِنَ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ
إِنَٰثًا ۚ إِنَّكُمْ لَتَقُولُونَ قَوْلًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٤٠﴾

Has your Lord favored you with sons, and taken unto Himself [as children in your claim] the angels who are females [in your imagination]. Surely, what you are saying is really formidable! [17:40]

وَجَعَلُوا۟ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةَ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ عِبَٰدُ
ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ إِنَٰثًا ۚ أَشَهِدُوا۟ خَلْقَهُمْ ۚ
سَتُكْتَبُ شَهَٰدَتُهُمْ وَيُسْـَٔلُونَ ﴿١٩﴾
وَقَالُوا۟ لَوْ شَآءَ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ مَا عَبَدْنَٰهُم ۚ مَّا
لَهُم بِذَٰلِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ ۚ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَخْرُصُونَ
﴿٢٠﴾

And they claim that the angels - who are themselves mere worshippers of the All-merciful - are females; did they witness their creation? Their [false] statement shall be recorded, and they shall be called to account. And they say, "Had the All-merciful so willed, we would not have worshiped them!" They have no knowledge of that; they are but conjecturing. [43:19-20]

وَكَم مِّن مَّلَكٍ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ لَا تُغْنِى
شَفَٰعَتُهُمْ شَيْـًٔا إِلَّا مِنۢ بَعْدِ أَن يَأْذَنَ ٱللَّهُ
لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَيَرْضَىٰٓ ﴿٢٦﴾ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا
يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ لَيُسَمُّونَ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةَ
تَسْمِيَةَ ٱلْأُنثَىٰ ﴿٢٧﴾ وَمَا لَهُم بِهِۦ مِنْ
عِلْمٍ ۖ إِن يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا ٱلظَّنَّ ۖ وَإِنَّ
ٱلظَّنَّ لَا يُغْنِى مِنَ ٱلْحَقِّ شَيْـًٔا ﴿٢٨﴾

And how many an angel there is in the heavens whose intercession avails to nothing, save after that God gives leave to whomsoever He wills and after that fully accepts. Those who do not believe in the life to come, call the angels as females. And they have no knowledge thereof; they follow nothing but surmise, and surmise avails naught with regard to truth. [53:26-28]

Despite the closeness of the angels to God, one must remember that they are merely His creation and His worshippers. No divinity can ever be ascribed to any of them, including Jibril [Archangel Gabriel] "*the Spirit [or inspiration] of the Holiness*" [e.g. 2:87, 253; 5:110; 16:2, 102; 19:17; 26:193; 40:15; 42:52; 58:22; 70:4; 78:38; 97:4]. The angels are not God's daughters as the polytheists in Arabia before Islam supported, just as Jesus is not His son as the Christians have believed, and all of these are merely worshippers of God in the Islamic faith, and they all never disdain to be more than this for a moment [4:172].

The argument against the stubborn deniers of the truth as to how they attribute to God female children while they like only to have males is just a use of the opponent's views, to expose their contradiction, for argument's sake, and does not mean in any way an acceptance of the claim that males are superior to females [see for example 3:195; 9:71]. Accordingly, any claim about the divinity of any angel, the Spirit of the Holy, or Jesus is rejected in principle in the Islamic faith. Also, the angels cannot intercede on the Day of Judgement except whenever God Himself wills such an intercession, and only for whomever and whatever God fully accepts.

Argument against sending down angels to convey God's message to people

They are saying too, "Why has not an angel been [visibly] sent down unto him?" But had We sent down an angel, the matter would have been determined [by a final judgement], and then no respite would be given to them [for repentance]. And had We made him an angel [as they wish], assuredly We would have made him [look like] a man, and thus We would confuse them the way that they are now confusing themselves and others with. [6:8-9, see also 15:7-8; 17:92; 41:14; 43:53, 60]

وَقَالُوا۟ لَوْلَآ أُنزِلَ
عَلَيْهِ مَلَكٌ ۖ وَلَوْ أَنزَلْنَا مَلَكًا لَّقُضِىَ
ٱلْأَمْرُ ثُمَّ لَا يُنظَرُونَ ﴿٨﴾ وَلَوْ جَعَلْنَٰهُ
مَلَكًا لَّجَعَلْنَٰهُ رَجُلًا وَلَلَبَسْنَا عَلَيْهِم مَّا
يَلْبِسُونَ ﴿٩﴾

And people's objection against believing [in the truth] when [God's] guidance came to them, was only that they said, "Has God sent forth a mortal human being as a conveyor of [His] message?" Say: "Had there been on earth angels walking about there comfortably [not disturbing or being disturbed, as if earth is their natural abode] , We would indeed have sent down to them out of heaven an angel as a conveyor of [Our] message." [17:94-95]

وَمَا مَنَعَ ٱلنَّاسَ أَن
يُؤْمِنُوٓا۟ إِذْ جَآءَهُمُ ٱلْهُدَىٰٓ إِلَّآ أَن قَالُوٓا۟
أَبَعَثَ ٱللَّهُ بَشَرًا رَّسُولًا ﴿٩٤﴾ قُل لَّوْ
كَانَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مَلَٰٓئِكَةٌ يَمْشُونَ
مُطْمَئِنِّينَ لَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْهِم مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ
مَلَكًا رَّسُولًا ﴿٩٥﴾

قُل لَّآ
أَقُولُ لَكُمْ عِندِى خَزَآئِنُ ٱللَّهِ وَ لَآ أَعْلَمُ
ٱلْغَيْبَ وَ لَآ أَقُولُ لَكُمْ إِنِّى مَلَكٌ ۖ إِنْ
أَتَّبِعُ إِلَّا مَا يُوحَىٰٓ إِلَىَّ ۚ قُلْ هَلْ
يَسْتَوِى ٱلْأَعْمَىٰ وَ ٱلْبَصِيرُ ۚ أَفَلَا
تَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

Say, "I do not say unto you, 'God's treasures are with me, nor that I know what is beyond the reach of human perception'; nor do I say unto you, 'I am an angel;' I only follow what is revealed to me." Say, "Are the blind and the one who sees equal?" Will you not then reflect? [6:50, see also 11:12, 31]

وَ لَوْ أَنَّنَا نَزَّلْنَآ إِلَيْهِمُ
ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةَ وَ كَلَّمَهُمُ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ وَ حَشَرْنَا
عَلَيْهِمْ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ قُبُلًا مَّا كَانُوا۟ لِيُؤْمِنُوٓا۟
إِلَّآ أَن يَشَآءَ ٱللَّهُ وَ لَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ
يَجْهَلُونَ ﴿١١١﴾

And even if We were to send down angels to them, and even if the dead were to speak unto them [of the truth of God's message], and even if We were to assemble before them face to face every thing [that can be an evidence for the truth], they would not have been the ones to believe, unless God has so willed [since they deliberately blocked their sense and minds granted by God to the human being for knowing the truth]; yet most of them fail to know. [6:111]

فَقَالَ
ٱلْمَلَؤُا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِن قَوْمِهِۦ مَا هَٰذَآ
إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُرِيدُ أَن يَتَفَضَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ
وَلَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ لَأَنزَلَ مَلَٰٓئِكَةً مَّا سَمِعْنَا
بِهَٰذَا فِىٓ ءَابَآئِنَا ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

But the leading ones among his [Noah's] people, who refused stubbornly to acknowledge the truth said, "This is naught but a mortal human being like yourselves, who wants to become superior to you. And if God willed [to convey His message to people], He would have surely sent down angels; we have never heard such [a claim of being sent by God] through [generations] of our forefathers since their early ones." [23:24]

وَ قَالُوا۟ مَالِ هَٰذَا ٱلرَّسُولِ يَأْكُلُ
ٱلطَّعَامَ وَ يَمْشِى فِى ٱلْأَسْوَاقِ ۙ لَوْلَآ
أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مَلَكٌ فَيَكُونَ مَعَهُۥ نَذِيرًا ﴿٧﴾

And they also say, "What about this Conveyor of [God's] message who eats food and goes about in the market-places? Why has not an angel been [visibly] sent down unto him, to be a warner with him?" [25:7]

And We sent not as Our message-conveyors before you but that they ate food and went about in the marketplaces, for We cause you [human beings] to be a testing for one another. Will you, then, endure such a testing with patience? Your Lord is All-seeing. But those who do not look forward to meet Us, are used to say, "Unless angels have been sent down to us, or we have seen Our Lord, [we will never believe]". Far too arrogant are they in themselves, and they have become outrageously disdainful. Upon the Day that they see the angels, there shall be no good tidings for the evil-doers; they will say, "We are locked in behind an ever-losing barrier with no chance [of getting out and attaining God's grace]. [25:20-22]

وَمَآ
أَرْسَلْنَا قَبْلَكَ مِنَ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ إِلَّآ إِنَّهُمْ
لَيَأْكُلُونَ ٱلطَّعَامَ وَيَمْشُونَ فِى
ٱلْأَسْوَاقِ ۗ وَجَعَلْنَا بَعْضَكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ
فِتْنَةً أَتَصْبِرُونَ ۗ وَكَانَ رَبُّكَ بَصِيرًا
﴿٢٠﴾ وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَآءَنَا
لَوْلَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَيْنَا ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ أَوْ نَرَىٰ
رَبَّنَا ۗ لَقَدِ ٱسْتَكْبَرُوا۟ فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَعَتَوْ
عُتُوًّا كَبِيرًا ﴿٢١﴾ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةَ
لَا بُشْرَىٰ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُجْرِمِينَ وَيَقُولُونَ
حِجْرًا مَّحْجُورًا ﴿٢٢﴾

It might be wrong to think that a conveyor of God's message to people should be someone who is above or beyond the mortal human nature and of an eternal spiritual one. However, this might be an attempt from the opponents of the message to challenge the conveyor of God's message and the prestige that he might gain among people with which they could not compete. Such opponents in different times argued that an angel should be the conveyor of God's message, or at least a partner in the conveyance, or associated visibly with the conveyor by any means. The Quran simply refers the people to the laws of nature, and thus the angels' natural abode is not on earth, and their spiritual nature cannot fit the human environment. The conveyance of God's message requires essential communication with people and interacting with them through words and deeds, and how can this be achieved if the conveyor of God's message to human beings is of a different nature? And even if an angel had been sent down to convey to people God's message, shouldn't this angel take the same human form to communicate properly with human beings? And in such a disguise, what would be the real difference in dealing with such an angel who has the form of and acts totally as a human being? Aren't such stubborn rejectors of the truth, who are trying to confuse others, themselves really confused in their argument? Accordingly, the conveyors of God's messages themselves strongly stated that they were merely human beings who received God's messages and not by any means angels, and the Quran repeatedly argued against sending down angels to communicate with people and convey to them the messages of God.

Some characteristics of angels

Then Satan whispered to them both [Adam and his wife] what led to make them conscious of their private

فَوَسْوَسَ
لَهُمَا ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ لِيُبْدِىَ لَهُمَا مَا وُۥرِىَ

عَنْهُمَا مِن سَوْءَٰتِهِمَا وَ قَالَ مَا نَهَىٰكُمَا رَبُّكُمَا عَنْ هَٰذِهِ ٱلشَّجَرَةِ إِلَّآ أَن تَكُونَا مَلَكَيْنِ أَوْ تَكُونَا مِنَ ٱلْخَٰلِدِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾

parts of which they both had not been aware before; [in their earlier state of innocence]; and he said, "Your Lord has but prohibited you from this tree lest you become angels, or lest you become immortals." [7:20]

In the above verse, Satan tries to point out to the first couple of human beings that the nature of angels in their spirituality and immortality is superior to the human nature. If they had kept in mind that God's command to the angels to prostrate themselves to Adam simply proves the opposite, Satan's temptations would have failed to bring about any effect. However, the human being has been created with such an eager search for superiority and immortality, however illusory and deceptive it may be, and such an attitude was exploited by Satan: *"And long ago did We give Our commandment to Adam, but he forgot and We found in him no constancy"* [20:115].

The above verse also underlines that the human being is not created to be an angel. The attitude of developing the human spirituality while ignoring the legitimate physical and intellectual development, or of keeping oneself permanently isolated from other human beings, is against the human nature as well as the Islamic balanced model. Such an attitude would crush the human being and would never create an angel.

فَلَمَّا سَمِعَتْ بِمَكْرِهِنَّ أَرْسَلَتْ إِلَيْهِنَّ وَ أَعْتَدَتْ لَهُنَّ مُتَّكَـًٔا وَ ءَاتَتْ كُلَّ وَٰحِدَةٍ مِّنْهُنَّ سِكِّينًا وَ قَالَتِ ٱخْرُجْ عَلَيْهِنَّ فَلَمَّا رَأَيْنَهُۥٓ أَكْبَرْنَهُۥ وَ قَطَّعْنَ أَيْدِيَهُنَّ وَ قُلْنَ حَٰشَ لِلَّهِ مَا هَٰذَا بَشَرًا إِنْ هَٰذَآ إِلَّا مَلَكٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٣١﴾

... and when the women saw him [Joseph], they so admired him that they cut their hands [with their knives unconsciously], saying, "Limitless is God's power in creation! This is not a human being [as a human being is known]! This is no other than a graceful angel." [12:31]

The above verse emphasizes a feature of the image of an angel in the human mind: beauty. However, since angels have their own different nature, the real beauty of an angel cannot be known or even imagined properly through our human conception which is naturally relative to the human experience of beauty. According to a tradition of the Prophet reported by Muslim and Ibn Hanbal and related by `Aisha, the angels have been created out of light, but there is no reference to this in the Quran. However, the angel also represents the moral beauty, since an angel is created with the nature of constant good-doing.

How angels may act in this world's life

وَ ٱتَّبَعُوا۟ مَا تَتْلُوا۟ ٱلشَّيَٰطِينُ عَلَىٰ مُلْكِ سُلَيْمَٰنَ ۖ وَ مَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَٰنُ وَ لَٰكِنَّ

And they followed what the devils used to recite during Solomon's reign, and it was not Solomon who denied

the truth but it was those devils who did by teaching people sorcery and what has come down through the two angels [or kings] in Babil [Babylon], Harut and Marut, who never taught it to anyone unless they warned in advance, "We are but a temptation to evil, so do not ever deny [God's] truth."
And they learn from these two how they might separate a person from his[/her] spouse, but they can harm none thereby except by God's leave, and [thus] they learn what only harms them and does not benefit them, knowing well that one who acquires such knowledge shall have no share in the [eternal] life to come, and how evil then [is that for which] they have sold their own selves, if they had but known. And had they but attained [firmly] to faith and been conscious of Him, a reward from God would indeed have been far better, if they had but known. [2:102-103]

ٱلشَّيَٰطِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ يُعَلِّمُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ
ٱلسِّحْرَ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَى ٱلْمَلَكَيْنِ بِبَابِلَ
هَٰرُوتَ وَمَٰرُوتَ ۚ وَمَا يُعَلِّمَانِ مِنْ
أَحَدٍ حَتَّىٰ يَقُولَآ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ فَلَا
تَكْفُرْ ۖ فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّقُونَ
بِهِۦ بَيْنَ ٱلْمَرْءِ وَزَوْجِهِۦ ۚ وَمَا هُم
بِضَآرِّينَ بِهِۦ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ
وَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنفَعُهُمْ ۚ وَلَقَدْ
عَلِمُوا۟ لَمَنِ ٱشْتَرَىٰهُ مَا لَهُۥ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ
مِنْ خَلَٰقٍ ۚ وَلَبِئْسَ مَا شَرَوْا۟ بِهِۦٓ
أَنفُسَهُمْ ۚ لَوْ كَانُوا۟ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٠٢﴾ وَلَوْ
أَنَّهُمْ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَٱتَّقَوْا۟ لَمَثُوبَةٌ مِّنْ عِندِ
ٱللَّهِ خَيْرٌ ۚ لَّوْ كَانُوا۟ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

The above verses refer to a certain extraordinary power that God granted Sulayman [Solomon], who - like his father Dawud [David] - was a prophet as well as a king according to the Quran, [see also 4:163; 6:84; 21:78-81; 27:15-44; 34:10-14; 38:30-40]. This was a power over Satanic forces: *"And among Satans [that We made subservient to him] some dived for him [into the sea] and did other work besides; and We were keeping watch over them" [21:82], "So We made subservient to him the wind that ran at his command softly wherever he willed; and the Satans [that We made to work for him] - every kind of builder and diver, and also others linked together in fetters. This is Our gift, give to others or withhold, without [having to render] account"* [38:36-39].

It seems that after Solomon's death, some Satanic forces tried to teach people evil practices of sorcery with the deception that they were used during Solomon's time, while Solomon never taught nor approved of such evil. Furthermore, these devils spread among the people something that had been attributed to two angels - or two kings according to a different reading of the word. These two angels had presented a test to the people by teaching them examples of evil magic and warning them against its harm and any involvement in it by any means. It may seem strange that any angels would give this information about evil doing that Satans exploited, whatever the connected caution might be, and that might support the different reading attributed to Ibn `Abbas and to later prominent knowledgeable people in the interpretation of the Quran such as al-Hasan al-Basri, Abu-l-Aswad and al-Dahhak. This reading presents the verse as referring to two kings, "*malikayn*", instead of two angels, "*malakayn*" [see the commentaries on the above verse by al-Tabari, al-Zamakhshari, al-Razi etc].

It may be a useful clarification here to quote these lines from Muhammad Asad in *The Message of the Quran*, where he states in his notes 83 and 84 on the verse 2:102: that the declaration that the devils were standing against the truth and the faith by teaching people sorcery "circumscribes metonymically man's moral duty to reject every attempt at 'sorcery' in as much as - irrespective of whether it succeeds or fails - it aims at subverting the order of nature as instituted by God ... It is certain that from very ancient times Babylon was reputed to be the home of magic arts..., and [the Quranic reference is] with a view to condemning every attempt at magic and sorcery, as well as all preoccupation with occult sciences in general." Thus Asad is explaining that the verse "does not raise the question whether there is an objective truth in the occult phenomena loosely described as 'magic', or whether they are based on self-deception [and illusion]. The intent here is to warn man that any attempt at influencing the course of events by means which - at least in the mind of the person responsible for it - have a 'supernatural' connotation is a spiritual offence, and must inevitably result in a most serious damage to their author's [or practitioner's] spiritual status." Several traditions of the Prophet warn against any involvement in sorcery, and one of them mentioned sorcery next to associating others with God as being among the seven most ruining evils [reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud, al-Nasa'i].

And we gave to Moses the Book, and after him We sent succeeding conveyors of the message, and We gave Jesus the son of Mary clear evidence [of God's guidance and its truth], and We supported him with the Spirit of the holiness; yet is it not the fact that whenever a conveyor of the message came to you with something that did not go with what you like you acted insolently, and some of them you denounced as liars, while some others you would kill" [2:87; see also for the sentence "*and We supported him [Jesus] with the spirit of the holiness*" the verses 2:253, 5:110]

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا
مُوسَى ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَقَفَّيْنَا مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ
بِٱلرُّسُلِ ۖ وَءَاتَيْنَا عِيسَى ٱبْنَ مَرْيَمَ
ٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ وَأَيَّدْنَٰهُ بِرُوحِ ٱلْقُدُسِ ۗ
أَفَكُلَّمَا جَآءَكُمْ رَسُولٌۢ بِمَا لَا تَهْوَىٰٓ
أَنفُسُكُمُ ٱسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ فَفَرِيقًا كَذَّبْتُمْ
وَفَرِيقًا تَقْتُلُونَ ﴿٨٧﴾

The angel Jibril (Archangel Gabriel) is also called in the Quran "*Ruh al- Qudus*"/ "the spirit of the holiness," since this Angel was sent by God to convey His inspiration to certain people [e.g. 2:87, 253; 5:110; 16:2, 102; 19:17-21; 26:192-193; 40:15; 42:52; 58:22]. The support of Jibril is repeatedly mentioned in the Quran with regard to Jesus and his mother, since the birth of Jesus and his miracles were strongly challenging to the community. Thus, the role of Jibril might not be limited to conveying the teachings of God, but might also be to support the prophets and the believers in their faith and actions, especially in critical times when they were confronted with overwhelming challenges.

And their Prophet said unto them, "It will be a sign for his [legitimate] dominion [Talut in the Quran, Saul in the Bible (I Samuel 8 ff.)] that the tabut [Ark of the Covenant] will come to you bringing peace within yourselves that is endowed by your Lord, and with a remnant of what the House of Musa [Moses] and the House of Harun [Aaron] left behind, borne by the angels. Surely, in that shall be a sign for you if you are [truly] believers." [2:248]

وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ إِنَّ ءَايَةَ
مُلْكِهِۦٓ أَن يَأْتِيَكُمُ ٱلتَّابُوتُ فِيهِ سَكِينَةٌ
مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَبَقِيَّةٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ ءَالُ مُوسَىٰ
وَءَالُ هَٰرُونَ تَحْمِلُهُ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ ۚ إِنَّ فِى
ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٤٨﴾

The angels in the above verse carried out a miraculous piece of work: bearing the Ark with the remainder of God's guidance that had been kept by the successive descendants of Moses and Aaron as divine evidence for the legitimate authority of Talut [Saul], who had been chosen by God to be the king of the children of Israel when they asked their Prophet for one to lead them in fighting their enemies. Did the angels physically carry the Ark with the Torah inside, or were they simply around it, without being seen or making any physical effort, as a sign of God's blessing? Regardless of whether the angels in that event merely gave spiritual and moral support, or whether they really performed a physical effort, it is clear that they did something in the events of this world life and with relation to the human beings.

And as he [Zakariyya in the Quran/ Zachariah in the Bible] stood praying in the sanctuary, the angels called to him, "God sends you the glad tidings of [the coming birth of] Yahya [John in the Bible], who shall confirm the truth of a word from God, and shall be outstanding among people, and utterly chaste, and a prophet from among the righteous." [3:39]

فَنَادَتْهُ
ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَآئِمٌ يُصَلِّى فِى
ٱلْمِحْرَابِ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بِيَحْيَىٰ
مُصَدِّقًۢا بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَسَيِّدًا
وَحَصُورًا وَنَبِيًّا مِّنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾

And when the angels said, "O Maryam (Mary)! God has chosen you and made you pure and raised you above all the women of the world." [3:42]

وَإِذْ قَالَتِ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ يَٰمَرْيَمُ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
ٱصْطَفَىٰكِ وَطَهَّرَكِ وَٱصْطَفَىٰكِ عَلَىٰ
نِسَآءِ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾

When the angels said, "O Maryam [Mary]! God sends you the good tidings of a word from Him, whose

إِذْ قَالَتِ
ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ يَٰمَرْيَمُ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكِ

name shall be al-Masih 'Isa ibn Maryam ["the anointed", Jesus Christ the son of Mary]; highly honored shall he be in this world and in the life to come, and [he shall be] of those who are drawn near unto God." [3:45]

بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنْهُ ٱسْمُهُ ٱلْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ٱبْنُ
مَرْيَمَ وَجِيهًا فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا وَ ٱلْأَخِرَةِ وَ مِنَ
ٱلْمُقَرَّبِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾

And mention in the Book Maryam [Mary] when she withdrew from her family to an eastern place, and kept herself in seclusion from them [for undisturbed worship], then We sent unto her Our spirit that appeared to her as a fully-shaped human being. She said, "I seek refuge from you with the All-merciful [Whom you should fear] if you are conscious of Him" The angel said, "I am but a messenger of your Lord to bring you [God's] gift of a son endowed with purity". She said, "How can I have a son when no man has ever touched me, and I have never been unchaste?" The angel said, "Thus it is; your Lord says, 'Easy is that for Me, and that We might make him a sign to human beings, and an act of grace from Us'". And [thus] it has been determined [by God]. [19:16-21]

وَ ٱذْكُرْ فِى
ٱلْكِتَٰبِ مَرْيَمَ إِذِ ٱنتَبَذَتْ مِنْ أَهْلِهَا
مَكَانًا شَرْقِيًّا ﴿١٦﴾ فَٱتَّخَذَتْ مِن دُونِهِمْ
حِجَابًا فَأَرْسَلْنَآ إِلَيْهَا رُوحَنَا فَتَمَثَّلَ
لَهَا بَشَرًا سَوِيًّا ﴿١٧﴾ قَالَتْ إِنِّىٓ أَعُوذُ
بِٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ مِنكَ إِن كُنتَ تَقِيًّا ﴿١٨﴾ قَالَ
إِنَّمَآ أَنَا۠ رَسُولُ رَبِّكِ لِأَهَبَ لَكِ غُلَٰمًا
زَكِيًّا ﴿١٩﴾ قَالَتْ أَنَّىٰ يَكُونُ لِى غُلَٰمٌ
وَلَمْ يَمْسَسْنِى بَشَرٌ وَ لَمْ أَكُ بَغِيًّا ﴿٢٠﴾
قَالَ كَذَٰلِكِ قَالَ رَبُّكِ هُوَ عَلَىَّ هَيِّنٌ
وَلِنَجْعَلَهُۥٓ ءَايَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَ رَحْمَةً مِّنَّا
وَكَانَ أَمْرًا مَّقْضِيًّا ﴿٢١﴾

And she who guarded her chastity, whereupon We breathed into her of Our spirit, and caused her and her son to become a sign to all people. [21:91, see also 4:171; 66:12]

وَٱلَّتِىٓ أَحْصَنَتْ فَرْجَهَا فَنَفَخْنَا فِيهَا مِن
رُّوحِنَا وَ جَعَلْنَٰهَا وَ ٱبْنَهَآ ءَايَةً
لِّلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٩١﴾

In the above verses the angel Gabriel, the spirit of the Holiness, conveyed to Prophet Zakariyya [Zachariah] and Maryam [Mary] the mother of 'Isa [Jesus] messages from God about particular events, not about a general guidance that should be spread among the people. To do this, Gabriel came to Mary, who was not a prophet, as a fully-shaped man. Thus, the angels, including Gabriel, may convey divine messages related to temporary events, and such an inspiration may be to prophets or to others. As for God's *"breathing"* into Mary of *"His spirit"*, the same expression is used by the Quran for the creation of Adam *"And when I have fully formed him and breathed into him of My spirit, fall down [O angels] before him in prostration"* [15:29; also 38:72], *"And then He forms him*

[Adam] properly and breathes into him of His spirit" [32:9]. On these grounds the Quran states: *"Verily, in God's right, the case of Jesus['s birth] is [as miraculous] as that of Adam['s creation], whom He created out of dust and then said unto him, "Be", and he is"* [3:59].

He sends down the angels with the spirit according to His command upon whomever He wills of His servants, saying: "Give warning [to people] that there is no god but I; be, therefore, conscious of Me." [16:2]

يُنَزِّلُ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةَ بِٱلرُّوحِ مِنْ أَمْرِهِۦ عَلَىٰ
مَن يَشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِۦٓ أَنْ أَنذِرُوٓاْ أَنَّهُۥ لَآ
إِلَٰهَ إِلَّآ أَنَا۠ فَٱتَّقُونِ ﴿٢﴾

Say, "The Spirit of the Holiness brought it down from your Lord by stages, setting forth the truth, so as to give firmness to those who have attained to faith, and to be a guidance and good tidings to those who have submitted themselves to God" [16:102]

قُلْ نَزَّلَهُۥ رُوحُ ٱلْقُدُسِ مِن رَّبِّكَ بِٱلْحَقِّ
لِيُثَبِّتَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَهُدًى وَبُشْرَىٰ
لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

God chooses message-conveyors from among the angels and from human beings as well; surely God is All- hearing, All-seeing. He knows whatever is before them or behind them, and unto God all matters go back. [22:75-76]

ٱللَّهُ يَصْطَفِى مِنَ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ رُسُلًا وَمِنَ
ٱلنَّاسِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَمِيعٌۢ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٧٥﴾ يَعْلَمُ
مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ ۗ وَإِلَى
ٱللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ ٱلْأُمُورُ ﴿٧٦﴾

All praise is due to God, Originator of the heavens and the earth, who has made the angels [His] message- bearers, endowed with wings: two or three or four; He adds to His creation whatever He wills. Surely, God has power over everything. [35:1]

ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ فَاطِرِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ
جَاعِلِ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ رُسُلًا أُو۟لِىٓ أَجْنِحَةٍ
مَّثْنَىٰ وَثُلَٰثَ وَرُبَٰعَ ۚ يَزِيدُ فِى ٱلْخَلْقِ
مَا يَشَآءُ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١﴾

Truly it is [the revelation] that has been sent down from the Lord of all being, brought down by the trustworthy Spirit, upon your heart in order to be one of the warners, in a clear Arabic tongue. [26:192-195]

وَإِنَّهُۥ لَتَنزِيلُ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ
﴿١٩٢﴾ نَزَلَ بِهِ ٱلرُّوحُ ٱلْأَمِينُ ﴿١٩٣﴾
عَلَىٰ قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُنذِرِينَ ﴿١٩٤﴾
بِلِسَانٍ عَرَبِىٍّ مُّبِينٍ ﴿١٩٥﴾

رَفِيعُ ٱلدَّرَجَٰتِ
ذُو ٱلْعَرْشِ يُلْقِى ٱلرُّوحَ مِنْ أَمْرِهِۦ عَلَىٰ
مَن يَشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِۦ لِيُنذِرَ يَوْمَ ٱلتَّلَاقِ
(١٥)

Exalted above all ranks [of being] is He, who has the throne [of almightiness]. By His command does He send the Spirit [with His inspiration] upon whomever He wills of His servants so as to warn [people of the coming] of the Day when they shall meet Him. [40:15]

وَمَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَن يُكَلِّمَهُ ٱللَّهُ
إِلَّا وَحْيًا أَوْ مِن وَرَآئِ حِجَابٍ أَوْ
يُرْسِلَ رَسُولًا فَيُوحِىَ بِإِذْنِهِۦ مَا يَشَآءُ ۚ
إِنَّهُۥ عَلِىٌّ حَكِيمٌ (٥١) وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَوْحَيْنَآ
إِلَيْكَ رُوحًا مِّنْ أَمْرِنَا ۚ مَا كُنتَ تَدْرِى
مَا ٱلْكِتَٰبُ وَلَا ٱلْإِيمَٰنُ وَلَٰكِن جَعَلْنَٰهُ
نُورًا نَّهْدِى بِهِۦ مَن نَّشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا ۚ
وَإِنَّكَ لَتَهْدِىٓ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ (٥٢)
صِرَٰطِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّذِى لَهُۥ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ أَلَآ إِلَى
ٱللَّهِ تَصِيرُ ٱلْأُمُورُ (٥٣)

And it is not for a human being that God should speak to him [/her] except through inspiration, or from behind a barrier, or by sending a conveyor to reveal by His leave whatever He wills; surely He is Exalted, All- wise. And thus, too [O Muhammad], have We, by Our command, sent inspiration to you; you knew not before what the [divine] book is, nor what the faith [precisely] is [and what it comprehends], but We have caused this [message] to be a light, whereby We guide whom We will of Our servants; and you surely shall guide [people] to the straight way, the way of God, to whom belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on earth; surely, and unto God all matters end. [42:51-53]

إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْىٌ يُوحَىٰ (٤)
عَلَّمَهُۥ شَدِيدُ ٱلْقُوَىٰ (٥) ذُو مِرَّةٍ
فَٱسْتَوَىٰ (٦) وَهُوَ بِٱلْأُفُقِ ٱلْأَعْلَىٰ
(٧) ثُمَّ دَنَا فَتَدَلَّىٰ (٨) فَكَانَ قَابَ
قَوْسَيْنِ أَوْ أَدْنَىٰ (٩) فَأَوْحَىٰٓ إِلَىٰ
عَبْدِهِۦ مَآ أَوْحَىٰ (١٠) مَا كَذَبَ ٱلْفُؤَادُ
مَا رَأَىٰٓ (١١) أَفَتُمَٰرُونَهُۥ عَلَىٰ مَا
يَرَىٰ (١٢) وَلَقَدْ رَءَاهُ نَزْلَةً أُخْرَىٰ
(١٣) عِندَ سِدْرَةِ ٱلْمُنتَهَىٰ (١٤)

That [which Muhammad conveys to you] is but [a divine] inspiration with which he is being inspired. A very mighty one has imparted [it] to him; one who is endowed with surpassing power. He stood poised at the highest [point on the] horizon, and then approached until he appeared as hung [in the air] at two bows'-length away [from you] or even closer. He, then, revealed to His [God's] servant whatever He revealed. His heart lies not about what he saw. Will you, then, dispute with him what he actually sees? Indeed, he saw him [this angel] another time by the lote-tree of the farthest limit. [53:4-14]

He truly saw him [the angel] on the clear horizon, and he is not one to grudge of [whatever has been revealed to him] of that which is beyond the reach of human sensory perception. [81:23-24]

وَلَقَدْ
رَءَاهُ بِٱلْأُفُقِ ٱلْمُبِينِ ﴿٢٣﴾ وَمَا هُوَ عَلَى
ٱلْغَيْبِ بِضَنِينٍ ﴿٢٤﴾

All of the above verses deal with God's revelation of His messages to their conveyors through the spirit of the Holiness Gabriel; some speak of this revelation in general [e.g. 16:2; 40:15], while others tell of revelations related to a certain prophet [e.g. 16:102; 26:192-195; 42:52]. The verses 53:4-14 refer to a special case of Gabriel's physical visibility by the Prophet Muhammad, who also saw Gabriel physically during the night of "Ascension" / "*Mi`raj*". Revealing the messages of God to their conveyors was an important role of the angels, especially Gabriel, in this life. However, as the verse 42:5 indicates, God's inspiration may come directly to an addressed person without any medium such as an angel. Besides this, on rare occasions God may speak to the conveyor of His message without a medium but behind some barrier, as in the case of Moses in Sinai [e.g. 4:164; 7:143-144; 20:19-36; 27:7-12, 28:29-35], and in the case of Muhammad during the night of "Ascension"/ "*Mi'raj.*" According to the Prophet's traditions, he saw the angel Gabriel in his natural shape only twice during his life, once in the early years of revelation after the temporary suspension of revelation which followed the revelation of the earliest verses of the Quran 96:1-5, and the second in the night of Ascension which occurred some time before the Prophet's migration from Mecca to Medina and after ten years from his prophethood "*by the lote-tree of the farthest limit*" [see the section on Prophet Muhammad in *The Messages of the Quran.* Seemingly, seeing Gabriel in his real shape, and so closely as the Quran put it using the old Arabic expression "*two bows' length away or even closer,*" was the exception and not the rule.

When you did say unto the believers, "Is it not enough for you that your Lord will provide you with three thousand angels sent down upon you? Yea, and if you are steadfastly patient and conscious of Him, and the enemy soon falls upon you, your Lord will provide you with five thousand angels, looking distinctive. And God has made this only as good tidings for you, and that your hearts might be at rest; and no [real] help can come except from God [and by His leave], the All-mighty, the All-wise. [3:124-126]

إِذْ تَقُولُ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَلَن
يَكْفِيَكُمْ أَن يُمِدَّكُمْ رَبُّكُم بِثَلَٰثَةِ ءَالَٰفٍ مِّنَ
ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ مُنزَلِينَ ﴿١٢٤﴾ بَلَىٰٓ ۚ إِن
تَصْبِرُوا۟ وَتَتَّقُوا۟ وَيَأْتُوكُم مِّن فَوْرِهِمْ
هَٰذَا يُمْدِدْكُمْ رَبُّكُم بِخَمْسَةِ ءَالَٰفٍ مِّنَ
ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ مُسَوِّمِينَ ﴿١٢٥﴾ وَمَا جَعَلَهُ
ٱللَّهُ إِلَّا بُشْرَىٰ لَكُمْ وَلِتَطْمَئِنَّ قُلُوبُكُم
بِهِۦ ۚ وَمَا ٱلنَّصْرُ إِلَّا مِنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ
ٱلْعَزِيزِ ٱلْحَكِيمِ ﴿١٢٦﴾

إِذْ تَسْتَغِيثُونَ رَبَّكُمْ فَاسْتَجَابَ لَكُمْ أَنِّي
مُمِدُّكُم بِأَلْفٍ مِّنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُرْدِفِينَ ﴿٩﴾
وَمَا جَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بُشْرَىٰ وَلِتَطْمَئِنَّ
بِهِ قُلُوبُكُمْ ۚ وَمَا النَّصْرُ إِلَّا مِنْ عِندِ
اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١٠﴾

When you were calling upon your Lord for succor, and He answered you, "I shall provide you with a thousand angels following one another." And God has made this only as good tidings for you and that your hearts might be at rest; and no [real] succor can come except from God [and by His leave]; surely God is All-mighty, All-wise. [8:9-10]

إِذْ يُوحِي رَبُّكَ إِلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ أَنِّي
مَعَكُمْ فَثَبِّتُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ۚ سَأُلْقِي فِي
قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الرُّعْبَ فَاضْرِبُوا
فَوْقَ الْأَعْنَاقِ وَاضْرِبُوا مِنْهُمْ كُلَّ بَنَانٍ
﴿١٢﴾

When your Lord inspired the angels, "I am with you; so give firmness unto those who have attained to faith. I shall cast dreadfulness into the hearts of the stubborn deniers of the truth; strike, then, their necks and strike every finger of them as well. [8:12]

The above verses state that the angels supported the Muslims in facing the attacks of an outnumbering enemy during the battle of Badr [2 A.H./ 624 C.E.]. Was their support physical or moral? Did the angels actually fight on the side of the Muslims or did they just inspire the Muslims with firmness and steadfastness and perhaps strengthen their spirits by increasing their numbers without actually participating in the fighting? Although there are traditions of the Prophet which could support some participation [reported by Muslim and al-Tabari], the verses may be interpreted in either way. The Quran states: *"And God has made this only as good tidings for you and that your hearts might be at rest."* This may mean that the angels' support was spiritual and moral. Even the command *"strike, then..."* included in the last of the above verses [8:12] may be understood to be addressing the angels ordering them to fight against the Muslims' enemies, or addressing the Muslims through the angels who have the mission of *"giving firmness to those who have attained to faith,"* and so they urged the Muslims to fight strongly against their enemies.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ
تَوَفَّاهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ ظَالِمِي أَنفُسِهِمْ
قَالُوا فِيمَ كُنتُمْ قَالُوا كُنَّا مُسْتَضْعَفِينَ
فِي الْأَرْضِ ۚ قَالُوا أَلَمْ تَكُنْ أَرْضُ اللَّهِ
وَاسِعَةً فَتُهَاجِرُوا فِيهَا ۚ فَأُولَٰئِكَ

Behold, those whom the angels gather in death, while they are wronging their own-selves, will be asked [by the angels], "Under what circumstances were you [during your life on earth]?" They say, "We were weak and oppressed on earth". They [the angels] say, "Was not God's earth wide enough for you to move [from your

place] to another place on it?" Such people's end is hell, and how evil a journey's end. But excepted are the oppressed - be they men, women or children - who cannot help it nor find a way of deliverance; and these may God pardon their wrongdoing; and God is All-pardoning, All-forgiving. [4:97-99]

مَأْوَىٰهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۖ وَسَآءَتْ مَصِيرًا ﴿٩٧﴾
إِلَّا ٱلْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ ٱلرِّجَالِ وَٱلنِّسَآءِ
وَٱلْوِلْدَٰنِ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ حِيلَةً وَلَا
يَهْتَدُونَ سَبِيلًا ﴿٩٨﴾ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ عَسَى
ٱللَّهُ أَن يَعْفُوَ عَنْهُمْ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَفُوًّا
غَفُورًا ﴿٩٩﴾

And He alone holds full sway over all His servants, and He sends forth watchers over you, and when death approaches any of you, Our messengers take him[/her], and they do never neglect. And they are thus brought back to God, their true Lord supreme; surely, His alone is the judgement, and He is the swiftest of all reckoners. [6:61-62]

وَهُوَ ٱلْقَاهِرُ فَوْقَ
عِبَادِهِۦ ۖ وَيُرْسِلُ عَلَيْكُمْ حَفَظَةً حَتَّىٰٓ
إِذَا جَآءَ أَحَدَكُمُ ٱلْمَوْتُ تَوَفَّتْهُ رُسُلُنَا
وَهُمْ لَا يُفَرِّطُونَ ﴿٦١﴾ ثُمَّ رُدُّوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ
مَوْلَىٰهُمُ ٱلْحَقِّ ۚ أَلَا لَهُ ٱلْحُكْمُ وَهُوَ
أَسْرَعُ ٱلْحَٰسِبِينَ ﴿٦٢﴾

... And if you could but see when the evildoers are in the agonies of death, and the angels are stretching forth their hands [calling unto them]: "Give up your souls! Today you shall be requited with the most humiliating suffering for having attributed to God what is not true, and for being persistently overbearing towards the signs and messages of God. [6:93]

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ
ٱفْتَرَىٰ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَوْ قَالَ أُوحِىَ
إِلَىَّ وَلَمْ يُوحَ إِلَيْهِ شَىْءٌ وَمَن قَالَ
سَأُنزِلُ مِثْلَ مَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ ۗ وَلَوْ تَرَىٰٓ
إِذِ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ فِى غَمَرَٰتِ ٱلْمَوْتِ
وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ بَاسِطُوٓا۟ أَيْدِيهِمْ أَخْرِجُوٓا۟
أَنفُسَكُمُ ۖ ٱلْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ عَذَابَ ٱلْهُونِ
بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَقُولُونَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ غَيْرَ ٱلْحَقِّ
وَكُنتُمْ عَنْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ تَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾

And if you could but see when the angels gather in death the stubborn deniers of the truth, beating their faces and their backs, [saying to them,] "Taste suffering through fire! This is in return for what your own hands have forwarded, and never does God do the least injustice to His creatures." [8:50-51]

وَلَوْ تَرَىٰٓ إِذْ يَتَوَفَّى
ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ۙ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ يَضْرِبُونَ
وُجُوهَهُمْ وَأَدْبَٰرَهُمْ وَذُوقُوا۟ عَذَابَ
ٱلْحَرِيقِ ﴿٥٠﴾ ذَٰلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ
وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَيْسَ بِظَلَّٰمٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ ﴿٥١﴾

Those whom the angels gather in death while still they are wronging their own-selves. Then they will offer surrender, [saying,] "We have been doing nothing evil".
[They will be answered,] "Nay; surely God has full knowledge of all you have been doing. So enter the gates of hell; evil indeed shall be the abode of the overbearing. [16:28-29]

ٱلَّذِينَ تَتَوَفَّىٰهُمُ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ ظَالِمِىٓ
أَنفُسِهِمْ ۖ فَأَلْقَوُا۟ ٱلسَّلَمَ مَا كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ
مِن سُوٓءٍ ۚ بَلَىٰٓ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمٌۢ بِمَا كُنتُمْ
تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾ فَٱدْخُلُوٓا۟ أَبْوَٰبَ جَهَنَّمَ
خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۖ فَلَبِئْسَ مَثْوًى
ٱلْمُتَكَبِّرِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

Those whom the angels gather in death while they are good in their depth and doing, saying [to them,]
" Peace be upon you! Enter paradise for what you were doing [in the previous life]." [16:32]

ٱلَّذِينَ تَتَوَفَّىٰهُمُ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ طَيِّبِينَ ۙ
يَقُولُونَ سَلَٰمٌ عَلَيْكُمُ ۙ ٱدْخُلُوا۟ ٱلْجَنَّةَ
بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

Say, "The angel of death who has been charged with you, shall [one day] gather you, and then to your Lord shall be brought back." [32:11]

قُلْ يَتَوَفَّىٰكُم مَّلَكُ
ٱلْمَوْتِ ٱلَّذِى وُكِّلَ بِكُمْ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ
تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿١١﴾

In several of the above-mentioned verses, it seems that the angels who gather the human souls in death are many as they are mentioned in the plural [4:97; 6:61, 93; 8:50; 16:28, 32], while the last one of the above verses indicates that there is "*the angel of death who has been charged with you.*" This angel in charge seemingly has many assistants from the angels who are distributed over the different times and places to gather those whose appointed time of death has come.

The verses also show that the angels treat the human souls differently in taking them according to their good or bad deeds in the previous world's life, and that they ask questions and make comments about them. The good doer feels that he/she is welcomed in the life to come and will be rewarded, while the evildoer realizes in approaching the afterlife his/her accountability for what has been forwarded and the requital for all his/her evil deeds. However, the final and detailed checking and final judgement considering all the individual's circumstances [i.e. intention, knowledge of God's guidance, free choice in his/her behavior etc.] will be before God directly on the Day of Judgement.

Those who stubbornly deny the truth and die as stubborn deniers of the truth, face the rejection of God, and of the angels and of [righteous] people altogether. In this state shall they abide; neither shall their suffering be lightened, nor they shall be granted respite. [2:161-162; see also 3:87]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ وَ مَاتُواْ وَ هُمْ كُفَّارٌ
أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ لَعْنَةُ ٱللَّهِ وَ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ
وَ ٱلنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١٦١﴾ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۖ
لَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ وَ لَا هُمْ يُنظَرُونَ
﴿١٦٢﴾

God [Himself] states that there is no god but He, and [so do] the angels and all who are endowed with knowledge, upholding justice; there is no god but He, the All-mighty, the All-wise. [3:18]

شَهِدَ ٱللَّهُ أَنَّهُۥ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ
وَ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ وَ أُوْلُواْ ٱلْعِلْمِ قَآئِمًۢا
بِٱلْقِسْطِ ۚ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ
﴿١٨﴾

But God [Himself] bears witness to [the truth of] that which He has sent down to you; out of His full knowledge and wisdom has he sent it down; and the angels bear witness; and God well suffices for a witness. [4:166]

لَّٰكِنِ ٱللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ بِمَآ أَنزَلَ
إِلَيْكَ ۖ أَنزَلَهُۥ بِعِلْمِهِۦ ۖ وَ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ
يَشْهَدُونَ ۚ وَ كَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ شَهِيدًا ﴿١٦٦﴾

And the thunder extols His limitless glory and praises Him [through the manifestation of God's creation and His cosmic laws and order], and so do the angels, in awe of Him; and it is He who lets loose the thunderbolts and strikes with them whom He wills; yet they stubbornly argue about God, who is mighty in His unfathomable contriving. [13:13]

وَ يُسَبِّحُ ٱلرَّعْدُ بِحَمْدِهِۦ
وَ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ مِنْ خِيفَتِهِۦ وَ يُرْسِلُ ٱلصَّوَٰعِقَ
فَيُصِيبُ بِهَا مَن يَشَآءُ وَ هُمْ يُجَٰدِلُونَ فِى
ٱللَّهِ وَ هُوَ شَدِيدُ ٱلْمِحَالِ ﴿١٣﴾

And before God prosrates itself everything that moves in the heavens and all that on earth [in their submission to God's laws] and the angels, and they never show arrogance. They fear their Lord high above them, and do whatever they are commanded to do. [16:49-50]

وَ لِلَّهِ
يَسْجُدُ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ مَا فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ مِن دَآبَّةٍ وَ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ وَ هُمْ لَا
يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾ يَخَافُونَ رَبَّهُم مِّن
فَوْقِهِمْ وَ يَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

It is He who bestows His blessings upon you, as do His angels, so as to bring you forth from the depths of darkness into the light; and He, indeed, is Most Gracious unto the believers. [33:43]

هُوَ ٱلَّذِى يُصَلِّى عَلَيْكُمْ
وَمَلَٰٓئِكَتُهُۥ لِيُخْرِجَكُم مِّنَ ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ إِلَى
ٱلنُّورِ ۚ وَكَانَ بِٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَحِيمًا ﴿٤٣﴾

Verily, God and His angels bless the Prophet; O you have attained to faith, do bless him and pray that peace [of God] be upon him. [33:56]

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ وَمَلَٰٓئِكَتَهُۥ
يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى ٱلنَّبِىِّ ۚ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا۟ صَلُّوا۟ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا۟ تَسْلِيمًا
﴿٥٦﴾

Those who say, "Our Lord is God [alone]," and wholeheartedly pursue the right way - upon them do angels descend, saying, "Fear not and grieve not, but receive the good tiding of the garden that you have been promised. We are your supporters in the present world life and in the life to come; therein you shall have whatever craving you feel in yourselves and whatever you request [in] a ready hospitable dwelling from Him the All-forgiving, the Most Gracious. [41:30-32]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوا۟
رَبُّنَا ٱللَّهُ ثُمَّ ٱسْتَقَٰمُوا۟ تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ
ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا۟ وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا۟
وَأَبْشِرُوا۟ بِٱلْجَنَّةِ ٱلَّتِى كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ
﴿٣٠﴾ نَحْنُ أَوْلِيَآؤُكُمْ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا
وَفِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۖ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهِىٓ
أَنفُسُكُمْ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَدَّعُونَ ﴿٣١﴾
نُزُلًا مِّنْ غَفُورٍ رَّحِيمٍ ﴿٣٢﴾

The uppermost heavens are well-nigh rent asunder [for awe of Him], and the angels extol their Lord's limitless glory and praise, and ask forgiveness for all on earth. Surely, God alone is truly the All-forgiving, the Most Gracious. [42:5]

تَكَادُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ يَتَفَطَّرْنَ مِن فَوْقِهِنَّ ۚ
وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ
وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونَ لِمَن فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ أَلَآ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلْغَفُورُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٥﴾

Should both of you repent to God, as your hearts both have certainly inclined [to what is not right, this would be the best]; but if you back each other against him [Prophet Muhammad], God Himself is his Supporter and Protector, as is Jibril [Gabriel] and all the righteous among the believers, and all [other] angels will be backers. [66:4]

إِن تَتُوبَآ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ
فَقَدْ صَغَتْ قُلُوبُكُمَا ۖ وَإِن تَظَٰهَرَا عَلَيْهِ
فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ مَوْلَىٰهُ وَجِبْرِيلُ وَصَٰلِحُ
ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۖ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ
ظَهِيرٌ ﴿٤﴾

In it [the night of Majesty or Destiny] the angels and the Spirit descend numerously and continuously by their Lord's leave, carrying out what He wills. Peace it is, until the rising of the dawn. [97:4-5]

تَنَزَّلُ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ
وَ ٱلرُّوحُ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِم مِّن كُلِّ أَمْرٍ
﴿٤﴾ سَلَٰمٌ هِىَ حَتَّىٰ مَطْلَعِ ٱلْفَجْرِ ﴿٥﴾

The above verses indicate that the angels are involved in acts in this present world beside bearing God's messages to the Prophets, supporting them, and gathering the human souls in death. They naturally bear witness that there is no god but He and that His messages are the truth and the conveyors of His messages are saying the truth [3:18; 4:166]. They participate with the other creations of God in extolling His glory and praising Him [13:13; 16:49; 42:5]. In addition, they follow God in blessing the Prophet and those who have attained to faith [33:43, 56], and pray to God that He forgive all those who are on earth [42:5].

This prayer shows how "angelic" are the angels, and how universal they expect God's grace to be. They are asking God to bestow His grace and forgiveness on all those who are on earth, even though they had previously anticipated - justifiably - that these may spread corruption and shed blood [2:30]. Moreover, the angels descend upon *"those who say, 'Our Lord is God' and pursue the right way,"* bringing to them good news about their bountiful rewards and promising them support in this world life and in the eternal life to come [41:30-32]. They follow God and join Gabriel and the righteous believers in supporting Prophet Muhammad against the plans of others to hurt him [66:4]. They also follow God and all people in rejecting those who deny the truth stubbornly and persistently [2:161].

The angels celebrate the night of "Majesty" or "Destiny," one of the last ten nights of the month of Ramadan, when the Prophet received God's revelation for the first time, and during the days of which Muslims were ordered to fast yearly from dawn to sunset. That particular night in Ramadan is celebrated in a distinctive way. Muslims are urged to devote the last ten nights of the month to worship, and in that distinguished night angels share with them the celebration: *"In it the angels and the Spirit descend numerously and continuously by their Lord's leave, carrying out what He wills"*. In this way, the angels have their assigned duties in this world's life, through which they deal with the human beings and have an effect on their lives. We only know of what the Quran mentions in this respect.

The Angels at the end of this world's life and in the life to come

Are they looking for aught but that God should come to them in cloud-shadows, together with the angels? By then, the matter will have been determined,

هَلْ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَّآ أَن
يَأْتِيَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ فِى ظُلَلٍ مِّنَ ٱلْغَمَامِ
وَ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ وَ قُضِىَ ٱلْأَمْرُ ۚ وَ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ

and unto God all things will be brought back. [2:210]

تُرْجَعُ ٱلْأُمُورُ ﴿٢١٠﴾

Are they looking for aught but that the angels should come to them [in a visible way], or that your Lord should come [in a visible way], or that some of your Lord's [peremptory] signs should come? On the day that such signs of your Lord come, believing will be of no avail to any human being who did not believe before, or earned some good through his [/her] belief. Say, "Watch and wait; we too [believers] are waiting". [6:158]

هَلْ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَّآ
أَن تَأْتِيَهُمُ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ أَوْ يَأْتِيَ رَبُّكَ أَوْ
يَأْتِيَ بَعْضُ ءَايَٰتِ رَبِّكَ ۗ يَوْمَ يَأْتِي
بَعْضُ ءَايَٰتِ رَبِّكَ لَا يَنفَعُ نَفْسًا إِيمَٰنُهَا
لَمْ تَكُنْ ءَامَنَتْ مِن قَبْلُ أَوْ كَسَبَتْ فِيٓ
إِيمَٰنِهَا خَيْرًا ۗ قُلِ ٱنتَظِرُوٓا۟ إِنَّا
مُنتَظِرُونَ ﴿١٥٨﴾

Are they looking for aught but that the angels should come [in a visible way] to them, or that your Lord's judgement should become manifest? So did those [stubborn rejectors of the truth] before their time, and [when God's judgement came to them], it was not God who wronged them, it was they who wronged their own selves. Thus, all the [consequences of] evil that they had done fell [back] upon them, and they were afflicted by that they mocked at. [16:33-34]

هَلْ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَّآ
أَن تَأْتِيَهُمُ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ أَوْ يَأْتِيَ أَمْرُ
رَبِّكَ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ فَعَلَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ
وَمَا ظَلَمَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَلَٰكِن كَانُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ
يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾ فَأَصَابَهُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتُ مَا
عَمِلُوا۟ وَحَاقَ بِهِم مَّا كَانُوا۟ بِهِۦ
يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

Upon the Day that they see the angels, there shall be no good tidings for the evil-doers; they will say, "We are locked in behind an ever-losing barrier with no chance [of getting out and attaining God's grace]. [25:22]

يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةَ
لَا بُشْرَىٰ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُجْرِمِينَ وَيَقُولُونَ
حِجْرًا مَّحْجُورًا ﴿٢٢﴾

Upon the day that the skies shall be split asunder with the clouds, and the angels shall be sent down in a mighty way. [25:25]

وَيَوْمَ
تَشَقَّقُ ٱلسَّمَآءُ بِٱلْغَمَٰمِ وَنُزِّلَ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ
تَنزِيلًا ﴿٢٥﴾

The above verses emphasize that the visibility of the angels by all human beings will be a characteristic of the end of this world's life and a sign of the life to come, a life different from the current one, in which angels are in general not visible to human beings. Those who challenged the prophets by asking the angels to descend to earth to convey to

people God's messages, or asking to see an angel as a companion or a partner of the prophet, or as evidence of the truth of God's message, are warned by the Quran that the ability of humans to see angels is possible only when God's judgement determining the end of this world's life comes. By then, it will be too late for the stubborn deniers of the truth to benefit from seeing the angels; they have only to expect the judgement and the requital. In other preceding verses, the Quran argues against the idea of having an angel as a conveyor of God's message, and it explains that it is against the nature of both the angel and the human being to co-habitate and communicate on earth in this way.

Gardens of perpetual bliss, which they shall enter, together with the righteous from among their forebears, their spouses and their offspring; and the angels will come unto them form every gate [saying]: "Peace be upon you, because you have persevered." How excellent is the ultimate abode and fulfillment. [13:23-24, see also 40:7-9]]

جَنَّٰتُ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا وَ مَن صَلَحَ مِنْ
ءَابَآئِهِمْ وَ أَزْوَٰجِهِمْ وَ ذُرِّيَّٰتِهِمْ ۖ
وَ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ يَدْخُلُونَ عَلَيْهِم مِّن كُلِّ بَابٍ
﴿٢٣﴾ سَلَٰمٌ عَلَيْكُم بِمَا صَبَرْتُمْ ۚ فَنِعْمَ
عُقْبَى ٱلدَّارِ ﴿٢٤﴾

The supreme awesomeness [of the Day of Resurrection] shall not grieve them [the believers], and the angels shall receive them [saying,] "This is your day [of reward] that you were promised." [21:103]

لَا يَحْزُنُهُمُ ٱلْفَزَعُ ٱلْأَكْبَرُ وَ تَتَلَقَّىٰهُمُ
ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ هَٰذَا يَوْمُكُمُ ٱلَّذِى كُنتُمْ
تُوعَدُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

And you shall see the angels surrounding the Throne, extolling their Lord's limitless glory and praising Him; and the [divine] judgement between all [human beings] shall be passed in full justice; and it shall be said: "All praise is due to God, the Lord of all-being." [39:75]

وَتَرَى ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةَ حَآفِّينَ مِنْ حَوْلِ
ٱلْعَرْشِ يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ ۖ وَ قُضِىَ
بَيْنَهُم بِٱلْحَقِّ وَ قِيلَ ٱلْحَمْدُ
لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾

O you who have attained to faith! Guard yourselves and your families, against a fire whose fuel is human beings and stones, and in charge of it there are angels awesome and severe, who never disobey God in whatever He commands them, and do whatever they are commanded to do. [66:6]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا
ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ قُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَكُمْ وَ أَهْلِيكُمْ
نَارًا وَقُودُهَا ٱلنَّاسُ وَ ٱلْحِجَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا
مَلَٰٓئِكَةٌ غِلَاظٌ شِدَادٌ لَّا يَعْصُونَ ٱللَّهَ مَآ
أَمَرَهُمْ وَ يَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ ﴿٦﴾

وَ ٱلْمَلَكُ عَلَىٰٓ أَرْجَآئِهَا ۚ
وَيَحْمِلُ عَرْشَ رَبِّكَ فَوْقَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ ثَمَٰنِيَةٌ
(١٧)

And the angels shall stand at its [the split sky's] sides, and above them eight shall bear on that Day your Lord's throne. [69:17]

تَعْرُجُ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ وَ ٱلرُّوحُ
إِلَيْهِ فِى يَوْمٍ كَانَ مِقْدَارُهُۥ خَمْسِينَ أَلْفَ
سَنَةٍ (٤)

To Him the angels and the Spirit ascend, through a day the length of which is [like] fifty thousand years. [70:4]

وَ مَا جَعَلْنَآ أَصْحَٰبَ ٱلنَّارِ إِلَّا
مَلَٰٓئِكَةً ۙ وَ مَا جَعَلْنَا عِدَّتَهُمْ إِلَّا فِتْنَةً
لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لِيَسْتَيْقِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟
ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَ يَزْدَادَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِيمَٰنًا ۙ
وَ لَا يَرْتَابَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ
وَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۙ وَ لِيَقُولَ ٱلَّذِينَ فِى قُلُوبِهِم
مَّرَضٌ وَ ٱلْكَٰفِرُونَ مَاذَآ أَرَادَ ٱللَّهُ
بِهَٰذَا مَثَلًا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يُضِلُّ ٱللَّهُ مَن يَشَآءُ
وَيَهْدِى مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَ مَا يَعْلَمُ جُنُودَ رَبِّكَ
إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ وَ مَا هِىَ إِلَّا ذِكْرَىٰ لِلْبَشَرِ
(٣١)

And We have appointed angels to be in charge of the fire; and We have made their number merely as a trial for the stubborn deniers of the truth, so that those who were given the Book might be convinced [of the truth of this message]; and that they who have attained to faith might be stronger in faith; and that [both] they who have been given the Book and those who believe [in this message] may be freed from all doubt; and that they in whose hearts there is [moral] sickness, and they who stubbornly deny the truth might say, "What is God referring to by this?" In this way, God lets go astray whoever [/whomever He] wills [according to everyone's own choice without imposition], and guides aright whoever [/whomever He] wills; and none comprehend your Lord's forces [submissive to His command] save Him; and this is naught but a reminder to the mortal human beings. [74:31]

يَوْمَ يَقُومُ
ٱلرُّوحُ وَ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ صَفًّا ۖ لَّا يَتَكَلَّمُونَ
إِلَّا مَنْ أَذِنَ لَهُ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ وَ قَالَ صَوَابًا
(٣٨)

Upon the day when the spirit and the angels shall stand in ranks; none shall speak save one to whom the All- merciful shall have given leave and who speaks aright. [78:38]

وَ جَآءَ
رَبُّكَ وَ ٱلْمَلَكُ صَفًّا صَفًّا (٢٢)

And your Lord comes, and the angels rank upon rank. [89:22]

On the Day of Resurrection and Judgement, the angels - as the verses indicate - shall have their role in various aspects. They shall stand in their ranks with God [78:38; 89:22]. They shall extol His limitless glory and praise Him and a certain number of them shall bear His throne [39:75; 69:17]. They shall welcome and greet those who have attained to faith and done righteousness withal as soon as these people are raised and when they are in the gardens of bliss [13:23-24; 21:103]. A certain number of angels shall also be in charge of the fire [66:6; 74:31] . According to their different responsibilities on earth at the end of this world's life and in the heavens in the life to come, the journey of the angels between the two on the Day of Resurrection is one of its characteristics. This huge distance transcends astronomical figures and is represented in the Quran as some fifty thousand years merely to help achieve a human conception of it.

In general, while we can understand the Quranic image of the life to come according to our human understanding of its words as represented in this life with all our linguistic, intellectual and material limitations, we should always keep in mind the tradition of the Prophet about the garden which can be extended to any feature in the life to come "In it, there is what an eye has never seen, and what an ear has never heard, and what has never come to a human imagination" [reported by al- Bukhari and Ibn Majah].

THE BELIEF IN ANGELS: A PART OF THE FAITH

Say, "Whosoever is an enemy of Jibril [Gabriel], [has to know that] it is He that has brought down [this revelation] upon your heart by God's leave, which confirms [God's messages] that came before it, and presents a guidance and good tidings to those who believe [in it]. Whosoever is an enemy to God and His angels and the conveyors of His messages and Gabriel and Mickael [Michael], God surely is the enemy of all who stubbornly deny the truth." [2:97-8]

قُلْ مَن كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِّجِبْرِيلَ فَإِنَّهُۥ
نَزَّلَهُۥ عَلَىٰ قَلْبِكَ بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا
بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَهُدًى وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ
﴿٩٧﴾ مَن كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِّلَّهِ وَمَلَٰٓئِكَتِهِۦ
وَرُسُلِهِۦ وَجِبْرِيلَ وَمِيكَىٰلَ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
عَدُوٌّ لِّلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٩٨﴾

True piety and virtuousness is not in [merely] turning your faces towards the east or the west, but true piety and virtuousness is [represented] in one who believes in God and the Last Day, and the angels, and the [divine] writ[s], and the prophets... [2:177]

لَّيْسَ ٱلْبِرَّ أَن تُوَلُّوا۟ وُجُوهَكُمْ
قِبَلَ ٱلْمَشْرِقِ وَٱلْمَغْرِبِ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱلْبِرَّ
مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ
وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ وَٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَٱلنَّبِيِّۦنَ وَءَاتَى
ٱلْمَالَ عَلَىٰ حُبِّهِۦ ذَوِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ
وَٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰ وَٱلْمَسَٰكِينَ وَٱبْنَ ٱلسَّبِيلِ
وَٱلسَّآئِلِينَ وَفِى ٱلرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ

ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَى ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَٱلْمُوفُونَ
بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَٰهَدُوا۟ ۖ وَٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ فِى
ٱلْبَأْسَآءِ وَٱلضَّرَّآءِ وَحِينَ ٱلْبَأْسِ
أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا۟ ۖ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ
ٱلْمُتَّقُونَ ﴿١٧٧﴾

The Conveyor of God's message, and the believers [in His message] believe in what has been sent down to him from his Lord; they all believe in God and His angels and His Books and the conveyors of His messages, not differentiating [in belief] between any of the conveyors, and they say: "We have heard, and we obey. Grant us Your forgiveness, O our Lord, and with you is all journeys' end." [2:285]

ءَامَنَ
ٱلرَّسُولُ بِمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِن رَّبِّهِۦ
وَٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۚ كُلٌّ ءَامَنَ بِٱللَّهِ وَمَلَٰٓئِكَتِهِۦ
وَكُتُبِهِۦ وَرُسُلِهِۦ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّن
رُّسُلِهِۦ ۚ وَقَالُوا۟ سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا ۖ
غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿٢٨٥﴾

O you who have attained to faith! Hold fast unto your belief in God and the Conveyor of His message and in the Book He has sent down step by step to the Conveyor of His message and the Book which He sent down before. And one who stubbornly denies God and His angels and His books and the conveyors of His messages and the Last Day has surely gone far astray. [4:136]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟
ءَامِنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ وَٱلْكِتَٰبِ
ٱلَّذِى نَزَّلَ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِۦ وَٱلْكِتَٰبِ
ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنزَلَ مِن قَبْلُ ۚ وَمَن يَكْفُرْ بِٱللَّهِ
وَمَلَٰٓئِكَتِهِۦ وَكُتُبِهِۦ وَرُسُلِهِۦ وَٱلْيَوْمِ
ٱلْءَاخِرِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَٰلًۢا بَعِيدًا ﴿١٣٦﴾

It is fundamental in the Islamic faith to believe in the existence of angels, and in all that has come about them in the Quran and in the authentic traditions of the Prophet. This is a part of the belief in what is beyond the human sensory perception, of which the only source of knowledge is the divine revelation. The Quran repeatedly stresses that the angels are just a creation of God, and they are unable to do anything unless commanded by Him. Accordingly, there is no room for overestimating or underestimating the real place of angels in the Islamic faith. It is contradictory to Islam to either believe that angels are gods or quasi-gods, or to believe that they do not exist or that they do nothing.

B) THE INVISIBLE BEINGS "AL-JINN"

THEIR NATURE

And the invisible beings [jinn] We had created before that [the creation of Adam] out of intense fire. [15:27]

وَ ٱلْجَآنَّ خَلَقْنَٰهُ مِن قَبْلُ
مِن نَّارِ ٱلسَّمُومِ ﴿٢٧﴾

And when We said to the angels, "Prostrate yourselves before Adam," they all prostrated themselves save Iblis, who was one of the invisible beings [jinn], and then he turned away from his Lord's command. Do you take him and his folk as patrons [for you] instead of Me, while they are your foe? How wretched a substitute [is this] on the part of the evildoers. [18:50]

وَ إِذْ قُلْنَا
لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ ٱسْجُدُوا۟ لِـَٔادَمَ فَسَجَدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ
إِبْلِيسَ كَانَ مِنَ ٱلْجِنِّ فَفَسَقَ عَنْ أَمْرِ
رَبِّهِۦٓ ۖ أَفَتَتَّخِذُونَهُۥ وَ ذُرِّيَّتَهُۥٓ أَوْلِيَآءَ
مِن دُونِى وَ هُمْ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌۢ ۚ بِئْسَ
لِلظَّٰلِمِينَ بَدَلًا ﴿٥٠﴾

It is these upon whom God's sentence falls due, together with [evil-doing] communities of invisible beings [jinn] as well as human beings that passed away before; they [all] have actually been lost. [46:18, see also 7:38]

أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ
حَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْقَوْلُ فِىٓ أُمَمٍ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن
قَبْلِهِم مِّنَ ٱلْجِنِّ وَ ٱلْإِنسِ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟
خَٰسِرِينَ ﴿١٨﴾

And He has created the invisible beings [jinn] out of smokeless fire flaming. [55:15]

وَخَلَقَ ٱلْجَآنَّ مِن مَّارِجٍ مِّن نَّارٍ ﴿١٥﴾

O human beings and invisible beings [jinn], if you [think that you] can get out of the heavens and earth, [try] to get out! You shall not pass beyond them except with an empowerment [from God according to His will and laws]. [55:33]

يَٰمَعْشَرَ ٱلْجِنِّ
وَ ٱلْإِنسِ إِنِ ٱسْتَطَعْتُمْ أَن تَنفُذُوا۟ مِنْ
أَقْطَارِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ فَٱنفُذُوا۟ ۚ
لَا تَنفُذُونَ إِلَّا بِسُلْطَٰنٍ ﴿٣٣﴾

In these [gardens] will be mates of modest gaze, untouched before by any man or invisible being. [55:56, 74]

فِيهِنَّ قَٰصِرَٰتُ ٱلطَّرْفِ لَمْ يَطْمِثْهُنَّ
إِنسٌ قَبْلَهُمْ وَلَا جَآنٌّ ﴿٥٦﴾

The Quran indicates that the invisible beings [jinn] have been created out of flaming fire which is not weakened by smoke, and which is forceful and penetrating. This graphically stresses the difference between the origin of the invisible beings and that of the human being who was created out of sounding clay. Accordingly, the nature of each is sharply different from the other, and they are separated and have different forms and lives. These invisible beings have their intelligence, will and responsibility and so they have been addressed by God, as the Quran indicates in the verses that follow. The disobedience of Iblis - probably the same as Satan or Lucifer in English and French - who was one of the invisible beings [jinn] according to the verse 18:50, is significant in this respect. Al-Hasan al- Basri, the prominent authority on various areas of religious knowledge was of this opinion which is based on the explicit meaning of the Quranic text. Defining the origin of Iblis as one of the jinn would remove the contradiction of supposing him originally to be an angel who was disobedient to God, as is implied in the Quranic account about God's command to the angels to prostrate themselves before Adam and their obedience of this command all together with the sole exception of Iblis. In principle, angels *"do not disobey God in whatever He commands them, and [always] do whatever they are commanded to do"* [66:6]

As for the Quranic account of that incident, one may say that God's command was addressed principally to the angels, but as the jinn were present they were most likely supposed to follow, since they are understood to be inferior to the angels. Thus Iblis, as one of the jinn, expressed his disobedience, as jinn have their will and choice. Through all his challenging argument with God, Iblis presented clear evidence of the abilities granted by God to the jinn. However, the powers of jinn are not absolute, and they, as invisible beings created from fire, cannot do whatever they like, since they are not other gods, but merely a creation of the One God. Like all creations of God, including the human beings, invisible beings cannot go beyond certain limits in their actions according to God's will and laws.

The verses that indicate the requital for evildoers in hell refer sometimes to *"umam"* of invisible as well as human beings [7:38, 46:18]. This Arabic word *"umam"* [pl; "*umma*" sing.] can simply mean groups or crowds [see for example 28:23], as well as different natural divisions, communities or generations related to one origin or breed. Can these verses be referring to natural differences within the jinn specifically? Can they be referring to their reproductive ability that produces successive generations? The verses that describe the mates in the garden as *"untouched before by any man or invisible being (jinn)"* [55:56, 74] may also raise certain questions. Can the statement be taken literally to indicate a possible sexual relation between these invisible beings and human beings and/or a possible sexual ability of the jinn as a means of reproduction for them? The different origins and nature of the human beings and the jinn may suggest an understanding

of the Quranic expression as an allegory that is referring to the chastity of these mates, especially when it is taken in context with being "*of modest gaze,*" as the previous part of the verse states. The Quran does not present answers to these questions, since the jinn in general represents a different and separate creation from the human beings (the Quranic information about Satan and his folk will follow later). As for the traditions of the Prophet that may help to answer these questions, I will present only what is strongly related to the fundamentals of the discussed Quranic verses, not the details, since the Prophet's traditions require a separate effort with a specific approach. With regard to describing these gardens' mates as "*untouched before*", I may refer to the verses 56:35-38 that indicate "*a renewed being and reconstructed virginity*" for all virtuous women in the hereafter. In his explanatory note no. 14 related to these verses Muhammad Asad wrote: "According to a number of authentic traditions [of the Prophet] quoted in full by al-Tabari and Ibn Kathir [in their commentary on the verses 56:35-36], the Prophet stated on several occasions that all righteous women, however old and decayed they may have been on earth, will be resurrected as virginal maidens and will, like their male counterparts, remain eternally young in paradise."

God's creation, not gods

And yet they have come to ascribe to God, as associates, the invisible beings [jinn], while it is He who has created them; and they have falsely attributed to Him sons and daughters without having any knowledge. Limitless is His glory, and highly exalted above what they describe. The Originator of the heavens and the earth; how could it be that He should have a child, when He never has had a mate, and it is He who has created all things? But He has full knowledge of everything. [6:100-101]

وَجَعَلُوا۟ لِلَّهِ شُرَكَآءَ
ٱلْجِنَّ وَخَلَقَهُمْ ۖ وَخَرَقُوا۟ لَهُۥ بَنِينَ
وَبَنَٰتٍۭ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ۚ سُبْحَٰنَهُۥ وَتَعَٰلَىٰ عَمَّا
يَصِفُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾ بَدِيعُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ أَنَّىٰ يَكُونُ لَهُۥ وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ تَكُن
لَّهُۥ صَٰحِبَةٌ ۖ وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ ۖ وَهُوَ
بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٠١﴾

And on the Day when He shall gather them all together, and He shall say to the angels, "Are these the ones who were worshipping you?" They shall answer, "Limitless are You in Your glory! You [alone] are our Supporter and Protector, not any of them! Nay, they were rather worshipping the invisible beings [jinn], most of them believed in them." [34:40-41]

وَيَوْمَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ يَقُولُ
لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ أَهَٰٓؤُلَآءِ إِيَّاكُمْ كَانُوا۟ يَعْبُدُونَ
﴿٤٠﴾ قَالُوا۟ سُبْحَٰنَكَ أَنتَ وَلِيُّنَا مِن
دُونِهِم ۖ بَلْ كَانُوا۟ يَعْبُدُونَ ٱلْجِنَّ ۖ
أَكْثَرُهُم بِهِم مُّؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

وَجَعَلُوا۟ بَيْنَهُۥ وَبَيْنَ ٱلْجِنَّةِ نَسَبًا ۚ وَلَقَدْ
عَلِمَتِ ٱلْجِنَّةُ إِنَّهُمْ لَمُحْضَرُونَ ﴿١٥٨﴾

And they have set up a kinship between Him and the invisible beings [jinn] while these invisible beings themselves will be brought to presence [and called to account before God on the Day of Judgement]. [37:158]

Just as some people - particularly in Arabia at the time of the message of Islam - attributed divinity to angels, and associated them with God or claimed that they were His daughters, others attributed divinity to the invisible beings [jinn] as associates with God. It seems that some people were confused between the angels and jinn since both are invisible. They claimed to be worshipping the angels but this was - mistakingly or otherwise - untrue; they were actually worshipping jinn, believing in their mightiness over them and over all creation, and trying to please them and to avoid their wrath and curse. The Quran emphasizes that God is one, the Creator and Lord of the angels, jinn and the whole creation in general, and none can be claimed to be His associate, son or daughter, from among the human beings, angels, jinn or anything/ anyone else.

RESPONSIBILITY AND REQUITAL

وَيَوْمَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ جَمِيعًا يَٰمَعْشَرَ
ٱلْجِنِّ قَدِ ٱسْتَكْثَرْتُم مِّنَ ٱلْإِنسِ ۖ وَقَالَ
أَوْلِيَآؤُهُم مِّنَ ٱلْإِنسِ رَبَّنَا ٱسْتَمْتَعَ
بَعْضُنَا بِبَعْضٍ وَبَلَغْنَآ أَجَلَنَا ٱلَّذِىٓ
أَجَّلْتَ لَنَا ۚ قَالَ ٱلنَّارُ مَثْوَىٰكُمْ خَٰلِدِينَ
فِيهَآ إِلَّا مَا شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ حَكِيمٌ
عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٢٨﴾ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نُوَلِّى بَعْضَ
ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ بَعْضًۢا بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَكْسِبُونَ
﴿١٢٩﴾ يَٰمَعْشَرَ ٱلْجِنِّ وَٱلْإِنسِ أَلَمْ
يَأْتِكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِّنكُمْ يَقُصُّونَ عَلَيْكُمْ ءَايَٰتِى
وَيُنذِرُونَكُمْ لِقَآءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هَٰذَا ۚ قَالُوا۟
شَهِدْنَا عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِنَا ۖ وَغَرَّتْهُمُ

And on the Day when He shall gather them all together, [saying to them,] "O you invisible beings [jinn]! You have attracted much of human beings to join you." And those of human beings who adhere to their company and support will say, "Our Lord! We did enjoy the company of one another [in the previous world life], and we have reached the end of our term that You determined for us." He will say, "The fire shall be your abode, therein to abide forever", unless God wills it otherwise;" surely your Lord is All-wise, All-knowing.
And so do We cause evildoers to adhere to one another, through what they earn. [And God will say,] "O you invisible beings [jinn] and human beings all together! Have not the conveyors [of My messages] come to you from among yourselves, conveying to you My messages and warning you of this Day [of Judgement] which you are facing? They will say, "We do bear witness against ourselves";

and the present world life was an illusion to them, and [thus] they will bear witness against themselves that they were stubborn deniers of the truth. [6:128-130]

اَلْحَيٰوةُ اَلدُّنْيَا وَ شَهِدُوا عَلٰى أَنفُسِهِمْ
أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا كٰفِرِينَ ﴿١٣٠﴾

He [God] will say, "Join in fire those communities of invisible beings [jinn] and human beings who came before you." And every time a group enters [the fire] it curses its fellow-group; and when they at last have all passed into it successively, the later of them will say about the earlier, "O our Lord! It is they who have led us astray, so give them double suffering in fire!" He will say, "Each should have a double, but you know not!" And the earlier of them will say to the later, "So you are not better than us; taste, then, this suffering for all that you have earned." [7:38-39]

قَالَ
اُدْخُلُوا فِىٓ أُمَمٍ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِكُم مِّنَ
اَلْجِنِّ وَ اَلْإِنسِ فِى اَلنَّارِ ۖ كُلَّمَا
دَخَلَتْ أُمَّةٌ لَّعَنَتْ أُخْتَهَا ۖ حَتّٰىٓ إِذَا
اَدَّارَكُوا فِيهَا جَمِيعًا قَالَتْ أُخْرٰىهُمْ
لِأُولٰىهُمْ رَبَّنَا هٰٓؤُلَآءِ أَضَلُّونَا فَـَٔاتِهِمْ
عَذَابًا ضِعْفًا مِّنَ اَلنَّارِ ۖ قَالَ لِكُلٍّ ضِعْفٌ
وَ لٰكِن لَّا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَ قَالَتْ أُولٰىهُمْ
لِأُخْرٰىهُمْ فَمَا كَانَ لَكُمْ عَلَيْنَا مِن فَضْلٍ
فَذُوقُوا اَلْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

And We have destined for hell many of the invisible beings [jinn] and human beings [as a result of evil-doing]; they have hearts [and minds] with which they fail to really comprehend, and they have eyes with which they fail to perceive, and they have ears with which they fail to hear. They are like cattle; nay, they are more erratic; it is they who are [truly] the neglectful. [7:179]

وَ لَقَدْ ذَرَأْنَا لِجَهَنَّمَ
كَثِيرًا مِّنَ اَلْجِنِّ وَ اَلْإِنسِ ۖ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ
لَّا يَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا وَ لَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ لَّا يُبْصِرُونَ
بِهَا وَ لَهُمْ ءَاذَانٌ لَّا يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَآ ۚ
أُولٰٓئِكَ كَالْأَنْعَٰمِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ ۚ أُولٰٓئِكَ
هُمُ اَلْغَٰفِلُونَ ﴿١٧٩﴾

Say: "If all human beings and all invisible beings (jinn) would come together in order to produce the like of the Quran, they could not produce its like even if they would be all backing one another [in this purpose]." [17:88]

قُل لَّئِنِ اَجْتَمَعَتِ اَلْإِنسُ
وَ اَلْجِنُّ عَلٰىٓ أَن يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هٰذَا
اَلْقُرْءَانِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِۦ وَ لَوْ كَانَ
بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيرًا ﴿٨٨﴾

And We have assigned to them mates [in this world's life] who have made whatever is there before or behind

وَ قَيَّضْنَا لَهُمْ قُرَنَآءَ

them attractive to them, and the sentence [of God] falls due upon them with other [evil-doing] communities of invisible beings [jinn] and human beings that passed away before; surely, they [all] will be lost. [41:25]

فَزَيَّنُوا لَهُم مَّا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ
وَحَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَوْلُ فِي أُمَمٍ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن
قَبْلِهِم مِّنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنسِ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا
خَاسِرِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾

It is these upon whom God's sentence falls due, together with [evil-doing] communities of invisible beings [jinn] as well as human beings that passed away before; they [all] have actually been lost. [46:18]

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ
حَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَوْلُ فِي أُمَمٍ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن
قَبْلِهِم مِّنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنسِ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا
خَاسِرِينَ ﴿١٨﴾

I have only created the invisible beings [jinn] and the human beings so that they may [know and] worship Me. No sustenance do I ever want from them, nor do I want them to feed Me. Surely, God is the Provider of all sustenance, the One with all might, the Ever-invulnerable . [51:56-58]

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنسَ إِلَّا
لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴿٥٦﴾ مَا أُرِيدُ مِنْهُم مِّن رِّزْقٍ
وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَن يُطْعِمُونِ ﴿٥٧﴾ إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ
الرَّزَّاقُ ذُو الْقُوَّةِ الْمَتِينُ ﴿٥٨﴾

The above verses underline the responsibility of the invisible beings [jinn], and the judgement and requital that they will have in the life to come. Moreover, they indicate that some conveyors of God's messages come to the jinn, as well as to the human beings, to convey the message to them and make them aware of God's judgement and requital in the life to come for all that they did in the present world's life. Were these Conveyors of God's messages human beings who addressed both the human beings and the jinn, or were they from the jinn? The Quran did not refer at all to conveyors of God's messages from the jinn, and thus the majority of scholars (*ulama*) agreed with the former standpoint. Ibn Kathir stated in his commentary that outstanding scholars from successive generations were of this opinion. Were the invisible beings included in the mission of the human conveyors of God's messages, or did they know about their messages indirectly through their special powers while staying invisible? This seems to be the case of what the Quran mentions about the jinn who listened to the Quran and became warners to their fellow-beings [46:29-32; 72:1-15].

However, God's message might not have been directly conveyed to the jinn through the human conveyors, and they might have their own channels to God's guidance that suit their nature and faculties. Either way, it seems from the Quran that the jinn have full responsibility about following the right way, and they have the essential faculties to know about God and worship Him, since they share with human beings this purpose for existence [51:56]. When the jinn ignore or neglect these essential faculties, they are

condemned by the Quran together with human beings who do the same injustice to their own selves and their abilities that have been granted to them by God, and they are considered in this respect worse in this behavior than the animals who lack such faculties in the first place.

The jinn, together with the human beings, have been challenged to produce the like of the Quran [17:88]. This leads one to wonder whether the two have equal powers in thinking and expressing themselves, or whether the jinn just provide the humans with such emotions and attitudes as wishful thinking and illusional arrogance and persistence? It is clear that there are certain channels of contact between the jinn and the human beings, as the verse 6:128 indicates: "*O you invisible beings [jinn]! You have attracted much of human beings to join you? And those of human beings who adhered to their company and support will say, 'Our Lord! We did enjoy the company of one another ...'*" The verse 41:25 refers in its beginning to the evildoers' "*mates of their like*", and mentions in its end the evil-doing "*communities of invisible beings [jinn] and human beings.*" Is the relation between the jinn - and Satan and the devils with which we deal later - on the one side, and the human beings on the other, merely spiritual, or does it have physical aspects? The Quran also mentions both of the jinn and the human beings in relation to the argument about the lack of responsibility which will be presented by the blind followers of leading persons or earlier generations who will end up in hell [7:38-39], as the Quran repeatedly emphasizes individual responsibility and condemns blind following or imitation of others [see for example 2:166-167; 14:21; 33:67-68; 34:31-33; 40:47-48; and see also 2:170; 5:104; 7:28, 70-71; 10:78; 11:62-3, 109; 14:10-11; 21:53-54; 26:74-77; 31:21; 43:22-24].

Do the jinn also have hierarchical laws of organization as a living species [see possible indications in the verses 7:38, 27:17], and do they have, as individuals do, different levels of intelligence, as the verse 27:39 may suggest? Restricting ourselves to the Quran may not provide us with enough details, and dealing with the details provided by the Prophet's traditions is beyond the purpose of this work.

Special relations between the Jinn and Sulayman (Solomon)

And unto Sulayman [(Solomon) We made subservient] the wind; its course every morning and every evening [covered the distance through which the human being could travel in] a month' s journey each, and We caused a source of molten copper to flow at his disposal; and among the invisible beings [jinn] there were some that had [been assigned] to work for him by his Lord's leave; and any of them that might swerve from Our command, We let taste suffering through a blazing flame. They made for him whatever he wished of sanctuaries and statues and bowls

وَلِسُلَيْمَٰنَ ٱلرِّيحَ غُدُوُّهَا
شَهْرٌ وَرَوَاحُهَا شَهْرٌ ۖ وَأَسَلْنَا لَهُۥ
عَيْنَ ٱلْقِطْرِ ۖ وَمِنَ ٱلْجِنِّ مَن يَعْمَلُ بَيْنَ
يَدَيْهِ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِۦ ۖ وَمَن يَزِغْ مِنْهُمْ عَنْ
أَمْرِنَا نُذِقْهُ مِنْ عَذَابِ ٱلسَّعِيرِ ﴿١٢﴾
يَعْمَلُونَ لَهُۥ مَا يَشَآءُ مِن مَّحَٰرِيبَ

as large as huge water troughs and pots firmly anchored. [We said,] "Labor, O House of David, feeling gratitude [towards Me]; and few are the truly grateful among My human creatures".
And when We determined that he should die, nothing indicated to them that he was dead except a [little] living creature from the earth that ate away his staff; and when he [his body] fell down to the ground, the invisible beings [jinn subservient to him] saw clearly that had they but understood the reality which was beyond the reach of their perception, they would not have continued in the humiliating suffering [of such servitude]. [34:12-14]

وَتَمَٰثِيلَ وَجِفَانٍ كَٱلْجَوَابِ وَقُدُورٍ
رَّاسِيَٰتٍ ۚ ٱعْمَلُوٓاْ ءَالَ دَاوُۥدَ شُكْرًا ۚ
وَقَلِيلٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِىَ ٱلشَّكُورُ ﴿١٣﴾ فَلَمَّا
قَضَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ ٱلْمَوْتَ مَا دَلَّهُمْ عَلَىٰ مَوْتِهِۦٓ
إِلَّا دَآبَّةُ ٱلْأَرْضِ تَأْكُلُ مِنسَأَتَهُۥ ۖ فَلَمَّا
خَرَّ تَبَيَّنَتِ ٱلْجِنُّ أَن لَّوْ كَانُواْ يَعْلَمُونَ
ٱلْغَيْبَ مَا لَبِثُواْ فِى ٱلْعَذَابِ ٱلْمُهِينِ
﴿١٤﴾

He [Sulayman(Solomon)] prayed, "O my Lord! Forgive me and grant me a dominion which is not to come to anyone after me; surely You are the All-giver. So We made subservient to him the wind that ran at his command softly wherever he might will, and from the Satans every builder and diver, and others linked together in fetters: "This is Our gift for you, give to others or withhold, without [having to render to others except Us] account". [38:35-39]

قَالَ رَبِّ ٱغْفِرْ لِى وَهَبْ لِى مُلْكًا
لَّا يَنۢبَغِى لِأَحَدٍ مِّنۢ بَعْدِىٓ ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ
ٱلْوَهَّابُ ﴿٣٥﴾ فَسَخَّرْنَا لَهُ ٱلرِّيحَ تَجْرِى
بِأَمْرِهِۦ رُخَآءً حَيْثُ أَصَابَ ﴿٣٦﴾
وَٱلشَّيَٰطِينَ كُلَّ بَنَّآءٍ وَغَوَّاصٍ ﴿٣٧﴾
وَءَاخَرِينَ مُقَرَّنِينَ فِى ٱلْأَصْفَادِ ﴿٣٨﴾
هَٰذَا عَطَآؤُنَا فَٱمْنُنْ أَوْ أَمْسِكْ بِغَيْرِ
حِسَابٍ ﴿٣٩﴾

And there were gathered to Sulayman (Solomon) his hosts of invisible beings [jinn] and of human beings and birds, all organized and led according to orders. [27:17]

وَحُشِرَ لِسُلَيْمَٰنَ
جُنُودُهُۥ مِنَ ٱلْجِنِّ وَٱلْإِنسِ وَٱلطَّيْرِ
فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

Said a bold one of the invisible beings [jinn, subject to Solomon], "I will bring it [the throne of the Queen of Saba' (Sheba)] before you rise from your place, and I am, for such [a work] powerful enough and worthy of trust." [27:39]

قَالَ عِفْرِيتٌ مِّنَ ٱلْجِنِّ أَنَا۠ ءَاتِيكَ بِهِۦ
قَبْلَ أَن تَقُومَ مِن مَّقَامِكَ ۖ وَإِنِّى عَلَيْهِ
لَقَوِىٌّ أَمِينٌ ﴿٣٩﴾

These verses point out a special relation between the Prophet Sulayman (the biblical Solomon, whom the Muslims believe to have been a prophet as well as a king) and the jinn. This relationship was unique, since a certain number of jinn were assigned by God to work for Solomon, and they produced concrete material things as sanctuaries, statues, and huge bowls and pots. Did these jinn physically appear while they were working or did they continue to be invisible? We cannot know from the Quran. What seems obvious is that this communication with the jinn, like that with the winds and the birds, was included in the forces that God made extraordinarily subservient to Solomon.

A bold and intelligent jinn offered to bring Solomon the throne of the Queen of Sheba before he rose up from his place. The jinn [which might be mainly satans or devils *(shayatin)* as indicated in the verses 38:37-8] were forced to work at Solomon's command by God's leave, and they were under such enormous pressure to work hard and such a fear of disobedience of these commands that they did not notice the death of Solomon on his throne until the staff that he used to lean on was gnawed away from its end by a little living creature from the earth, and thus his body fell down!

What exactly was that little "living creature from the earth," *dabbat ul-ard,* and how long did it take to eat the end of the staff until it moved and the dead body of Solomon fell down? It would not have taken too long for the death of Solomon to be noticed by his family and bodyguards, and thus that little living creature from the earth might be some little rodent, or any small creature whose nibbling could bring such an effect in a short time.The jinn also seem to have their limitations in the above verse [34:14], as they were not able to notice Solomon's death except after seeing his body falling down.

In general, one can see that the relation between Prophet Solomon and the jinn was unique. It was included in the miraculous and supernatural powers granted to the Prophet by God;, and cannot provide by any means a general rule for the relation between these two sharply different beings: the humans and the invisible.

The invisible beings listening to the Quran

And when we caused a group of the invisible beings [jinn] to come to you, giving an ear to the Quran and when they were aware that it was recited, they said [to one another,] "Listen in silence". And when [the recitation] came to an end, they returned to their people warning them. They said, "O our people! We have listened to a book that was sent down after Moses, confirming what was before it [of God's revelation], guiding to the truth and to a straight way. O our people! Respond to the one who

وَإِذْ صَرَفْنَآ
إِلَيْكَ نَفَرًا مِّنَ ٱلْجِنِّ يَسْتَمِعُونَ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ
فَلَمَّا حَضَرُوهُ قَالُوٓا۟ أَنصِتُوا۟ ۖ فَلَمَّا
قُضِىَ وَلَّوْا۟ إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِم مُّنذِرِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾
قَالُوا۟ يَٰقَوْمَنَآ إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا كِتَٰبًا أُنزِلَ
مِنۢ بَعْدِ مُوسَىٰ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ
يَهْدِىٓ إِلَى ٱلْحَقِّ وَإِلَىٰ طَرِيقٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ
﴿٣٠﴾ يَٰقَوْمَنَآ أَجِيبُوا۟ دَاعِىَ ٱللَّهِ

calls you to God, and have faith in Him, and He will forgive you [whatever happened before] of your wrongdoing, and avert from you grievous suffering. And any who does not respond to one who calls to God can never be invincible on earth, nor can [he/she] have supporters against Him; all such are in obvious delusion." [46:29-32]

وَءَامِنُوا۟ بِهِۦ يَغْفِرْ لَكُم مِّن ذُنُوبِكُمْ
وَيُجِرْكُم مِّنْ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٣١﴾ وَمَن لَّا
يُجِبْ دَاعِىَ ٱللَّهِ فَلَيْسَ بِمُعْجِزٍ فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَيْسَ لَهُۥ مِن دُونِهِۦٓ أَوْلِيَآءُ ۚ
أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ فِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٣٢﴾

Say: "It has been revealed to me that some of the invisible beings [jinn] gave ear [to the recitation of this Book], then they said [to their fellow-beings], "We have indeed heard a wondrous discourse, guiding to rectitude. We have come to believe in it, and we shall never associate with our Lord anyone. He - exalted be our Lord's majesty - has never taken to Himself either a consort or a son. And [now we know] that the fool among us spoke what is outrageous about God, while we [mistakenly] thought that the human beings and the invisible ones [jinn] would never tell a lie about God. Yet there have been always some of the human beings who seek refuge with some of the invisible beings [jinn], but these only have added to their suffering, and they have thought as you also do - that God never raises up anyone [from death].

"And we could come close to heaven, but we found it filled with mighty guards and shooting stars. It happened [before] that we could have positions suitable for listening, but now anyone who tries to listen finds a shooting star directed to hit!

"And we can never be sure [as created beings with limited knowledge] whether something evil is intended to befall those who live on earth, or their Lord wills to endow them with consciousness of what is right.

"And we ourselves have some who are righteous among us, while some are below that; we have always followed widely divergent paths.

قُلْ أُوحِىَ إِلَىَّ أَنَّهُ ٱسْتَمَعَ نَفَرٌ مِّنَ
ٱلْجِنِّ فَقَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا قُرْءَانًا عَجَبًا
﴿١﴾ يَهْدِىٓ إِلَى ٱلرُّشْدِ فَـَٔامَنَّا بِهِۦ ۖ
وَلَن نُّشْرِكَ بِرَبِّنَآ أَحَدًا ﴿٢﴾ وَأَنَّهُۥ
تَعَٰلَىٰ جَدُّ رَبِّنَا مَا ٱتَّخَذَ صَٰحِبَةً وَلَا
وَلَدًا ﴿٣﴾ وَأَنَّهُۥ كَانَ يَقُولُ سَفِيهُنَا
عَلَى ٱللَّهِ شَطَطًا ﴿٤﴾ وَأَنَّا ظَنَنَّآ أَن لَّن
تَقُولَ ٱلْإِنسُ وَٱلْجِنُّ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ كَذِبًا
﴿٥﴾ وَأَنَّهُۥ كَانَ رِجَالٌ مِّنَ ٱلْإِنسِ
يَعُوذُونَ بِرِجَالٍ مِّنَ ٱلْجِنِّ فَزَادُوهُمْ
رَهَقًا ﴿٦﴾ وَأَنَّهُمْ ظَنُّوا۟ كَمَا ظَنَنتُمْ أَن
لَّن يَبْعَثَ ٱللَّهُ أَحَدًا ﴿٧﴾ وَأَنَّا لَمَسْنَا
ٱلسَّمَآءَ فَوَجَدْنَٰهَا مُلِئَتْ حَرَسًا شَدِيدًا
وَشُهُبًا ﴿٨﴾ وَأَنَّا كُنَّا نَقْعُدُ مِنْهَا مَقَٰعِدَ
لِلسَّمْعِ ۖ فَمَن يَسْتَمِعِ ٱلْـَٰٔنَ يَجِدْ لَهُۥ
شِهَابًا رَّصَدًا ﴿٩﴾ وَأَنَّا لَا نَدْرِىٓ أَشَرٌّ
أُرِيدَ بِمَن فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ أَمْ أَرَادَ بِهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ
رَشَدًا ﴿١٠﴾ وَأَنَّا مِنَّا ٱلصَّٰلِحُونَ وَمِنَّا
دُونَ ذَٰلِكَ ۖ كُنَّا طَرَآئِقَ قِدَدًا ﴿١١﴾

"And indeed, we have [now] come to thinking that we can never be invincible in facing God, and we are never able to get beyond His reach and escape.
"Hence, as soon as we have heard the guidance [of God] we believed in it; and one who believes in his [/her] Lord need never have fear of loss or injustice.
"Yet, [only] some among us have submitted themselves to God, while others have deviated [from righteousness to wrongdoing]. As for those who have submitted themselves to Him they have seriously sought the right direction; but as for those who have deviated [from righteousness to wrongdoing], they are but firewood for hell." [72:1-15]

وَأَنَّا ظَنَنَّآ أَن لَّن نُّعْجِزَ ٱللَّهَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ
وَلَن نُّعْجِزَهُۥ هَرَبًا ﴿١٢﴾ وَأَنَّا لَمَّا
سَمِعْنَا ٱلْهُدَىٰٓ ءَامَنَّا بِهِۦ ۖ فَمَن يُؤْمِنۢ
بِرَبِّهِۦ فَلَا يَخَافُ بَخْسًا وَلَا رَهَقًا ﴿١٣﴾
وَأَنَّا مِنَّا ٱلْمُسْلِمُونَ وَمِنَّا
ٱلْقَٰسِطُونَ ۖ فَمَنْ أَسْلَمَ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ
تَحَرَّوْا۟ رَشَدًا ﴿١٤﴾ وَأَمَّا ٱلْقَٰسِطُونَ
فَكَانُوا۟ لِجَهَنَّمَ حَطَبًا ﴿١٥﴾

These verses state that a group of jinn listened to the Quran recited by Prophet Muhammad. This did not seem to happen frequently during the mission of the Prophet, and the Quran did not mention any similar event in relation to any previous prophet except for a brief reference to the jinn in the message and Book of Moses [46:30]. Other verses also state that humans may seek refuge with the jinn, although there is no indication of how such a relation would take place. Would it be real or illusory, physical or non-physical? Did that group of jinn who listened to the Quran come to the Prophet intentionally or by chance, and God's direction [46:29] can always work through His natural laws, especially those of cause and effect. A tradition of the Prophet indicated that he was not aware of their presence when he recited the Quran [reported by Muslim, Ibn Hanbal and al-Tirmidhi].

It is also indicated that the jinn have their limits beyond which they cannot go and if they do they can be hurt, the same as human beings; "O you invisible beings and human beings! *If you [think that you] can get out of the heavens and the earth, [try to] get out! You shall not pass through except with an empowerment [from God] ... A flash of fire and [molten] copper will be directed to you, and you can never win"* [55:33, 35]. The jinn seemed interested in "having suitable positions close to the heavens to listen" and be aware of the messages of God, especially that given to Prophet Moses. Why was Moses in particular referred to? Did they listen to the message given to him? How do the jinn understand the divine messages in their different languages, and how do they interpret them into their way of communication, when "*they returned to their people as warners*" [46:29]? And even after God's messages may reach the jinn at any time and by any means, there are among them those who are righteous and those who are not, since they have followed *"widely divergent paths"* [71:11].

The Muslims have to keep to the Quran and the authentic traditions of the Prophet for information about the jinn, and to avoid any step beyond them to any sources or

practices out of curiosity. The humans and jinn are different in nature and life, and Muslims are warned by the Quran and Sunna against wasting their time, energy and intelligence in seeking contacts with jinn, through sorcery or by other means, or in trying to obtain their help by any means and for any matter, even if this matter is legitimate. They are forbidden from approaching sorcery by the assistance of jinn or otherwise; even if one who may think that he/she has been hit by sorcery, he/she is not allowed to practice it in defense [as the tradition reported by Ibn Hanbal and Abu Dawud indicates] or to seek the help of some jinn against others. Humans and jinn have sharp differences, and the jinn themselves have their "divergent paths"; how, then, can a believer make sure which kind of jinn he/she would come across, even if any real contact may be established?

(C) SATAN AND THE DEVILS "IBLIS, AL-SHAYATIN"

THE ORIGIN

وَ إِذْ قُلْنَا
لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ ٱسْجُدُوا۟ لِـَٔادَمَ فَسَجَدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ
إِبْلِيسَ أَبَىٰ وَ ٱسْتَكْبَرَ وَ كَانَ مِنَ
ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾

And when We said to the angels, "Prostrate yourselves before Adam," and they all prostrated themselves save Iblis (Satan), who refused and showed insolence, and became a stubborn rejector of the truth. [2:34]

فَأَزَلَّهُمَا
ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ عَنْهَا فَأَخْرَجَهُمَا مِمَّا كَانَا
فِيهِ ۖ وَ قُلْنَا ٱهْبِطُوا۟ بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ
عَدُوٌّ ۖ وَ لَكُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَ مَتَٰعٌ
إِلَىٰ حِينٍ ﴿٣٦﴾

...and We said, "Get you all down, enemies to one another; and on earth you shall have your dwelling and a livelihood that you shall enjoy for a while." [2:36]

وَ لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَٰكُمْ ثُمَّ
صَوَّرْنَٰكُمْ ثُمَّ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ ٱسْجُدُوا۟
لِـَٔادَمَ فَسَجَدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ إِبْلِيسَ لَمْ يَكُن مِّنَ
ٱلسَّٰجِدِينَ ﴿١١﴾ قَالَ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَلَّا
تَسْجُدَ إِذْ أَمَرْتُكَ ۖ قَالَ أَنَا۠ خَيْرٌ مِّنْهُ
خَلَقْتَنِى مِن نَّارٍ وَ خَلَقْتَهُۥ مِن طِينٍ
﴿١٢﴾ قَالَ فَٱهْبِطْ مِنْهَا فَمَا يَكُونُ لَكَ أَن

We who have created you and then formed you, and then We said to the angels "Prostrate yourselves before Adam" and they [all] prostrated themselves, save Iblis (Satan); he was not of those who prostrated themselves. God said, "What has kept you from prostrating yourself when I commanded you?" He said, "I am better than he; You have created me out of fire, and him You have created out of clay." God said: "Get you down out of it, it is not for you to show insolence here; so go forth; surely you are but

one who should degradedly be yielding. He said: "Grant me a respite till the day they shall be raised from the dead." God said: "Be you among those who are respited." He said, "Now that you have let me go astray [of the right way], I shall surely waylay them all along Your straight way, then I shall come on them from before them and from behind them, from their right and from their left; and most of them You will not find grateful." God said, "Go you forth from it, disgraced and expelled; and those of them that follow you, I shall assuredly fill hell with you all." [7:11-18]

تَتَكَبَّرَ فِيهَا فَٱخْرُجْ إِنَّكَ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰغِرِينَ
(١٣) قَالَ أَنظِرْنِىٓ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ
(١٤) قَالَ إِنَّكَ مِنَ ٱلْمُنظَرِينَ (١٥) قَالَ
فَبِمَآ أَغْوَيْتَنِى لَأَقْعُدَنَّ لَهُمْ صِرَٰطَكَ
ٱلْمُسْتَقِيمَ (١٦) ثُمَّ لَءَاتِيَنَّهُم مِّنۢ بَيْنِ
أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ وَعَنْ أَيْمَٰنِهِمْ وَعَن
شَمَآئِلِهِمْ ۖ وَلَا تَجِدُ أَكْثَرَهُمْ شَٰكِرِينَ
(١٧) قَالَ ٱخْرُجْ مِنْهَا مَذْءُومًا
مَّدْحُورًا ۖ لَّمَن تَبِعَكَ مِنْهُمْ لَأَمْلَأَنَّ
جَهَنَّمَ مِنكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ (١٨)

Said he [Iblis] "O my Lord! As You have caused me to be perverted, I shall make all on earth seem attractive to them, and I shall seduce them all together, save those among them who are your true worshippers." Said He [God], "This is for Me [what I have surely determined as] a straight way: over My servants you shall have no power, except [those] who follow you from among those who have [already] been lost in wrongdoing [by their own will]; and for them hell shall be their promised end. [15:39-43]

قَالَ رَبِّ بِمَآ
أَغْوَيْتَنِى لَأُزَيِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ
وَلَأُغْوِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ (٣٩) إِلَّا عِبَادَكَ
مِنْهُمُ ٱلْمُخْلَصِينَ (٤٠) قَالَ هَٰذَا صِرَٰطٌ
عَلَىَّ مُسْتَقِيمٌ (٤١) إِنَّ عِبَادِى لَيْسَ لَكَ
عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَٰنٌ إِلَّا مَنِ ٱتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ ٱلْغَاوِينَ (٤٢)
وَإِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ لَمَوْعِدُهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ (٤٣)

And when We said to the angels, "Prostrate yourselves before Adam"; so they all prostrated themselves save Iblis; he said, "Shall I prostrate myself before one whom You have created out of clay?" He added, "You see this whom You have honored above me, if You but allow me a respite till the Day of Resurrection, I shall assuredly seize and lead his offspring save a few."
Said He [God], "Go [the way you have chosen], but those of them that follow you -surely hell shall be your recompense - all of you, an ample recompense! And drive to your side

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ ٱسْجُدُوا۟ لِءَادَمَ
فَسَجَدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ إِبْلِيسَ قَالَ ءَأَسْجُدُ لِمَنْ
خَلَقْتَ طِينًا (٦١) قَالَ أَرَءَيْتَكَ هَٰذَا
ٱلَّذِى كَرَّمْتَ عَلَىَّ لَئِنْ أَخَّرْتَنِ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ
ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ لَأَحْتَنِكَنَّ ذُرِّيَّتَهُۥٓ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا
(٦٢) قَالَ ٱذْهَبْ فَمَن تَبِعَكَ مِنْهُمْ فَإِنَّ
جَهَنَّمَ جَزَآؤُكُمْ جَزَآءً مَّوْفُورًا (٦٣)

whomsoever of them you can drive with your voice, and set up on them with your forces, those on horses or those on foot, and share with them [earning and spending] their wealth, and [begetting and raising] their children, and give them your promises!"
But Satan's promises for them are but a delusion. "Surely over My [true] worshippers you shall have no power; and your Lord is sufficient as a guardian." [17:61-65]

وَٱسْتَفْزِزْ مَنِ ٱسْتَطَعْتَ مِنْهُم بِصَوْتِكَ
وَأَجْلِبْ عَلَيْهِم بِخَيْلِكَ وَرَجِلِكَ وَشَارِكْهُمْ
فِى ٱلْأَمْوَٰلِ وَٱلْأَوْلَٰدِ وَعِدْهُمْ ۚ وَمَا
يَعِدُهُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ إِلَّا غُرُورًا ﴿٦٤﴾ إِنَّ
عِبَادِى لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَٰنٌ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ
بِرَبِّكَ وَكِيلًا ﴿٦٥﴾

And when We said to the angels, "Prostrate yourselves before Adam," they all prostrated themselves save Iblis, who was one of the invisible beings [jinn], and then he turned away from his Lord's command. Do you take him and his folk as patrons [for you] instead of Me, while they are your foe? How wretched a substitute [is this] on the part of the evildoers. [18:50]

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا
لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ ٱسْجُدُوا۟ لِءَادَمَ فَسَجَدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ
إِبْلِيسَ كَانَ مِنَ ٱلْجِنِّ فَفَسَقَ عَنْ أَمْرِ
رَبِّهِۦٓ ۖ أَفَتَتَّخِذُونَهُۥ وَذُرِّيَّتَهُۥٓ أَوْلِيَآءَ
مِن دُونِى وَهُمْ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ ۚ بِئْسَ
لِلظَّٰلِمِينَ بَدَلًا ﴿٥٠﴾

Said he [Iblis], "Then [I swear] by Your might and glory, I shall assuredly seduce them all together, except those among them who are your true worshippers." Said He [God], "Here is the truth, and the truth I say: I shall assuredly fill hell with you and whosoever of them follow you, all together." [38:82-85]

قَالَ فَبِعِزَّتِكَ لَأُغْوِيَنَّهُمْ
أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٨٢﴾ إِلَّا عِبَادَكَ مِنْهُمُ
ٱلْمُخْلَصِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾ قَالَ فَٱلْحَقُّ وَٱلْحَقَّ
أَقُولُ ﴿٨٤﴾ لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنكَ وَمِمَّن
تَبِعَكَ مِنْهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾

The rebellious Iblis refused God's command to prostrate himself before Adam, and thus he initiated the change of some invisible beings [jinn] into devils when they choose to follow him in disobeying God. From such a piece of information one can deduce that the jinn have free choice, and thus they can decide their own way. The verse 18:50 states that Iblis was one of the jinn, yet al-Hasan al-Basri [d. 728 C.E.], a prominent authority on matters of religion, said that Iblis has never been one of the jinn. As it has previously been mentioned, the Quranic statement that Iblis disobeyed God's command to prostrate himself before Adam in the Quran, while this command was addressed to the angels, might indicate that the jinn who were present were supposed to follow since they are inferior in rank to angels, and thus Iblis as one of the jinn, expressed his disobedience. This arrogance, which caused such a rebellious act against God's command, has become the origin of evil for jinn as well as of seduction to evil for human beings.

The argument of Iblis with God proves that he enjoys intelligence. This enabled him to argue for his disobedience on the grounds that he was created out of fire while Adam was created out of clay. His plans for seducing the human being underline how he and his folk are cunning, persistent and confident of success in most cases, and that he can achieve this seduction through numerous ways *"from before and behind and from right and left; and most of them You will not find grateful [for what You have granted them]"* [7:17]. The Satanic seduction, then, can be open or hidden, direct or indirect, and trying to drive a person to either of the two extremes of rejection or fanaticism.

Satan strives hard to seduce as many people as possible to go astray, even those who may think that they are on the right track, by letting them deceive their own selves and others about their intentions for doing good. He uses both temptation and threats: *"Satan threatens you poverty [to pressure you to get illegitimate earnings] and bids you to do what is shameful"* [2:268]. Throughout all of his various plots, illusory promises, threats and all-round exploitation of human weaknesses Satan becomes a partner in all the decisions of the seduced person: he can tempt a person to earn or spend money in evil ways, or to beget children illegally or raise them wrongfully, and thus he does his best to "*seize and lead Adam's offering save a few*" [17:62].

In such an assuredness, Satan swears by God's glory and might that he shall seduce the offspring of Adam all together "*except those among them who are Your true worshippers*" [15:40]. Satan seems well aware of God's all-mightiness, emphasizing that all his rebellious actions against God in the past, present and the future are out of mere haughtiness and stubbornness, and that he has never had any doubt or confusion about God and His power. Thus Satan became a model for evil-doing and seduction for it. Those whose intelligence, strong consciousness of God and firm will overcome Satan , and receive God's help and support in resisting the persistent Satanic plots for seducing the human being. They reject his delusive promises according to what God has stated sharply: *"Surely over My servants you shall have no power; and your Lord is sufficient as a guardian."*

SATAN'S ENMITY FOR HUMAN BEINGS SHOULD ALERT THEM TO AVOID HIS APPRAOCHES

...and We said, "Get you all down, enemies to one another; and on earth you shall have your dwelling and a livelihood that you shall enjoy for a while." [2:36]

فَأَزَلَّهُمَا
ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ عَنْهَا فَأَخْرَجَهُمَا مِمَّا كَانَا
فِيهِ ۖ وَقُلْنَا ٱهْبِطُوا۟ بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ
عَدُوٌّ ۖ وَلَكُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمَتَٰعٌ
إِلَىٰ حِينٍ ﴿٣٦﴾

O you human beings! Eat of what is on earth, lawful and good, and follow not the footsteps of Satan; verily he is a clear enemy to you. [2:168]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا
ٱلنَّاسُ كُلُوا۟ مِمَّا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ حَلَٰلًا
طَيِّبًا وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا۟ خُطُوَٰتِ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ ۚ
إِنَّهُۥ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٦٨﴾

O you have attained to faith! Enter the peace, all of you, through submitting your whole selves to God, and follow not the steps of Satan; for surely he is a clear enemy to you. [2:208]

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُواْ ٱدْخُلُواْ فِى ٱلسِّلْمِ كَآفَّةً وَلَا
تَتَّبِعُواْ خُطُوَٰتِ ٱلشَّيْطَـٰنِ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَكُمْ
عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٢٠٨﴾

...and but for God's bounty and grace towards you, all but a few of you would have followed Satan. [4:83]

وَإِذَا جَآءَهُمْ أَمْرٌ
مِّنَ ٱلْأَمْنِ أَوِ ٱلْخَوْفِ أَذَاعُواْ بِهِۦ ۖ
وَلَوْ رَدُّوهُ إِلَى ٱلرَّسُولِ وَإِلَىٰٓ أُو۟لِى
ٱلْأَمْرِ مِنْهُمْ لَعَلِمَهُ ٱلَّذِينَ يَسْتَنۢبِطُونَهُۥ
مِنْهُمْ ۗ وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ
وَرَحْمَتُهُۥ لَٱتَّبَعْتُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَـٰنَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٨٣﴾

And of the livestock [you get benefits as they] carry [your] load and provide [your] clothing and furnishing. Eat of what God has provided for you as sustenance, and follow not the footsteps of Satan, since he is your distinct foe. [6:142]

وَمِنَ ٱلْأَنْعَـٰمِ حَمُولَةً وَفَرْشًا ۚ
كُلُواْ مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُواْ
خُطُوَٰتِ ٱلشَّيْطَـٰنِ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ
﴿١٤٢﴾

And tell My worshippers that they should speak [always] in the most preferable way; surely Satan stirs up discord between them; surely Satan is ever to the human being a foe whose hostility is evident. [17:53]

وَقُل لِّعِبَادِى
يَقُولُواْ ٱلَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلشَّيْطَـٰنَ
يَنزَغُ بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلشَّيْطَـٰنَ كَانَ لِلْإِنسَـٰنِ
عَدُوًّا مُّبِينًا ﴿٥٣﴾

... Do you take him and his folk as patrons [for you] instead of Me, while they are your foe? How wretched a substitute [is this] on the part of the evildoers. [18:50]

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا
لِلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةِ ٱسْجُدُواْ لِـَٔادَمَ فَسَجَدُوٓاْ إِلَّآ
إِبْلِيسَ كَانَ مِنَ ٱلْجِنِّ فَفَسَقَ عَنْ أَمْرِ
رَبِّهِۦٓ ۗ أَفَتَتَّخِذُونَهُۥ وَذُرِّيَّتَهُۥٓ أَوْلِيَآءَ
مِن دُونِى وَهُمْ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌۢ ۚ بِئْسَ
لِلظَّـٰلِمِينَ بَدَلًا ﴿٥٠﴾

O you who have attained to faith! Follow not Satan's footsteps; for whoever follows Satan's footsteps

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا
تَتَّبِعُواْ خُطُوَٰتِ ٱلشَّيْطَـٰنِ ۚ وَمَن يَتَّبِعْ

realizes that he [but] commands what is shameful [and immoral] and counter to reason [and common sense]; and were it not for the grace of God and His mercy on you, not one of you would ever have attained purity [and righteousness]; but God does cause whomever He wills to grow in purity; and God is All-hearing, All-knowing. [24:21]

خُطُوَٰتِ ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنِ فَإِنَّهُۥ يَأۡمُرُ
بِٱلۡفَحۡشَآءِ وَٱلۡمُنكَرِۚ وَلَوۡلَا فَضۡلُ ٱللَّهِ
عَلَيۡكُمۡ وَرَحۡمَتُهُۥ مَا زَكَىٰ مِنكُم مِّنۡ أَحَدٍ
أَبَدٗا وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُزَكِّي مَن يَشَآءُۗ
وَٱللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٞ ٢١

... so Moses struck him down with his fist, and [thus] ended his life. He said [to himself], "This is of Satan's doing, he is surely an evident foe who leads [the human being] astray." [28:15]

وَدَخَلَ ٱلۡمَدِينَةَ عَلَىٰ
حِينِ غَفۡلَةٖ مِّنۡ أَهۡلِهَا فَوَجَدَ فِيهَا رَجُلَيۡنِ
يَقۡتَتِلَانِ هَٰذَا مِن شِيعَتِهِۦ وَهَٰذَا مِنۡ
عَدُوِّهِۦۖ فَٱسۡتَغَٰثَهُ ٱلَّذِي مِن شِيعَتِهِۦ
عَلَى ٱلَّذِي مِنۡ عَدُوِّهِۦ فَوَكَزَهُۥ مُوسَىٰ
فَقَضَىٰ عَلَيۡهِۖ قَالَ هَٰذَا مِنۡ عَمَلِ
ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنِۖ إِنَّهُۥ عَدُوّٞ مُّضِلّٞ مُّبِينٞ ١٥

Surely Satan is a foe to you; so take him for a foe. He but calls on his followers just to let them find themselves among those who are destined for the blazing flame. [35:6]

إِنَّ ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنَ لَكُمۡ عَدُوّٞ فَٱتَّخِذُوهُ عَدُوًّاۚ
إِنَّمَا يَدۡعُواْ حِزۡبَهُۥ لِيَكُونُواْ مِنۡ
أَصۡحَٰبِ ٱلسَّعِيرِ ٦

And let not Satan bar you [from the straight way to which God guides you]; he is for you a foe whose hostility is evident. [43:62]

وَلَا يَصُدَّنَّكُمُ ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنُۖ
إِنَّهُۥ لَكُمۡ عَدُوّٞ مُّبِينٞ ٦٢

The Quran repeatedly reminds human beings in general, and the believers in the One God and His messages in particular, that Satan who has been rebellious to God, is their clear enemy. He has disobeyed God and has sworn to lead people astray, and he overwhelms them with traps that are both obvious and hidden, and with false promises and threats. Thus, humans have to deal with him as an enemy, not as a patron, guide or ally, and they should always be alert against the Satanic plots. In spite of these repeated strong warnings, however, the human beings, including the believers in the One God and His messages, are in many cases deceived, trapped and led astray due to their human naivete and to the Satanic cunning. Satan thus can manipulate and exploit the human being, and whenever any human weakness is exposed, he works on it to divert the human being suddenly or gradually from the straight way, through temptations or threats. The Quran assures the believer that a constant consciousness of God and an alertness of Satan can keep him/her stable and steadfast on the right way, and shield him/her against such a permanent, intelligent and persistent foe.

Character of Satan

Satan, being originally from the invisible beings "jinn", was created out of fire. See the previous verses related to the nature of jinn and the commentary on them [e.g. 15:27, 55:15], and the verses related to Iblis [e.g. 7:12, 38:76].

Those who have attained to faith fight in the way of God, and those who stubbornly deny the truth fight for the powers of evil and tyranny. Fight, then, against these allies of Satan; surely, Satan's guile is ever feeble. [4:76]

ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ يُقَٰتِلُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ
وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ يُقَٰتِلُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ
ٱلطَّٰغُوتِ ۖ فَقَٰتِلُوٓا۟ أَوْلِيَآءَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ ۚ
إِنَّ كَيْدَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ كَانَ ضَعِيفًا ﴿٧٦﴾

Instead of Him, they but call on female beings, and they but call on a rebellious Satan, whom God has rejected, and he said, "Of your servants I will assuredly take unto myself a given share, and I will lead them astray, and fill them with fancies, and I will instruct them and they will cut off the ears of the livestock [in idolatrous worship], and I shall instruct them so as to perverse God's creation." But all who take Satan rather than God as a guide and supporter has come to an evident loss. He promises them and fills them with fancies, but nothing does Satan promise them except delusion. Such as these have hell as their abode, and they shall find no escape therefrom. [4:117-121, see also 22:3]

إِن يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِۦٓ إِلَّآ إِنَٰثًا وَإِن
يَدْعُونَ إِلَّا شَيْطَٰنًا مَّرِيدًا ﴿١١٧﴾ لَّعَنَهُ
ٱللَّهُ ۘ وَقَالَ لَأَتَّخِذَنَّ مِنْ عِبَادِكَ نَصِيبًا
مَّفْرُوضًا ﴿١١٨﴾ وَلَأُضِلَّنَّهُمْ وَلَأُمَنِّيَنَّهُمْ
وَلَءَامُرَنَّهُمْ فَلَيُبَتِّكُنَّ ءَاذَانَ ٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ
وَلَءَامُرَنَّهُمْ فَلَيُغَيِّرُنَّ خَلْقَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَمَن
يَتَّخِذِ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ وَلِيًّا مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ فَقَدْ
خَسِرَ خُسْرَانًا مُّبِينًا ﴿١١٩﴾ يَعِدُهُمْ
وَيُمَنِّيهِمْ ۖ وَمَا يَعِدُهُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ إِلَّا
غُرُورًا ﴿١٢٠﴾ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ مَأْوَىٰهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ
وَلَا يَجِدُونَ عَنْهَا مَحِيصًا ﴿١٢١﴾

O you who have attained to faith! Liquor and gambling, and idolatrous practices and divining of the futures are but a loathsome evil of Satan's doing; avoid it, then so that you may attain to success. By means of liquor and gambling Satan seeks only to bring about enmity and hatred among you, and to bar you from the remembrance of God and from prayer. Will you not, then, desist? [5:90-91, see also 8:11]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِنَّمَا ٱلْخَمْرُ وَٱلْمَيْسِرُ
وَٱلْأَنصَابُ وَٱلْأَزْلَٰمُ رِجْسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ
ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ فَٱجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ
﴿٩٠﴾ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ أَن يُوقِعَ
بَيْنَكُمُ ٱلْعَدَٰوَةَ وَٱلْبَغْضَآءَ فِى ٱلْخَمْرِ
وَٱلْمَيْسِرِ وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَن ذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ وَعَنِ
ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ ۖ فَهَلْ أَنتُم مُّنتَهُونَ ﴿٩١﴾

And We have made them [the heavens] secure against every accursed Satan; and any one who seeks to hear [the unknowable] by stealth is pursued by a burning flame. [15:17-18, see also 37:7, 67:5]

وَحَفِظْنَٰهَا مِن كُلِّ شَيْطَٰنٍ رَّجِيمٍ
﴿١٧﴾ إِلَّا مَنِ ٱسْتَرَقَ ٱلسَّمْعَ فَأَتْبَعَهُۥ
شِهَابٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٨﴾

Surely, the squanderers are in the party of the devils; and the devil has always been ungrateful to his Lord. [17:27]

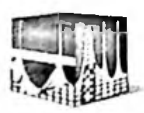
إِنَّ
ٱلْمُبَذِّرِينَ كَانُوٓا۟ إِخْوَٰنَ ٱلشَّيَٰطِينِ ۖ
وَكَانَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ لِرَبِّهِۦ كَفُورًا ﴿٢٧﴾

"O my father, [said Ibrahim/Abraham], do not worship Satan, who is surely a rebel against the All-merciful." [19:44]

يَٰٓأَبَتِ لَا تَعْبُدِ
ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ ۖ إِنَّ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ كَانَ لِلرَّحْمَٰنِ
عَصِيًّا ﴿٤٤﴾

And so, by your Lord, We shall surely gather them together with Satans and then We shall surely bring them on their knees around hell. [19:68; see also 6:128]

فَوَرَبِّكَ لَنَحْشُرَنَّهُمْ
وَٱلشَّيَٰطِينَ ثُمَّ لَنُحْضِرَنَّهُمْ حَوْلَ جَهَنَّمَ
جِثِيًّا ﴿٦٨﴾



"Indeed, he [whom I took as a close friend] led me astray from [the due observance of] the reminding guidance [of God] after it had come to me"; and Satan is ever a forsaker [and betrayer] of the human being. [25:29]

لَّقَدْ أَضَلَّنِى عَنِ ٱلذِّكْرِ
بَعْدَ إِذْ جَآءَنِى ۗ وَكَانَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ
لِلْإِنسَٰنِ خَذُولًا ﴿٢٩﴾

It is a tree that grows in the very heart of the blazing fire [of hell]; its fruit is as the heads of Satans. [37:64-65]

إِنَّهَا شَجَرَةٌ تَخْرُجُ فِىٓ
أَصْلِ ٱلْجَحِيمِ ﴿٦٤﴾ طَلْعُهَا كَأَنَّهُۥ رُءُوسُ
ٱلشَّيَٰطِينِ ﴿٦٥﴾

Satan, being originally one of the jinn, was created out of fire. He enjoys free choice and intelligence, and he chose to use these faculties in rebelling against God, arguing stubbornly with Him, and working persistently to seduce human beings and lead them astray. He is accursed by God for his arrogance and stubbornness, and he should be avoided by the believers in God since he has been, from the beginning, their bitter foe, and what he seduces people to do is always evil and loathsome. However, the Quran points out that one

who is conscious of God can overcome the plots of Satan, regardless of the cunning and exertions that he uses. Such a believer in God has connected himself/herself with the origin of all power and almightiness: the Creator and Lord of Satan, human beings and all beings. In such a confrontation between a genuine faith in God and Satanic plots, Satan is surely the loser and his guile is ever defeatable. Satan himself, from the beginning of his rebellion, has made it clear that those who are true worshippers of God cannot be reached by his traps, and this has been assured by God [e.g. 15:40;42;17:65;38:83].

Satan's arrogance and stubbornness clearly indicate his rebelliousness and ungratefulness to God. Besides, his bitter enmity to the human being assures that, while he still admits God's power and almightiness, Satan would betray the human being after trapping and seducing him/her to evil-doing [e.g. 8:48; 14:22]. Such a perverse human being faces the consequences of evil-doing in this world life as well as in the eternal life to come, when Satans will also face their judgement and suffering, since they were given - having originally been jinn - intelligence, choice and full responsibility [19:68, also 6:128].

How Satan seduces

Then Satan caused them both to slip therefrom, and thus brought them out of that they had been in, and We said, "Get you all down, enemies to one another; and on earth you shall have your dwelling and a livelihood that you shall enjoy for a while." [2:36]

فَأَزَلَّهُمَا
ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ عَنْهَا فَأَخْرَجَهُمَا مِمَّا كَانَا
فِيهِ ۖ وَقُلْنَا ٱهْبِطُوا۟ بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ
عَدُوٌّ ۖ وَلَكُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمَتَٰعٌ
إِلَىٰ حِينٍ ﴿٣٦﴾

And they followed what the devils used to recite during Solomon's reign, and it was not Solomon who denied the truth but it was those devils who did by teaching people sorcery... [2:102]

وَٱتَّبَعُوا۟ مَا تَتْلُوا۟ ٱلشَّيَٰطِينُ عَلَىٰ مُلْكِ
سُلَيْمَٰنَ ۖ وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَٰنُ وَلَٰكِنَّ
ٱلشَّيَٰطِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ يُعَلِّمُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ
ٱلسِّحْرَ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَى ٱلْمَلَكَيْنِ بِبَابِلَ
هَٰرُوتَ وَمَٰرُوتَ ۚ وَمَا يُعَلِّمَانِ مِنْ
أَحَدٍ حَتَّىٰ يَقُولَآ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ فَلَا
تَكْفُرْ ۖ فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّقُونَ
بِهِۦ بَيْنَ ٱلْمَرْءِ وَزَوْجِهِۦ ۚ وَمَا هُم
بِضَآرِّينَ بِهِۦ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ
وَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنفَعُهُمْ ۚ وَلَقَدْ
عَلِمُوا۟ لَمَنِ ٱشْتَرَىٰهُ مَا لَهُۥ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ
مِنْ خَلَٰقٍ ۚ وَلَبِئْسَ مَا شَرَوْا۟ بِهِۦٓ
أَنفُسَهُمْ ۚ لَوْ كَانُوا۟ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

Those of you who turned away on the day when the two parties confronted one another, Satan caused them to slip through some of what they themselves had earned; but God has pardoned them; God is All- forgiving, All-clement. [3:155]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ تَوَلَّوْا۟ مِنكُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْتَقَى
ٱلْجَمْعَانِ إِنَّمَا ٱسْتَزَلَّهُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ
بِبَعْضِ مَا كَسَبُوا۟ ۖ وَلَقَدْ عَفَا ٱللَّهُ
عَنْهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿١٥٥﴾

Satan assures you a prospect of poverty and bids you to do what is shameful, whereas God promises you His forgiveness and His bounty, and God is All-embracing, All-knowing. [2:268]

ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ يَعِدُكُمُ ٱلْفَقْرَ
وَيَأْمُرُكُم بِٱلْفَحْشَآءِ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ يَعِدُكُم
مَّغْفِرَةً مِّنْهُ وَفَضْلًا ۗ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٦٨﴾

That is Satan instilling [into you] fear of his allies; so fear them not, but fear Me, if you are [true] believers. [3:175]

إِنَّمَا ذَٰلِكُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ يُخَوِّفُ
أَوْلِيَآءَهُۥ ۖ فَلَا تَخَافُوهُمْ وَخَافُونِ إِن
كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٧٥﴾

And those who spend out of their possessions to show off to people, and they believe not in God and the Last Day, and any who has Satan for a soul-mate, how evil a soul-mate has he [/she]. [4:38]

وَٱلَّذِينَ
يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَٰلَهُمْ رِئَآءَ ٱلنَّاسِ وَلَا
يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَلَا بِٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ ۗ
وَمَن يَكُنِ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ لَهُۥ قَرِينًا فَسَآءَ قَرِينًا ﴿٣٨﴾

Instead of Him, they but call on female beings, and they but call on a rebellious Satan, whom God has rejected, and he said, "Of your servants I will assuredly take unto myself a given share, and I will lead them astray, and fill them with fancies, and I will instruct them and they will cut off the ears of the livestock [in idolatrous worship], and I shall instruct them so as to perverse God's creation." But all who take Satan rather than God as a guide and supporter has come to an evident loss. He promises them and fills them with fancies, but nothing does Satan promise them except delusion. [4:117-120]

إِن يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِۦٓ إِلَّآ إِنَٰثًا وَإِن
يَدْعُونَ إِلَّا شَيْطَٰنًا مَّرِيدًا ﴿١١٧﴾ لَّعَنَهُ
ٱللَّهُ ۘ وَقَالَ لَأَتَّخِذَنَّ مِنْ عِبَادِكَ نَصِيبًا
مَّفْرُوضًا ﴿١١٨﴾ وَلَأُضِلَّنَّهُمْ وَلَأُمَنِّيَنَّهُمْ
وَلَءَامُرَنَّهُمْ فَلَيُبَتِّكُنَّ ءَاذَانَ ٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ
وَلَءَامُرَنَّهُمْ فَلَيُغَيِّرُنَّ خَلْقَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَمَن
يَتَّخِذِ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ وَلِيًّا مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ فَقَدْ
خَسِرَ خُسْرَانًا مُّبِينًا ﴿١١٩﴾ يَعِدُهُمْ
وَيُمَنِّيهِمْ ۖ وَمَا يَعِدُهُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ إِلَّا
غُرُورًا ﴿١٢٠﴾

قُلْ أَنَدْعُوا۟ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا
يَنفَعُنَا وَلَا يَضُرُّنَا وَنُرَدُّ عَلَىٰٓ أَعْقَابِنَا
بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَىٰنَا ٱللَّهُ كَٱلَّذِى ٱسْتَهْوَتْهُ
ٱلشَّيَٰطِينُ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ حَيْرَانَ لَهُۥٓ
أَصْحَٰبٌ يَدْعُونَهُۥٓ إِلَى ٱلْهُدَى ٱئْتِنَا
قُلْ إِنَّ هُدَى ٱللَّهِ هُوَ ٱلْهُدَىٰ وَأُمِرْنَا
لِنُسْلِمَ لِرَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٧١﴾

... *like one lured to bewilderment through the earth by Satans* .... [6:71]

قَالَ
فَبِمَآ أَغْوَيْتَنِى لَأَقْعُدَنَّ لَهُمْ صِرَٰطَكَ
ٱلْمُسْتَقِيمَ ﴿١٦﴾ ثُمَّ لَءَاتِيَنَّهُم مِّنۢ بَيْنِ
أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ وَعَنْ أَيْمَٰنِهِمْ وَعَن
شَمَآئِلِهِمْ ۖ وَلَا تَجِدُ أَكْثَرَهُمْ شَٰكِرِينَ ﴿١٧﴾

[Whereupon] he [Iblis] said, "Now that you have let me go astray [of the right way], I shall surely waylay them all along Your straight way, then I shall come on them from before them and from behind them, from their right and from their left; and most of them You will not find grateful." [7:16-17]

وَٱتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ ٱلَّذِىٓ
ءَاتَيْنَٰهُ ءَايَٰتِنَا فَٱنسَلَخَ مِنْهَا فَأَتْبَعَهُ
ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ فَكَانَ مِنَ ٱلْغَاوِينَ ﴿١٧٥﴾ وَلَوْ
شِئْنَا لَرَفَعْنَٰهُ بِهَا وَلَٰكِنَّهُۥٓ أَخْلَدَ إِلَى
ٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱتَّبَعَ هَوَىٰهُ ۚ فَمَثَلُهُۥ كَمَثَلِ
ٱلْكَلْبِ إِن تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْهِ يَلْهَث أَوْ تَتْرُكْهُ
يَلْهَث ۚ ذَّٰلِكَ مَثَلُ ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا۟
بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا ۚ فَٱقْصُصِ ٱلْقَصَصَ لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٧٦﴾

And tell them what happened to one to whom We gave Our messages but then he withdrew from them, and Satan catches up with him, and he became one of the perverts. And had We willed, We would have elevated him up by those messages, but he clung to the earth and followed his whims. Thus, his parable is that of an [excited] dog; if you bear upon him he will pant, and if you leave him he will pant. Such is the parable of those who denounce Our messages as lies. Tell [them], then, such stories, so as that they might ponder. [7:175-176]

يَٰبَنِىٓ ءَادَمَ لَا يَفْتِنَنَّكُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ
كَمَآ أَخْرَجَ أَبَوَيْكُم مِّنَ ٱلْجَنَّةِ يَنزِعُ
عَنْهُمَا لِبَاسَهُمَا لِيُرِيَهُمَا سَوْءَٰتِهِمَآ ۗ
إِنَّهُۥ يَرَىٰكُمْ هُوَ وَقَبِيلُهُۥ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا
تَرَوْنَهُمْ ۗ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا ٱلشَّيَٰطِينَ أَوْلِيَآءَ
لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

O Children of Adam! Let not Satan tempt you as he caused your forepar-ents both to be out of the garden, uncovering them [after their previous state of innocence] to make them aware of their private parts. Surely, he and his folk are watching you from where you cannot perceive them. We have made Satan's supporters [and patrons] of those who have no faith. [7:27]

وَ قَالَ لِلَّذِى ظَنَّ
أَنَّهُۥ نَاجٍ مِّنْهُمَا ٱذْكُرْنِى عِندَ رَبِّكَ
فَأَنسَىٰهُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ ذِكْرَ رَبِّهِۦ فَلَبِثَ فِى
ٱلسِّجْنِ بِضْعَ سِنِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾

And then he [Joseph] said to the one of the two [fellow prisoners] that he took as saved, "Mention me [and my case of unjust imprisonment] to your lord [when you become free]". But Satan caused him to forget to mention [this] to his lord, and thus he [Joseph] continued in a prison a few [more] years. [12:42; see also 18:63]

وَ رَفَعَ أَبَوَيْهِ
عَلَى ٱلْعَرْشِ وَ خَرُّوا۟ لَهُۥ سُجَّدًا ۖ
وَقَالَ يَٰٓأَبَتِ هَٰذَا تَأْوِيلُ رُءْيَىَ مِن قَبْلُ
قَدْ جَعَلَهَا رَبِّى حَقًّا ۖ وَ قَدْ أَحْسَنَ بِىٓ
إِذْ أَخْرَجَنِى مِنَ ٱلسِّجْنِ وَ جَآءَ بِكُم مِّنَ
ٱلْبَدْوِ مِنۢ بَعْدِ أَن نَّزَغَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ بَيْنِى
وَبَيْنَ إِخْوَتِىٓ ۚ إِنَّ رَبِّى لَطِيفٌ لِّمَا
يَشَآءُ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿١٠٠﴾

... And He [God] was indeed good to me when He freed me from prison, and [again when] He brought you [all to me] from the desert, after Satan had infused discord between me and my brothers. Surely, my Lord is kind in whatever He wills; He is the All-knowing, the All-wise." [12:100, see also 17:53]

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّآ
أَرْسَلْنَا ٱلشَّيَٰطِينَ عَلَى ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ تَؤُزُّهُمْ
أَزًّا ﴿٨٣﴾

Are you not aware that We have let loose Satans upon those who stubbornly deny the truth to impel them [towards their choice of evil deeds] with inciting impulsion? [19:83]

قَالَ رَبِّ بِمَآ
أَغْوَيْتَنِى لَأُزَيِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ
وَلَأُغْوِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾ إِلَّا عِبَادَكَ
مِنْهُمُ ٱلْمُخْلَصِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾

Said he [Iblis] "O my Lord! As You have caused me to be perverted, I shall make all on earth seem attractive to them, and I shall seduce them all together, save those among them who are your true worshippers." [15:39-40, see also 6:43; 16:63; 27:24; 28:15; 29:38; 38:82-83]

وَ قَالَ
ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ لَمَّا قُضِىَ ٱلْأَمْرُ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
وَعَدَكُمْ وَعْدَ ٱلْحَقِّ وَ وَعَدتُّكُمْ
فَأَخْلَفْتُكُمْ ۖ وَ مَا كَانَ لِىَ عَلَيْكُم مِّن
سُلْطَٰنٍ إِلَّآ أَن دَعَوْتُكُمْ فَٱسْتَجَبْتُمْ لِى ۖ
فَلَا تَلُومُونِى وَ لُومُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَكُم ۖ مَّآ
أَنَا۠ بِمُصْرِخِكُمْ وَ مَآ أَنتُم بِمُصْرِخِىَّ ۖ
إِنِّى كَفَرْتُ بِمَآ أَشْرَكْتُمُونِ مِن قَبْلُ ۗ إِنَّ

And once the matter has been settled, Satan says, "God surely promised you a true promise; and I promised you then I failed you. Yet, I had no power at all over you, but that I called you and you responded positively to me. Hence, blame not me, but blame your own selves. It is not for me [now] to offer you help in response to your cries, nor for you to offer me help in response to my cries. I have denied your belief of associating me with God aforetime." Surely, for

evildoers awaits a grievous suffering. [14:22]

ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٢﴾

And drive to your side whomsoever of them you can drive with your voice, and set up on them with your forces, those on horses or those on foot, and share with them [earning and spending] their wealth, and [begetting and raising] their children, and give them your promises!" But Satan's promises for them are but a delusion. [17:64]

وَٱسْتَفْزِزْ مَنِ ٱسْتَطَعْتَ مِنْهُم بِصَوْتِكَ
وَأَجْلِبْ عَلَيْهِم بِخَيْلِكَ وَرَجِلِكَ وَشَارِكْهُمْ
فِى ٱلْأَمْوَٰلِ وَٱلْأَوْلَٰدِ وَعِدْهُمْ ۚ وَمَا
يَعِدُهُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ إِلَّا غُرُورًا ﴿٦٤﴾

... and Satan is ever a forsaker and [betrayer] of the human being. [25:29]

لَّقَدْ أَضَلَّنِى عَنِ ٱلذِّكْرِ
بَعْدَ إِذْ جَآءَنِى ۗ وَكَانَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ
لِلْإِنسَٰنِ خَذُولًا ﴿٢٩﴾

Like Satan when he said to the human being, "Deny the truth! - but as soon as he [/she, the human being] has denied the truth, Satan says, "I am quit of you. Surely, I fear God, the Lord of all being." So their end is that both are in fire, therein to abide; that is the recompense of evildoers. [59:16-17]

كَمَثَلِ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ إِذْ
قَالَ لِلْإِنسَٰنِ ٱكْفُرْ فَلَمَّا كَفَرَ قَالَ إِنِّى
بَرِىٓءٌ مِّنكَ إِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ ٱللَّهَ رَبَّ
ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٦﴾ فَكَانَ عَٰقِبَتَهُمَآ أَنَّهُمَا
فِى ٱلنَّارِ خَٰلِدَيْنِ فِيهَا ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ جَزَٰٓؤُا
ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٧﴾

And Satan decked out their deeds fair to them, and said, "Today you shall not be overcome by any people, since I shall be your protector"; but as soon as the two [fighting] parties came within sight of one another, he turned back on his heels and said, "I am quit of you; I see what you do not see; I fear God, and God is severe in retribution." [8:48]

وَإِذْ زَيَّنَ
لَهُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ وَقَالَ لَا غَالِبَ
لَكُمُ ٱلْيَوْمَ مِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ وَإِنِّى جَارٌ لَّكُمْ ۖ
فَلَمَّا تَرَٰٓءَتِ ٱلْفِئَتَانِ نَكَصَ عَلَىٰ عَقِبَيْهِ
وَقَالَ إِنِّى بَرِىٓءٌ مِّنكُمْ إِنِّىٓ أَرَىٰ مَا لَا
تَرَوْنَ إِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ ٱللَّهَ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ شَدِيدُ
ٱلْعِقَابِ ﴿٤٨﴾

And when they are told to follow what God has sent down, they answer, "No, we but follow that which we found our forefathers believing and doing" What? Even though Satan was calling

وَإِذَا قِيلَ
لَهُمُ ٱتَّبِعُوا۟ مَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ قَالُوا۟ بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ
مَا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ ءَابَآءَنَآ ۚ أَوَلَوْ كَانَ

them to the suffering of the blazing fire? [31:21]

أَلشَّيْطَٰنُ يَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ ٱلسَّعِيرِ ﴿٢١﴾

Those who have turned their backs [to God's message], after the guidance has become clear to them, it was Satan that decked out their deeds fair to them and filled them with false expectations. [47:25]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱرْتَدُّوا۟ عَلَىٰٓ أَدْبَٰرِهِم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ ٱلْهُدَى ۙ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ سَوَّلَ لَهُمْ وَأَمْلَىٰ لَهُمْ ﴿٢٥﴾

[Suspicious] confabulations conducted in secrecy are of Satan; so as to cause grief to those who have attained to faith; but he cannot hurt them in the least, unless it be by God's leave, and in God let the believers place their trust. [58:10]

إِنَّمَا ٱلنَّجْوَىٰ مِنَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ لِيَحْزُنَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَلَيْسَ بِضَآرِّهِمْ شَيْـًٔا إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَعَلَى ٱللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

And thus it is that against every prophet We set up enemies, Satanic forces from among human beings and from among invisible beings [jinn] as well, confiding to one another glittering words, all meant as a delusion. Yet, had your Lord willed, they would have never done it. Hence, leave them to their false forging, and so [that would be a test for] the hearts of those who do not believe in the life to come may incline to it, and be content with it, and thus earn whatever they may earn [as a result of that test]. [6:112-113]

وَكَذَٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِىٍّ عَدُوًّا شَيَٰطِينَ ٱلْإِنسِ وَٱلْجِنِّ يُوحِى بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ زُخْرُفَ ٱلْقَوْلِ غُرُورًا ۚ وَلَوْ شَآءَ رَبُّكَ مَا فَعَلُوهُ ۖ فَذَرْهُمْ وَمَا يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿١١٢﴾ وَلِتَصْغَىٰٓ إِلَيْهِ أَفْـِٔدَةُ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ وَلِيَرْضَوْهُ وَلِيَقْتَرِفُوا۟ مَا هُم مُّقْتَرِفُونَ ﴿١١٣﴾

And on the Day when He shall gather them all together, [saying to them,] "O you invisible beings [jinn]! You have attracted much of human beings to join you." And those of human beings who adhere to their company and support will say, "Our Lord! We did enjoy the company of one another [in the previous world life], and we have reached the end of our term that You determined for us." He will say, "The fire shall be your abode, therein to abide forever", unless God wills it otherwise;" surely your Lord is All-wise, All-knowing. And so do We cause

وَيَوْمَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ جَمِيعًا يَٰمَعْشَرَ ٱلْجِنِّ قَدِ ٱسْتَكْثَرْتُم مِّنَ ٱلْإِنسِ ۖ وَقَالَ أَوْلِيَآؤُهُم مِّنَ ٱلْإِنسِ رَبَّنَا ٱسْتَمْتَعَ بَعْضُنَا بِبَعْضٍ وَبَلَغْنَآ أَجَلَنَا ٱلَّذِىٓ أَجَّلْتَ لَنَا ۚ قَالَ ٱلنَّارُ مَثْوَىٰكُمْ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ إِلَّا مَا شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٢٨﴾ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نُوَلِّى بَعْضَ

evildoers to adhere to one another, through what they earn. [6:128-129]

ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ بَعْضًۢا بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿١٢٩﴾

Satan has gained mastery over them and has caused them to remain oblivious of the remembrance of God. Such as these are Satan's folk; surely, it is the folk of Satan that will truly be the losers. [58:19]

ٱسْتَحْوَذَ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ فَأَنسَىٰهُمْ
ذِكْرَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ حِزْبُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ ۚ
أَلَآ إِنَّ حِزْبَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ هُمُ ٱلْخَٰسِرُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

"O my father, [said Ibrahim/ Abraham], do not worship Satan, who is surely a rebel against the All-merciful." [19:44]

يَٰٓأَبَتِ لَا تَعْبُدِ
ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ ۖ إِنَّ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ كَانَ لِلرَّحْمَٰنِ
عَصِيًّا ﴿٤٤﴾

Those who devour usury will not rise but as one who blunders through being affected by Satan ... [2:275]

ٱلَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ ٱلرِّبَوٰا۟ لَا يَقُومُونَ
إِلَّا كَمَا يَقُومُ ٱلَّذِى يَتَخَبَّطُهُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ
مِنَ ٱلْمَسِّ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّمَا
ٱلْبَيْعُ مِثْلُ ٱلرِّبَوٰا۟ ۗ وَأَحَلَّ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْبَيْعَ
وَحَرَّمَ ٱلرِّبَوٰا۟ ۚ فَمَن جَآءَهُۥ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِّن
رَّبِّهِۦ فَٱنتَهَىٰ فَلَهُۥ مَا سَلَفَ وَأَمْرُهُۥٓ
إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَمَنْ عَادَ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ
أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٢٧٥﴾

And call to mind Our servant Ayub [Job], when he cried out to his Lord, "Satan has afflicted me with weariness and suffering." [Thereupon he was told:] "Scurry on your feet; here is cool water to wash with and to drink." [38:41-42]

وَٱذْكُرْ عَبْدَنَآ أَيُّوبَ
إِذْ نَادَىٰ رَبَّهُۥٓ أَنِّى مَسَّنِىَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ
بِنُصْبٍ وَعَذَابٍ ﴿٤١﴾ ٱرْكُضْ بِرِجْلِكَ ۖ
هَٰذَا مُغْتَسَلٌۢ بَارِدٌ وَشَرَابٌ ﴿٤٢﴾

And [this Book] has not been brought down by Satans; neither does it suit their nature and ends, nor are they able to do it. They are utterly debarred [even] from hearing it. [26:210-212, and see also 81:25]

وَمَا تَنَزَّلَتْ بِهِ
ٱلشَّيَٰطِينُ ﴿٢١٠﴾ وَمَا يَنۢبَغِى لَهُمْ وَمَا
يَسْتَطِيعُونَ ﴿٢١١﴾ إِنَّهُمْ عَنِ ٱلسَّمْعِ
لَمَعْزُولُونَ ﴿٢١٢﴾

As we have seen before, the Quran strongly and repeatedly warns the human beings in general, and the believers in particular, against their invisible bitter foe "Satan", who,

in his rebellion against God, asked Him for a respite just to take his anger over as many of the Children of Adam as possible, and to prove his power and prevalence over them by pulling them to his way of rebellion and evil-doing. To foul the gift of the human mind that, if used properly, can judge what is evil and avoid it, Satan has to mobilize all his intelligence and cunning to tempt the human being to do, with the least amount of thinking, what may seem to be wrong to him/her. He has to use all his force to cripple the human thinking, and to let haste, selfishness and shortsightedness control the human behavior. The human being enjoys intelligence and free will, and the human self is imbued with readiness for both righteousness and wrong doing [90:10, 91:7-10]; Satan has to make all possible efforts to address and nurture what is low and mean in the human being, and to cripple, as much as possible, the human intellectual/spiritual/moral faculties, so as to bring the human life to the biological level, and to absorb the human intellect in developing the instinctive desires of food, drink, sex and a luxurious life [3:14].

The Quran goes further to educate the human being about how the invisible Satan tries to seduce him/her and foil his/her faculties or turn them to do what is wrong and evil. Satan may start with short-term momentary deviation and wrongdoing, causing a person to "slip" gradually and begin to go down slowly [2:36; 3:155], rather than making him/her undergo a shocking decline that may alert him/her against the Satanic traps. However, the Quran emphasizes here the human individual responsibility, since it states that Adam's eating from the forbidden tree with his wife, which was forgiven by God when they both repented, was their own choice [2:36-37; 7:10-25].

Therefore, Satan targets the human weaknesses and negligence, and catches those who show their weakness and do not try hard. Human beings who enjoy good judgement and strong wills are able to challenge and overcome the intelligence and complicated plots of the invisible Satan, with the help of God's guidance for the individual, the family and the society, by sharpening their human intelligence and developing their human will. Those who attract Satan by their weakness and wrongdoing cannot blame him for devoting special efforts to them: "*Satan caused them to slip through some of what they themselves had earned*" [3:155]. However, momentary slipping, followed by repentance and serious efforts to strengthen the human will against the Satanic traps, is forgiven by God's grace that considers human weakness "*but God has pardoned them; God is All- forgiving, All-clement.*" The Quran teaches that it is the persistent and continuous wrongdoing which represents a serious negligence or abuse of the human intellect [3:135-136; 4:17-18]

The Satanic approach to the human being is to make anything wrong seem good, beautiful and justifiable [e.g. 6:43; 8:48; 15:39-40; 16:63; 27:24; 28:15; 29:38; 38:82-83]. Satan has to persuade the human being to follow his low instinctive cravings and whims and to consider only the instant and personal fancies, and to let the human being gradually get used to abandoning deep thinking and the consideration of long-term and wide-range interests. For this goal, Satan has to try all the various efforts that he may be able to make "*from before them and from behind them, from their right and from their left ...*" [7:17], "*with your voice ...with your forces [those] on horses or those on foot, and share with them [earning and spending] their wealth, and [begetting and raising] their children and give them your promises ...*" [17:64].

When a person is to be seduced by being obsessed with the past that is "behind"

him/her, Satan uses this way to keep him/her always living in the past and ignoring the realities of the present time. In this way, one may follow the forefathers however wrong their doing might be [e.g.2:170; 5:104; 7:28; 10:78; 21:53-54; 26:74; 31:21; 43:22-23]. One may think that he/she can stop the time passing to live only with a memory of the past connected with a particular event, a period of the past, or a close person who abandoned him/her or passed away etc. In the same way Satan also finds an easy way to seduce a person obsessed with the present time and the instant or short-term pleasures of the flesh that it may hold, or with the illusions of the future in whatever ways such illusions may be achieved, however immoral they may be. Satan may come from the right to a righteous person, to tempt him/her to be more strict in his/her righteousness even if he/she hurts himself/herself or others in this way. From the left, Satan may seduce the wrong doer to go further, and to carry on without thinking or repenting. However righteous a person may seem at a certain time, his/her weaknesses may prevail at another, since the human self is imbued with both attitudes. Thus the cunning ever-attentive and active Satan is ready always to seize the chance of human failure and jump in: "*... and tell them what happened to one to whom We gave Our messages, but he withdrew from them, and Satan catches up with him, and he became one of the perverts*" [7:175].

God has created the human being and has guided him/her to live in harmony with the nature created by Him, and has made him/her realize how God's creation is formed to serve a purpose that fits in His comprehensive plan. However, the human being may try to disturb this harmony and damage the natural resources due to haste, selfishness, shortsightedness or any other wrong inclination. Among Satan's plots, is that he "*instruct[s the human being] so as to perverse [the nature of] God's creation*" [4:120]. This may apply to all living creatures and to all the environment and the whole cosmos "*and God does not love damage and corruption*" [2:205; see also 2:11-12, 27, 60; 5:64; 7:56, 74; 8:73; 10:81; 11:85, 116; 13:25; 26:152, 183; 28:77, 83; 29:36; 30:41; 38:28].

Satan has known about the fatal human weaknesses ever since his attempts with the earliest human couple, Adam and his wife. He knows how the human creature is curious to discover the unknown, how eager he/she is for superiority and eternity [7:20; 20:120], and how the human sexual awareness developed when Adam and his wife ate from the forbidden tree. Thus, Satanic seduction targets these human weaknesses, addressing the human curiosity and desires for superiority to turn people against one another even if they are brothers [12:100; 17:53; 58:10, and see also the verses about the two children of Adam 5:27-31], as well as the human sexuality; "*let not Satan seduce you as he caused your ancestors to be brought out of the garden, stripping them of their garments to show them what should be covered and remain private*" [7:27]. Thus the Satanic approaches vary to suit the enormous human variety, and the Satanic intelligence never runs out of tricks. Satan tempts the weak to feel helpless and to be ever suppressed and humiliated [3:175, 4:97-98], while he tempts the strong to be haughty and commit aggression [8:48].

The Quran alerts the human being against this cunning foe and his numerous different plots, which all aim to make any kind of evil acceptable, and even desirable and pleasurable, and as apparently justifiable as possible. Satan does his best to pull human beings to his evil side through intimidation and temptation, through worries and fancies,

and through promises of continuous support and help. He lies and deceives, but he is able to exploit the human weaknesses and failings and thus one may believe his lies and deception, since he/she is ready for self-deception, wishful thinking and illusion. The Quran warns human beings against the empty and false Satanic threats and promises: *"That is Satan instilling [into you] fear of his allies; so fear them not, but fear Me"* [3:175; see also 2:268], *"He promises them and fill them with fancies; but nothing does Satan promise them except delusion"* [4:120; see also 17:64].

The Quran then presents penetrating images about how Satan quits and betrays those to whom he has promised support in this world's life and how he will withdraw in the life to come from all that he said before [e.g. 8:48; 14:22; 59:16-17]. A human being who follows Satan is always *"lured to bewilderment through earth"* [6:71] whatever his promises may be, and therefore he/she ought to lose all trust in such an invisible plotter and a bitter enmity: *"And Satan is ever a forsaker [and betrayer] of the human being" [25:29].*

However, in spite of such continuous deception and betrayal, there are human beings who take satans as supporters and allies, and together they form an inseparable combination and a united front. The Quran combines such evil allies together, "Satanic humans and jinn" [6:112, see also 2:14; 4:76, 119; 6:121, 128; 7:27, 30; 17:27], and considers them to be "soul-mates" [4:38], and one Satanic party [58:19], since *"Satan has gained mastery over them and keeps out of their minds the remembrance of God"* [58:19]. These evil allies - in the short term since Satan cannot be a reliable ally for any long term - will themselves on the Day of Judgement admit that *"We did enjoy the company of one another"* [6:128]. People may in fact be so close and obedient to Satan that they may become, consciously or unconsciously, His worshippers [19:44]

Now, if the relation between the human being and Satan may go so far, and he is so penetrating to the human being that he runs in the veins with blood [as is expressed in a Prophet's tradition reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah and al-Darami], can he hurt the human being physically and directly without any medium? The Quran mentions *"fumbling because of Satan's touch"* [2:275], and reports that Prophet Job said, *"Satan has afflicted [literally: 'touched'] me with weariness and suffering"* [38:41].

On the other hand, these expressions of physical Satanic effects may be understood metaphorically, or as emphasizing that Satan is really the source of evil in this life although his evil may come indirectly through one's own deeds or others'. Satans teach people sorcery [2:102], but this also can just mean that he persuades them to learn, explore or experiment. It may be tempting for people to attribute things to Satan when this is not the case, and the Quran clearly points this out. For example, Arabs before Islam believed that poetry might be influenced by jinn or Satans, and thus they also attributed the Quran to them; therefore why the Quran stresses that its source is God only, and that these invisible forces are absolutely unable to inspire God's words [26:210-212, 81:25]. As for any possible physical power of Satans on the natural forces to cause bad consequences, such as winds, storms, rains, floods, typhoons, earthquakes, or volcanos, the Quran teaches that the cosmos are in God's dominion and under His power and laws only, whatever the results of any phenomenon may be [e.g. 2:164; 7:57; 10:22; 13:3; 14:32; 15:19-22; 16:14-

15; 17:66-69; 21:30-33; 22:65; 25:48; 27:61-63; 29:65; 30:24-26; 31:31; 35:12, 38, 40; 42:28, 33-34; 43:12; 45:5, 12; 50:7; 77:27; see also 17:77; 21:33; 33:38; 36:40; 48:23].

Satan and the Prophets

And thus it is that against every prophet We set up enemies, Satanic forces from among human beings and from among invisible beings [jinn] as well, confiding to one another glittering words, all meant as a delusion. Yet, had your Lord willed, they would have never done it. Hence, leave them to their false forging, and so [that would be a test for] the hearts of those who do not believe in the life to come may incline to it, and be content with it, and thus earn whatever they may earn [as a result of that test]. [6:112-113]

وَكَذَٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ
عَدُوًّا شَيَٰطِينَ ٱلْإِنسِ وَٱلْجِنِّ يُوحِى
بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ زُخْرُفَ ٱلْقَوْلِ
غُرُورًا ۚ وَلَوْ شَآءَ رَبُّكَ مَا فَعَلُوهُ ۖ
فَذَرْهُمْ وَمَا يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿١١٢﴾ وَلِتَصْغَىٰٓ
إِلَيْهِ أَفْـِٔدَةُ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ
وَلِيَرْضَوْهُ وَلِيَقْتَرِفُوا۟ مَا هُم مُّقْتَرِفُونَ
﴿١١٣﴾

[Revealed in the way from Makka to Madina]
And whenever We sent forth a conveyor of God's message or a prophet before you, [whose message people would follow], Satan would cast in his hopes for the future [personal worry about people's response, and about the suspicions of some of them about his real aims]; but God annuls [such worries] that Satan casts, and lets His message stand firmly; surely, God is All-knowing, All-wise. And [all] that is in order to let what Satan casts become a trial for those whose hearts have ill-feelings and those whose hearts are hardened; and surely the evildoers are in extreme dissension [with what is right]. And [also in this way] those who have [true] knowledge should realize that this [message] is the truth from your Lord and believe in it and so their hearts humbly submit to it. And it is God who does guide to a straight way those who have attained to faith. [22:52-54]

وَمَآ
أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ مِن رَّسُولٍ وَلَا نَبِىٍّ
إِلَّآ إِذَا تَمَنَّىٰٓ أَلْقَى ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ فِىٓ
أُمْنِيَّتِهِۦ فَيَنسَخُ ٱللَّهُ مَا يُلْقِى ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ
ثُمَّ يُحْكِمُ ٱللَّهُ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ
حَكِيمٌ ﴿٥٢﴾ لِّيَجْعَلَ مَا يُلْقِى ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ
فِتْنَةً لِّلَّذِينَ فِى قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ وَٱلْقَاسِيَةِ
قُلُوبُهُمْ ۗ وَإِنَّ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ لَفِى شِقَاقٍ
بَعِيدٍ ﴿٥٣﴾ وَلِيَعْلَمَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْعِلْمَ
أَنَّهُ ٱلْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّكَ فَيُؤْمِنُوا۟ بِهِۦ فَتُخْبِتَ
لَهُۥ قُلُوبُهُمْ ۗ وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَهَادِ ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٥٤﴾

And also [We made subservient to Sulayman/ Solomon] from the Satans every builder and diver, and also

وَٱلشَّيَٰطِينَ كُلَّ بَنَّآءٍ وَغَوَّاصٍ ﴿٣٧﴾

others linked together in fetters. [38:37-38]

وَءَاخَرِينَ مُقَرَّنِينَ فِى ٱلْأَصْفَادِ ﴿٣٨﴾

Satan tries his plots even with the prophets and conveyors of God's messages. His followers from the humans and jinn are natural enemies of those who present God's guidance to people and warn them against the evil Satanic plans [6:112-113]. They forge and spread lies, and God could surely prevent them, but His will is to test the human beings and jinns by one another, and thus He grants them all intelligence and free will to choose and decide for themselves. The Quran urges the prophets and all believers to ignore this false forging, and to leave those who have bad intentions to be trapped by such spread lies and become so pleased with them that they may be encouraged to take positive action against those who teach God's guidance. In the end, everything is recorded, and everyone will be judged for all that he/she has chosen and done with his/her own free will. Even the innermost hopes and aspirations of the conveyor of God's message may be the target of Satan's efforts. Such a conveyor hopes that people answer positively to God's guidance, and whenever he finds the majority of his people denouncing the message as a lie and resisting it, he may be discouraged and weakened. Such a Satanic slink into the conveyor's inner- self may happen, since he is, after all, merely a human being, but in the end God never allows Satan's efforts a final success with regard to God's message or the conveyor's trust in Him [38:34-35; see also 11:120; 17:74-75; 25:32].

Some Satanic humans and jinn may also spread suspicion about the real intentions of the conveyor of God's message, claiming that his message is only a means for personal gains. Satan is allowed to go that far so that his effort may be a test for human beings, and thus those who are wise and knowing would never be deceived by what Satan causes in human selves, and would realize the truth and submit to it. On the other hand, those who have bad evil feelings would receive what Satan casts with pleasure and do their best to spread it wherever they can. However, evil cannot unite people, since it nurtures selfishness and opportunism, and hence will have as many different aims as the number of people following it, and thus they will be split in spite of their common evil grounds [e.g. 59:11-17].

As for the believers in the One God, the true faith inspires them to look for God's acceptance and His eternal reward in the life to come, and such long-sightedness can bring their hearts together even in different times and places [e.g. 59:8-10]. Even when the believers in God slip once in a Satanic trap, they soon repent and realize their error [e.g. 3:135, 155; 7:201-202], "*and God does guide to a straight way those who have attained to faith*" [22:54].

Protection against Satan

We said, "Get you down out of it, all [Adam and his wife and Satan] together; yet there shall come to you guidance from Me, and those who follow My

قُلْنَا ٱهْبِطُوا۟ مِنْهَا جَمِيعًا ۖ فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُم مِّنِّى هُدًى فَمَن تَبِعَ هُدَاىَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ

guidance shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve. But those who stubbornly reject the truth and denounce as lies Our messages - they shall be inhabitants of the Fire, and therein they shall abide." [2:38-39]

يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ وَ كَذَّبُواْ
بِـَٔايَـٰتِنَآ أُوْلَـٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَـٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ ۖ هُمْ
فِيهَا خَـٰلِدُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

Said He, "Get down out of it all together [Adam and his wife and Satan], you enemies to one another! Yet if there comes to you from Me guidance, then whosoever follows My guidance shall not go astray, neither shall he [/she] be unhappy, and whosoever fails to be mindful of Me, his [/her] life shall be a life of narrowness, and on the Day of Resurrection We shall raise him [/her] blind."[20:123-124]

قَالَ ٱهْبِطَا مِنْهَا جَمِيعًا ۖ بَعْضُكُمْ
لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ ۖ فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُم مِّنِّى هُدًى
فَمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَ هُدَاىَ فَلَا يَضِلُّ وَ لَا يَشْقَىٰ
﴿١٢٣﴾ وَ مَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِى فَإِنَّ لَهُۥ
مَعِيشَةً ضَنكًا وَ نَحْشُرُهُۥ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَـٰمَةِ
أَعْمَىٰ ﴿١٢٤﴾

"... and I have named her Maryam (Mary), and I seek your protection for her and her offspring against Satan, the accursed." [3:36]

فَلَمَّا وَضَعَتْهَا
قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّى وَضَعْتُهَآ أُنثَىٰ وَ ٱللَّهُ
أَعْلَمُ بِمَا وَضَعَتْ وَ لَيْسَ ٱلذَّكَرُ
كَٱلْأُنثَىٰ ۖ وَ إِنِّى سَمَّيْتُهَا مَرْيَمَ وَ إِنِّىٓ
أُعِيذُهَا بِكَ وَ ذُرِّيَّتَهَا مِنَ ٱلشَّيْطَـٰنِ
ٱلرَّجِيمِ ﴿٣٦﴾

And if it happens that prompting from Satan insinuates you, seek refuge with God; He is All-hearing, All-knowing. Surely, those who are conscious of God whenever a visitation of Satan touches them, bethink themselves [of Him], and thus their vision [of the matter] becomes clear; while their fellows [indulged in their short-sighted pleasures] would [try hard to] draw them into error, and they are unable to stop and have self-control. [7:200-202]

وَ إِمَّا يَنزَغَنَّكَ مِنَ ٱلشَّيْطَـٰنِ نَزْغٌ فَٱسْتَعِذْ
بِٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٠٠﴾ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ
ٱتَّقَواْ إِذَا مَسَّهُمْ طَـٰٓئِفٌ مِّنَ ٱلشَّيْطَـٰنِ
تَذَكَّرُواْ فَإِذَا هُم مُّبْصِرُونَ ﴿٢٠١﴾
وَ إِخْوَٰنُهُمْ يَمُدُّونَهُمْ فِى ٱلْغَىِّ ثُمَّ لَا
يُقْصِرُونَ ﴿٢٠٢﴾

Now whenever you read the Quran, seek refuge with God from Satan, the accursed. He has no power over those who have attained to faith and in their Lord they place their trust; his power is only over those who follow him and who associate

فَإِذَا قَرَأْتَ
ٱلْقُرْءَانَ فَٱسْتَعِذْ بِٱللَّهِ مِنَ ٱلشَّيْطَـٰنِ
ٱلرَّجِيمِ ﴿٩٨﴾ إِنَّهُۥ لَيْسَ لَهُۥ سُلْطَـٰنٌ عَلَى
ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ
﴿٩٩﴾ إِنَّمَا سُلْطَـٰنُهُۥ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ

him with God. [16:98-100]

يَتَوَلَّوْنَهُۥ وَ ٱلَّذِينَ هُم بِهِۦ مُشْرِكُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

And say, "O my Lord! I seek refuge with you from the promptings of Satans; and I seek refuge with You, O my Lord, lest they approach me." [23:97-98]

وَ قُل رَّبِّ
أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ هَمَزَٰتِ ٱلشَّيَٰطِينِ ﴿٩٧﴾
وَ أَعُوذُ بِكَ رَبِّ أَن يَحْضُرُونِ ﴿٩٨﴾

And if it happens that a prompting from Satan insinuates you, seek refuge with God; He alone is All-hearing, All-knowing. [41:36]

وَ إِمَّا يَنزَغَنَّكَ
مِنَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ نَزْغٌ فَٱسْتَعِذْ بِٱللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ
هُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿٣٦﴾

As well as giving all this enlightenment and guidance about this rebel against God who is at the same time the invisible persistent foe of human beings with all his bitterness and cunning, the Quran also presents the means of protection from this inevitable danger. When Satan rebelled and requested a respite to carry out an unceasing assault against the human intelligence, morality and will, he declared that his plots could never succeed with those who are *"true worshippers of God."* So, consciousness of God is the main shield against Satan's invisible assaults and against human weaknesses through which Satan can penetrate. To stress this God-consciousness, the believer has to say in words when he/she starts reading the Quran or any important matter that he/she takes refuge with God from Satan. When the believer has a baby, the first thing that he should do for the baby is to seek God's protection for him/her. If it happened that Satan has been able to reach a believer's mind and heart, then that believer can turn the Satanic temptation away by remembering God and regain his/her consciousness of Him. All the dimensions of the Satanic project become clear to the believer in the light of the faith in God and the eternal life to come, as the human being and this worldly life are put into perspective and take their proper size. Consciousness of God and taking shelter with Him against Satan are not merely spoken words, but a way of life. Since Adam and his wife and Satan were sent to earth, God has declared: *"there shall come to you guidance from Me, and those who follow My guidance shall have no fear, nor [shall they] grieve"* [2:38].

The believer is protected against Satan's plots as long as the divine guidance is sought throughout the entire life of the individual, the family, the society and their relations with others, in every time and place. With such a comprehensive security cover, Satan can find no gap through which he can penetrate with his promptings, and even if he once succeeds his success would not last long, as the believers are able to come back to their shield as soon as possible, seeking the protection of God, and thus their *"vision becomes clear"* [7:201].

CHAPTER THREE

THE FAITH (II)

THE ONE GOD AND THE ETERNAL LIFE TO COME

THE ONE GOD

فَتَلَقَّىٰٓ ءَادَمُ مِن رَّبِّهِۦ
كَلِمَٰتٍ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلتَّوَّابُ
ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٣٧﴾ قُلْنَا ٱهْبِطُوا۟ مِنْهَا
جَمِيعًا ۖ فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُم مِّنِّى هُدًى فَمَن
تَبِعَ هُدَاىَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ
يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ وَكَذَّبُوا۟
بِـَٔايَٰتِنَآ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ ۖ هُمْ
فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

Thereupon Adam received from His Lord certain words [of guidance], and He accepted his repentance; He alone is the Acceptor of Repentance, the Most Gracious.
We said, "Get you down out of it, all [three] together; yet there shall come to you guidance from Me, and those who follow My guidance shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve.
But those who stubbornly reject the truth and denounce as lies our messages - they shall be the inhabitants of the Fire, and therein they shall abide. [2:37-39]

As the human race was established on earth with all its strengths and weaknesses, God stated that He would provide it, from time to time, with His guidance against self-ishness, shortsightedness and attitudes of aggression or submission that are exploited by Satan's temptation. This temptation has been trying to penetrate the human instincts since the story of Adam and his wife in the garden (*al-janna*). Adam and his wife came to live on earth after their repentance to God and God's acceptance of their repentance, and thus the human race, in the Islamic view, was freed from the burden of the earliest human

sin, and as generations came to succeed one another on earth, they were entrusted with the responsibility of human and material development according to God's guidance.

The above verse demonstrates that for repentance one must acknowledge his/her wrong doing, and must be determined not to repeat the mistake in the future. Although human nature is weak, as long as one turns sincerely to his/her Lord for mercy, God is the Acceptor of Repentance, and the Most Gracious. His grace helps the human being overcome his/her natural weaknesses and shortcomings through faith in Him and through following His guidance. The plural "We" is used throughout the Quran for God when He speaks of Himself, as it is usual in Arabic to use the plural for someone of high rank. However, the singular "I" may be used to underline God's closeness in certain cases.

In order to help the human being overcome human weaknesses and shortcomings, God's assurance of guidance is given. Following the divine guidance would save the human being from any grief or sorrow caused by wrong doing in the past, and from fear about the repetition of such a wrong doing in the future. The heart and mind secure a strong support through the relationship with God. On the contrary, a stubborn effort to deny the truth in spite of realizing that it is the truth, would result in shortsighted, selfish and faulty practices that would lead to suffering both in this life and in the life to come.

Not precisely [is that which they are claiming] but rather, anyone who submits his [/her] face [and whole being] to God and is doing good, he [/she] shall have his [/her] reward with his [/her] Lord, and on such shall be no fear, neither shall they grieve. [2:112]

بَلَىٰ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ
وَجْهَهُۥ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ فَلَهُۥٓ أَجْرُهُۥ
عِندَ رَبِّهِۦ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ
يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿١١٢﴾

This verse refers literally to whoever submits his/her face to God as the face is the most expressive part of the body and determines the direction of the person as a whole, and has been used in Arabic to denote one's whole self, whole being, or whole personality. As Muhammed Asad in his note about the above verse emphasizes, "This expression, repeated in the Quran several times, provides a perfect definition of Islam, which is derived from the root-verb "*aslama*" surrendered oneself means self-surrender to God, and it is in the sense that the terms "Islam" and "Muslim" are used throughout the Quran." Submitting ones whole self to God would help to resist the human attitudes of selfishness, greed, and aggression and maintain a balance against arrogance or humility. All human weaknesses and limitations in relation to kinship, wealth, home [9:24] would be overcome through a wider perspective shaped by submitting one's whole being with its feelings, thoughts and thinking processes, aspirations and practices to God's guidance. It is a loyalty that surpasses and contains any other loyalty to oneself, to another person, or to a group of people such as a class, an ethnicity, a gender, or a party. Of course, loyalties to such people are natural and cannot be overlooked, but they should not exceed the reasonable degree to become the ultimate and supreme goal that guides and controls everything else. Worshipping the One God secures individual psychological balance in times of

strength and weaknesses, and it creates a social balance between the powerful and the weak.

God: there is no god but He, the Ever-Living, the Self-subsistent and Watcher and Guardian over all being. No slumber does overtake Him nor sleep. To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth. Who is there who may intercede with Him, save by His leave? He knows all that lies before [people] or behind them, whereas they cannot comprehend any of His knowledge save such as He wills. His Throne [and Might and Power] encompass the heavens and the earth, and upholding them wearies Him not. He is alone the All-high the All-glorious.

Let there be no coercion in matters of faith; the right way has become distinct from [the way of] error. Hence, whoever rejects the powers of injustice and evil and believes in God has indeed taken hold of the most unfailing support that shall never give way, and God is All-hearing, All-knowing. God is the Patron [the Supporter and Protector] of those who attained to faith, taking them out from the depths of darkness forth into light; whereas the patrons of those who deny [and reject] the truth are the powers of evil [taghut] who take them from light forth into the depths of darkness; it is they who are inhabitants of the fire, therein they shall abide. [2:255-257]

ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ ٱلْحَىُّ ٱلْقَيُّومُ ۚ لَا
تَأْخُذُهُۥ سِنَةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ ۚ لَّهُۥ مَا فِى
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ مَن ذَا
ٱلَّذِى يَشْفَعُ عِندَهُۥٓ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِۦ ۚ يَعْلَمُ مَا
بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ ۖ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ
بِشَىْءٍ مِّنْ عِلْمِهِۦٓ إِلَّا بِمَا شَآءَ ۚ وَسِعَ
كُرْسِيُّهُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ ۖ وَلَا
يَـُٔودُهُۥ حِفْظُهُمَا ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَلِىُّ ٱلْعَظِيمُ
﴿٢٥٥﴾ لَآ إِكْرَاهَ فِى ٱلدِّينِ ۖ قَد تَّبَيَّنَ
ٱلرُّشْدُ مِنَ ٱلْغَىِّ ۚ فَمَن يَكْفُرْ بِٱلطَّٰغُوتِ
وَيُؤْمِنۢ بِٱللَّهِ فَقَدِ ٱسْتَمْسَكَ بِٱلْعُرْوَةِ
ٱلْوُثْقَىٰ لَا ٱنفِصَامَ لَهَا ۗ وَٱللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ
عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٥٦﴾ ٱللَّهُ وَلِىُّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟
يُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ إِلَى ٱلنُّورِ ۖ
وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا۟ أَوْلِيَآؤُهُمُ ٱلطَّٰغُوتُ
يُخْرِجُونَهُم مِّنَ ٱلنُّورِ إِلَى ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ ۗ
أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا
خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٢٥٧﴾

The above verses are basic in the Islamic faith, as they provide essential and valuable information. Verse 2:255 mentions the greatest name of God as a tradition of the Prophet says [reported by al-Hakim], and that is: "*God; there is no God but He, the Ever-Living, the Self-Subsistent and Watcher and Guardian over all beings.*" The attributes of God are different from those of anything in our present world: He lives, but His life is eternal and self-subsisting; it does not depend on other beings and is not limited to time and space. Furthermore, His life, being the source of constant support of all derived forms of life, is perfect, in contrast to the imperfect life around us which is not only subject to death but also to fatigue and sickness and thus needs rest and sleep to survive.

Just as God's life is absolute life, His being is absolute being. All that is in the heavens and on earth are His and it is all under His full power and control. How then will

any creature be able to stand before Him and claim to intercede for a fellow-creature unless He wills and permits this. God's knowledge is absolute and is not restricted by time or place, while these conditions do restrict the knowledge of His creatures. His knowledge and our knowledge are essentially and categorically different. Verse 2:256 firmly establishes the human freedom of belief "*There should be no coercion in matters of faith.*"

Although faith in God secures the psychological balance between arrogance and hopelessness, and the social balance between the powerful and the weak, the believers in the One God and in His power, knowledge and attributes who always seek His guidance and protection should never impose by force their belief that they themselves have accepted voluntarily and freely, since there should be no coercion or excuse [see also 10:99, 11:28]. Faith and belief should come as a conscious decision caused by the human conviction to leave the darkness and embrace the light, not as a result of the physical or psychological pressures of temptation and compulsion. The believers in the One God ought to have self-confidence about the soundness of their belief, and its scientific, logical and psychological grounds and its individual, social and universal usefulness, and thus "*the right way has become distinct from [the way of] error.*" Unless one reaches his/her own conviction in the faith, it would not bring out its benefits to the believers. Faith in its logic contradicts imposition, and the human being cannot achieve the positive results of faith except through his/her free decision. Imposition and compulsion, then, are meaningless. Everyone will be judged in the after life in relation to his/her faith whatever it may be, and according to his/her intention, knowledge, and material, social and psychological circumstances

Do they seek a faith other than that of God, while all that is in the heavens and on earth have, willingly or unwillingly, submitted themselves to Him, and to Him shall they all be brought back? [3:83]

أَفَغَيْرَ دِينِ ٱللَّهِ يَبْغُونَ
وَلَهُۥٓ أَسْلَمَ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ
طَوْعًا وَكَرْهًا وَإِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٨٣﴾

The universe, life, and the human intellect and spirit all lead to a belief in the Creator and Lord of all beings [1:2]. All these submit to God's laws willingly or unwillingly, and they manifest God's power and perfect order in the material cosmos and living creatures. As for the human being, his/her body like that of any other living creature, is controlled unwillingly by biological laws, but his/her mind and spirit have their own function which can go beyond the physiological, sensuous and nervous abilities of the human being, and is capable of voluntarily reaching a belief in God and His guidance. In the end, all shall be returned to God without choice, and He will be the only Judge of all the deeds of everyone in this life. This is the logical end that gives a meaning to all the wonders of God's creation in the physical, biological, psychological, intellectual and spiritual fields [23:115-116].

The only [true] faith in the sight of God is [the human being's] self-submission to Him; and those who were

إِنَّ ٱلدِّينَ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلْإِسْلَٰمُ ۗ وَمَا
ٱخْتَلَفَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ إِلَّا مِنۢ

given the Book aforetime were not at variance except after the knowledge came to them, out of selfishness and jealousy among themselves. And as for whoso denies the truth of God's messages, God is swift in reckoning. So, if they argue with you [O Prophet], say: "I have submitted my whole self unto God, and whosoever follows me." And say to those who have been given the Book aforetime, as well as the unlettered people [who have not been given it]: "Have you submitted your whole selves to Him?" If they have submitted, they have come upon the right way; but if they turn away, your duty is only to deliver the message; and God sees all that is in [the hearts of] His creatures. [3:19-20]

بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَهُمُ ٱلْعِلْمُ بَغْيًۢا بَيْنَهُمْ ۗ وَمَن
يَكْفُرْ بِـَٔايَـٰتِ ٱللَّهِ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَرِيعُ
ٱلْحِسَابِ ﴿١٩﴾ فَإِنْ حَآجُّوكَ فَقُلْ
أَسْلَمْتُ وَجْهِىَ لِلَّهِ وَمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَنِ ۗ وَقُل
لِّلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَـٰبَ وَٱلْأُمِّيِّـۧنَ
ءَأَسْلَمْتُمْ ۚ فَإِنْ أَسْلَمُوا۟ فَقَدِ ٱهْتَدَوا۟ ۖ
وَّإِن تَوَلَّوْا۟ فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ ٱلْبَلَـٰغُ ۗ
وَٱللَّهُ بَصِيرٌۢ بِٱلْعِبَادِ ﴿٢٠﴾

And if one goes in search of a faith other than self-submission unto God, it shall never be accepted from him [/her], and in the life to come he [/she] shall be among the lost. [3:85]

وَمَن يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ ٱلْإِسْلَـٰمِ
دِينًا فَلَن يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِى ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ مِنَ
ٱلْخَـٰسِرِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾

The Arabic word "Islam" originally means "submission", and with regard to the faith it means "submission to God". Therefore, Islam in this wider sense of the word, has been the faith of all the conveyors of God's messages which were emphasized and finalized by that of Muhammad, according to the Quran [e.g. 2:128, 131-33, 3:20, 52, 67, 5:44, 111, 6:71, 162-163, 10:72, 84, 12:101, 22:34, 27:44, 28:53, 31:22, 39:12, 40:66]. Restricting the word "Islam" to the message of Muhammad only, in the narrower sense and terminological indication of the word, should not overshadow its origin and primary meaning. When verse [3:85] is taken into context with the two preceding verses [3:83-84], it underlines the fact that all of God's creation submits [*aslama* in Arabic] willingly to Him, and that Islam requires the belief in all the previous messages of God that were spread by the successive conveyors chosen by Him for their mission.

Then He sent down upon you after distress a sense of security, a slumber [out of inner calm] that enfolded some of you, whereas others who cared mainly for themselves, harbored wrong thoughts about God-thoughts inherited from the period of ignorance [before Islam] - saying "Have we any part [in the ultimate reckoning] whatsoever in the matter?" Say: "Verily, all the matter

ثُمَّ أَنزَلَ عَلَيْكُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ
ٱلْغَمِّ أَمَنَةً نُّعَاسًا يَغْشَىٰ طَآئِفَةً مِّنكُمْ ۖ
وَطَآئِفَةٌ قَدْ أَهَمَّتْهُمْ أَنفُسُهُمْ يَظُنُّونَ
بِٱللَّهِ غَيْرَ ٱلْحَقِّ ظَنَّ ٱلْجَـٰهِلِيَّةِ ۖ
يَقُولُونَ هَل لَّنَا مِنَ ٱلْأَمْرِ مِن شَىْءٍ ۗ قُلْ

[and power of decision] is entirely to God;";but they were concealing within themselves that which they reveal not to you, saying [to themselves], "If we had had a part [or any power of decision] in the matter, we would never have been killed here." Say: "Even if you had been in your homes, those whose death here had been set in this way would have sallied forth to where they were destined finally to lie down [in graves]; and [all that has happened to you] that God might test what is within your innate selves and let what you have in your hearts become clear and pure [not confused or confusing]; and God is well aware of any that may be within the innate self. [3:154]

إِنَّ ٱلْأَمْرَ كُلَّهُۥ لِلَّهِ ۗ يُخْفُونَ فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِم
مَّا لَا يُبْدُونَ لَكَ ۖ يَقُولُونَ لَوْ كَانَ لَنَا
مِنَ ٱلْأَمْرِ شَىْءٌ مَّا قُتِلْنَا هَٰهُنَا ۗ قُل لَّوْ
كُنتُمْ فِى بُيُوتِكُمْ لَبَرَزَ ٱلَّذِينَ كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ
ٱلْقَتْلُ إِلَىٰ مَضَاجِعِهِمْ ۖ وَلِيَبْتَلِىَ ٱللَّهُ
مَا فِى صُدُورِكُمْ وَلِيُمَحِّصَ مَا فِى
قُلُوبِكُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌۢ بِذَاتِ ٱلصُّدُورِ
﴿١٥٤﴾

And those who have associated others with God say, "Had God so willed, we would not have worshiped any but Him - neither we nor our forefathers; nor would we have declared anything forbidden without a commandment from Him." Thus did speak those [worshippers of others beside God] who lived before; but are the conveyors of [God's] message bound to more than clearly deliver the message [entrusted to them]? [16:35]

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا۟
لَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ مَا عَبَدْنَا مِن دُونِهِۦ مِن
شَىْءٍ نَّحْنُ وَلَآ ءَابَآؤُنَا وَلَا حَرَّمْنَا مِن
دُونِهِۦ مِن شَىْءٍ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ فَعَلَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن
قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ فَهَلْ عَلَى ٱلرُّسُلِ إِلَّا ٱلْبَلَٰغُ
ٱلْمُبِينُ ﴿٣٥﴾

And when it is said to them, "Spend [on the poor and needy] of what God has provided for you as sustenance, those who deny stubbornly the truth say to those who have attained to faith, "What, shall we feed such a one whom, if God willed, He could have fed? You are but lost in evident error!" [36:47]

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ أَنفِقُوا۟ مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ ٱللَّهُ
قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَنُطْعِمُ
مَن لَّوْ يَشَآءُ ٱللَّهُ أَطْعَمَهُۥٓ إِنْ أَنتُمْ إِلَّا
فِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٤٧﴾

And they say, "There is nothing but our present world's life; we die as we come to life, and nothing but time destroys us." Of that they have no knowledge whatsoever; they merely conjecture. [45:24]

وَقَالُوا۟ مَا هِىَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا
ٱلدُّنْيَا نَمُوتُ وَنَحْيَا وَمَا يُهْلِكُنَآ إِلَّا
ٱلدَّهْرُ ۚ وَمَا لَهُم بِذَٰلِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ ۖ إِنْ هُمْ
إِلَّا يَظُنُّونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

Throughout the above verses, the Quran refutes the belief in "fatalism", which the human being may use as an excuse for wrong doing or neglect of responsibilities. Yes, God has the power to decide and determine, but He has decided that the human being should have his/her intellectual ability and free will, and consequently every individual is responsible for using them properly. God's will is to let the human being have the power of thinking and the freedom of choice, and thus it would be fair to hold him/her accountable for what he/she freely does, and what he/she freely refrains from doing. God surely knows what any human being will freely choose, since He is the All-knowing, and He would not be a real God if He did not know the future as He knows the past and present. Nevertheless, every individual has his/her free will, and he/she should maintain and develop his/her intellectual and psychological abilities so as to secure his/her free choice and decision, supported by the family, society and state in this respect. Moreover, every human being should act positively and take the initiative to enjoin the right and forbid the wrong as much as he/she can. However, despite this free will, giving and taking of life are naturally beyond any human power, and thus they are excluded from any human freedom. They are merely decided by God who only *"grants life and deals death"* [see e.g. 2:258, 3:156, 7:158, 9:116, 10:56, 23:80, 40:68, 44:8, 57:2 ....].

These verses underline an essential principle, namely that matters of faith can and should be openly and freely discussed and argued, as long as the discussion and argument is conducted in a constructive and fruitful way, from logical and ethical angles. The last of the above verses raises the repeated atheist theme: that there is no power behind what takes place in life other than "time" and "nature," and so it is only natural laws that are working in this world, and no after-life can be expected. The Quran did not disregard such a serious argument against the faith in God. Instead, it exposes its lack of foundation and then teaches the Muslims how to face the most challenging arguments objectively and courageously. One finds throughout the Quran objective reports of whatever was said by those who did not believe, and the arguments with them in different ways, thus paving the way for theologians and philosophers to follow and carry on the argument according to the knowledge and methods of their time, while adhering to the Quranic ethical values in such arguments [e.g. 16:125; 22:3, 8; 29:46; 31:20; 34:24-26].

And who could be of better faith than one who submits his [/her] whole self unto God, doing this sincerely and doing good, and follows the creed of Ibrahim (Abraham) who turned away from all that is false? And God exalted Ibrahim(Abraham) with His love. [4:125]

وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ دِينًا
مِّمَّنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُۥ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ
وَٱتَّبَعَ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ حَنِيفًا ۗ وَٱتَّخَذَ ٱللَّهُ
إِبْرَٰهِيمَ خَلِيلًا ﴿١٢٥﴾

Ibrahim (Abraham) is distinguished in the Quran with a significant description "the one who is beloved by God (*khalil*)." He was tested when he was thrown into the fire, and when he was told that he should sacrifice his son. He proved in both cases, as well as in others, that he submitted his whole self to God alone. He was a model in his true faith and righteous behavior that should be followed by all believers especially his descendants

[e.g. 2:132, 12:38]. He persistently called people to worship the One God wherever he went in his inspiring life.. Muslims believe that establishing the Ka'ba in Mecca as the house of worship for the One God was carried out by Ibrahim and his son Isma'il [Ishmael], and it has had its continuous religious effect in the area for successive centuries until the message of Muhammad emerged there. Thus, he was revered by Jews and Christians, as well as by Prophet Muhammad and his followers who have also been *"following the creed of Ibrahim (Abraham)"* [see 2:124, 2:135; 3:68, 95; 6:161; 16:120-123; 22:78; 33:7; 42:13; 60:4].

Say:"Am I to take to myself as patron other than God, the Originator of the heavens and the earth, He who gives nourishment but Himself needs none?" Say: "I am bidden to be foremost among those who submit themselves to God, and not to be among those who associate others with Him".
Say: "I would dread, if I should be disobedient to my Lord, the suffering of an awesome Day." Whosoever shall be spared [from this suffering] on that Day is indeed granted His grace; and that is [truly] the manifest success.
And if God should let you be touched by any harm, none can remove it but He; and if He should let you be touched by some good, He has power over everything. And He alone holds full sway over His creatures. And He alone is truly the All-wise, the All-aware.
Say: "What could be most weighty as a witness [to the truth]?" Say: "God is witness between me and you; and this Quran has been revealed to me so that I might warn thereby you, and whomsoever it may reach. Could you indeed bear witness that besides the One God there are other gods?" Say: "I do not bear [such] witness" Say: "He is the One God, and I am totally in the clear from whatever you associate with Him." [6:14-19]

قُلْ أَغَيْرَ ٱللَّهِ
أَتَّخِذُ وَلِيًّا فَاطِرِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ
وَ هُوَ يُطْعِمُ وَ لَا يُطْعَمُ ۗ قُلْ إِنِّيٓ أُمِرْتُ
أَنْ أَكُونَ أَوَّلَ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ ۖ وَ لَا تَكُونَنَّ
مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٤﴾ قُلْ إِنِّيٓ أَخَافُ إِنْ
عَصَيْتُ رَبِّي عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٥﴾ مَنْ
يُصْرَفْ عَنْهُ يَوْمَئِذٍ فَقَدْ رَحِمَهُۥ ۚ وَ ذَٰلِكَ
ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْمُبِينُ ﴿١٦﴾ وَ إِنْ يَمْسَسْكَ ٱللَّهُ
بِضُرٍّ فَلَا كَاشِفَ لَهُۥٓ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ وَ إِنْ
يَمْسَسْكَ بِخَيْرٍ فَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ
﴿١٧﴾ وَ هُوَ ٱلْقَاهِرُ فَوْقَ عِبَادِهِۦ ۚ وَ هُوَ
ٱلْحَكِيمُ ٱلْخَبِيرُ ﴿١٨﴾ قُلْ أَيُّ شَيْءٍ أَكْبَرُ
شَهَٰدَةً ۖ قُلِ ٱللَّهُ ۖ شَهِيدٌۢ بَيْنِي
وَبَيْنَكُمْ ۚ وَ أُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ هَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانُ
لِأُنذِرَكُم بِهِۦ وَ مَنْۢ بَلَغَ ۚ أَئِنَّكُمْ لَتَشْهَدُونَ
أَنَّ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ ءَالِهَةً أُخْرَىٰ ۚ قُل لَّآ
أَشْهَدُ ۚ قُلْ إِنَّمَا هُوَ إِلَٰهٌ وَٰحِدٌ وَ إِنَّنِي
بَرِيٓءٌ مِّمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

The human being has essential needs in order to survive, and to secure and develop his/her physical, intellectual and psychological-spiritual abilities. The One who fulfills all these needs during the whole life is the One whom the human being should recognize as God, the Lord, Sustainer and Cherisher. He fulfills the human needs, but He is not in need of anyone; He is the Creator and His being is eternal, and thus He is the One to Whom

the human creature has to submit voluntarily if he/she uses his/her human intelligence properly and seriously. The belief that the human being emerged on his/her own, can live on his/her own, and will leave this life according to his/her own will can not be convincing or possible. The thought that several deities divide divine virtues or powers among themselves is also against logic and common sense. The human being thus finds himself/herself led by his/her mind and heart to submit to the Creator and One God, and to reject any claimed deity associated with Him. Believing in the Creator with His All-wisdom makes one see that it is unconvincing to believe that this life, with all its injustices and unfulfillment, is an end in itself; there should be a place for another life which is more just, happy and fulfilling [see e.g. 23:115-116]. In the life to come, those who will suffer will be paying back for making others suffer unjustly in this life, and those who either suffer unjustly now or were following God's guidance in helping others, will attain to eternal happiness and will receive their reward for overcoming their selfishness, arrogance and greed.

The above verse [6:17] states clearly that God allows not only happiness, but also pain to exist in this life. He creates the human being with his/her intellect and free will, and consequently human good and evil deeds are to be equally expected. Since the creation of the earliest human being, the angels wondered if the human beings, with their intellect and free choice on earth, would not make it likely that corruption and blood-shedding would be spread on earth [2:30]. God allows both positives and negatives to exist together, since He has created this life as a test for the human being, and such a test requires cycles of happiness and distress in order to be complete. Those who say that God cannot create any harm or pain since He is All-good, should keep in mind that God is definitely able to prevent harm and pain inflicted on others if He so willed, and that He creates natural harmful causes, such as: earthquakes, volcanoes, floods, storms, predators, germs, microbes and viruses, etc. God is the Creator of all creation, and He alone is in full control of it and He holds sway over all His creatures. God's creation is perfect in achieving its goal and purpose, but this world's life is not absolutely perfect, since absolute perfection, justice, stability and permanence will be the qualities of the eternal life to come [e.g. 12:109, 13:26, 29:64, 35:35; 40:39]. That life to come is the convincing answer and the just compensation for the injustice and unfulfillment in this world, and this fact is repeatedly stressed in God's guidance. The Quran thus supports the human mind and heart in developing the proper argument and reaching the truth about the One God and the eternal life to come.

And with Him are the keys to all that is beyond the reach of any creation's perception; none knows them but He. And He knows whatever there is on land and in the sea; and not a leaf does fall but He knows it; nor a grain in the deep darkness of the earth, nor anything fresh or dried up, but is in a clear record [of His knowledge and power].

وَعِندَهُۥ مَفَاتِحُ
ٱلْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَآ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِى
ٱلْبَرِّ وَٱلْبَحْرِ ۚ وَمَا تَسْقُطُ مِن وَرَقَةٍ
إِلَّا يَعْلَمُهَا وَلَا حَبَّةٍ فِى ظُلُمَٰتِ
ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا رَطْبٍ وَلَا يَابِسٍ إِلَّا فِى
كِتَٰبٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٥٩﴾ وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى يَتَوَفَّىٰكُم

And it is He who causes you to be [like] dead by night, and knows all that you do by day, and through it He does bring you back to [full] life therein in order that a term set [by Him] be fulfilled; and in the end, unto Him shall you all return, then He will make you know [the whole truth about] all that you were doing [in life].
And He alone holds full sway over all His servants, and He sends forth watchers over you, and when death approaches any of you, Our messengers take him[/her], and they do never neglect. And they are thus brought back to God, their true Lord supreme; surely, His alone is the judgement, and He is the swiftest of all reckoners.
Say: "Who is it that saves you from the dark depths of land and sea, [as] you call upon Him humbly and secretly from your hearts: 'If He only saves us from this we shall assuredly be among the grateful'".Say: "It is God alone who saves you from this and from every distress, and yet you associate others with Him!" [worshipping false gods!]
Say:"It is He alone who has power to let you suffer from what may come to you from above you or from beneath your feet, or to confound you with splits and conflicts, and let you taste the violence of one another." See how We extend diverse signs [of Our power to people], so that they might really comprehend. [6:59-65]

بِٱلَّيْلِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا جَرَحْتُم بِٱلنَّهَارِ ثُمَّ
يَبْعَثُكُمْ فِيهِ لِيُقْضَىٰٓ أَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى ۖ ثُمَّ
إِلَيْهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ
تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾ وَهُوَ ٱلْقَاهِرُ فَوْقَ
عِبَادِهِۦ ۖ وَيُرْسِلُ عَلَيْكُمْ حَفَظَةً حَتَّىٰٓ
إِذَا جَآءَ أَحَدَكُمُ ٱلْمَوْتُ تَوَفَّتْهُ رُسُلُنَا
وَهُمْ لَا يُفَرِّطُونَ ﴿٦١﴾ ثُمَّ رُدُّوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ
مَوْلَىٰهُمُ ٱلْحَقِّ ۚ أَلَا لَهُ ٱلْحُكْمُ وَهُوَ
أَسْرَعُ ٱلْحَٰسِبِينَ ﴿٦٢﴾ قُلْ مَن يُنَجِّيكُم
مِّن ظُلُمَٰتِ ٱلْبَرِّ وَٱلْبَحْرِ تَدْعُونَهُۥ
تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفْيَةً لَّئِنْ أَنجَىٰنَا مِنْ هَٰذِهِۦ
لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلشَّٰكِرِينَ ﴿٦٣﴾ قُلِ ٱللَّهُ
يُنَجِّيكُم مِّنْهَا وَمِن كُلِّ كَرْبٍ ثُمَّ أَنتُمْ
تُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾ قُلْ هُوَ ٱلْقَادِرُ عَلَىٰٓ أَن
يَبْعَثَ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابًا مِّن فَوْقِكُمْ أَوْ مِن
تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِكُمْ أَوْ يَلْبِسَكُمْ شِيَعًا وَيُذِيقَ
بَعْضَكُم بَأْسَ بَعْضٍ ۗ ٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ نُصَرِّفُ
ٱلْءَايَٰتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

God alone knows all that can be perceived and what may be far beyond the perception of all His creation. He has created all, and He knows all the laws that are central to His creation, and can know in advance how any of His creation will act in given circumstances. According to His laws of land and sea, of gravity and plant life, and His laws about the effects of humidity and dryness on His various creations, and about cause and effect in general, He knows in advance all that may result from these laws in differing circumstances. We may gradually discover some of these laws, but the more we painstakingly discover, the more we realize the magnitude of what we do not know and what we may not be able to know. In some cases we may know only that several probabilities exist, but we may not be able to definitely predict what will certainly take place. The human being has biological and psychological laws, some of which we may know, and thus we can

understand his/her sleep at night and actions in daytime. But, the human mind and free will may lead the very same person to act inconsistently in similar situations, so it is understandable that people would react differently however similar may be their circumstances.

Thus, God alone knows all that occurs in His creation in its totality and order, and in all its details as well. Death is an absolute secret, and what follows it is beyond any perception of the living human beings. Also, whenever the human being thinks that he/she is in control, different problems let him/her continuously realize that this is far from the truth. People may suffer from physical developments in the atmosphere or in the environment, from biological deficiency, from psychological disturbances or imbalances, or from social conflicts and ills. The most advanced countries with their highly sophisticated equipment have recently had their sufferings from ecological pollution and defects in air, land and sea. These sufferings have ranged from holes in the ozone layer and air pollution, to earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, oil spills and various other environmental damages. It is God's power and guidance that can help create a balance within the human self and between the individual and the society, different groups in the society, the countries of the whole world, and primarily between the whole humanity and the nature. People call upon God, and promise to follow His guidance when they are in trouble, but they soon forget when they become at ease again. The Quran repeatedly reminds the human being about the ups and downs in this life, and urges him/her to realize that it is not eternal, and that the human being — whatever his/her knowledge and power may be — is not in full control. Having faith in God and the life to come and adhering to His guidance, can provide human beings with balance and stability in facing the sharp physical and human vicissitudes of this world's life.

Say: "Shall we call, apart from God, on that which can neither benefit nor harm us, and thus we shall be back on our heels after God has guided us, like one lured to bewilderment through the earth by Satans, while his [/her] companions are calling on him [/her] to offer guidance: 'Come to us." Say: "God's guidance is the true guidance, and we have been bidden to submit ourselves to the Lord of the worlds." [6:71]

قُلْ أَنَدْعُوا۟ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا
يَنفَعُنَا وَلَا يَضُرُّنَا وَنُرَدُّ عَلَىٰٓ أَعْقَٰبِنَا
بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَىٰنَا ٱللَّهُ كَٱلَّذِى ٱسْتَهْوَتْهُ
ٱلشَّيَٰطِينُ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ حَيْرَانَ لَهُۥٓ
أَصْحَٰبٌ يَدْعُونَهُۥٓ إِلَى ٱلْهُدَى ٱئْتِنَا ۗ
قُلْ إِنَّ هُدَى ٱللَّهِ هُوَ ٱلْهُدَىٰ ۖ وَأُمِرْنَا
لِنُسْلِمَ لِرَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٧١﴾

This verse underlines how a belief in anything apart from God is against sound reason, and against one's own stability, balance and tranquillity. False gods will lead to a split personality and behavioral confusion, and when one acts against common sense one loses harmony both within one's own self and with reasonable people who try sincerely to help one out of the bewilderment that he/she is in. God's guidance is the only true one, since it comes from the Lord of all beings who is never biased with or against anyone. Thus, a reasonable person should submit him/herself to this guidance and follow the divine justice in dealing with both him/herself and others.

And thus We were directing the attention of Ibrahim [Abraham to signs of] the mighty dominion [of God] over the heavens and the earth, that he might be of those who know for certain.

And when the night outspread over him and he saw a star he said, "This is my Lord"; but when it went down, he said, "I love not those that go down."

Then, when he saw the moon rising, he said, "This is my Lord"; but when it went down, he said, "If my [true] Lord does not guide me, I shall surely be among those who go astray!"

Then, when he saw the sun rising he said, "This is my Lord; this one is the greatest [of all]"; but when it too went down, he said, "O my people! Surely, far be it from me to join you in what you associate with God.

"For me, I have turned truly my face to Him who brought into being the heavens and the earth, turning away from all that is false, and I am not of those who associate any with Him."

And his people argued with him. He said [to them], "Do you argue with me about God, when it is He who has guided me? But I fear not what you associate with Him [for nothing can befall me] unless my Lord so wills; all things does my Lord embrace in His knowledge; will you not then be mindful?

"And how should I fear what you have associated with God, seeing you fear not to associate with God that whereon He has not sent down to you any warrant? Which of the two parties has more right to feel secure, if you happen to know?

"It is those who have attained to faith, and who have not obscured their faith by wrongdoing that are in true security, and it is they who have found the right way." [6:75-82]

وَكَذَٰلِكَ نُرِىٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ مَلَكُوتَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَلِيَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُوقِنِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾
فَلَمَّا جَنَّ عَلَيْهِ ٱلَّيْلُ رَءَا كَوْكَبًا ۖ قَالَ
هَٰذَا رَبِّى ۖ فَلَمَّآ أَفَلَ قَالَ لَآ أُحِبُّ
ٱلْأَفِلِينَ ﴿٧٦﴾ فَلَمَّا رَءَا ٱلْقَمَرَ بَازِغًا
قَالَ هَٰذَا رَبِّى ۖ فَلَمَّآ أَفَلَ قَالَ لَئِن لَّمْ
يَهْدِنِى رَبِّى لَأَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلضَّآلِّينَ
﴿٧٧﴾ فَلَمَّا رَءَا ٱلشَّمْسَ بَازِغَةً قَالَ
هَٰذَا رَبِّى هَٰذَآ أَكْبَرُ ۖ فَلَمَّآ أَفَلَتْ قَالَ
يَٰقَوْمِ إِنِّى بَرِىٓءٌ مِّمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾
إِنِّى وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِىَ لِلَّذِى فَطَرَ
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ حَنِيفًا ۖ وَمَآ أَنَا۠
مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٧٩﴾ وَحَآجَّهُۥ قَوْمُهُۥ ۚ
قَالَ أَتُحَٰٓجُّوٓنِّى فِى ٱللَّهِ وَقَدْ هَدَىٰنِ ۚ
وَلَآ أَخَافُ مَا تُشْرِكُونَ بِهِۦٓ إِلَّآ أَن يَشَآءَ
رَبِّى شَيْـًٔا ۖ وَسِعَ رَبِّى كُلَّ شَىْءٍ عِلْمًا ۖ
أَفَلَا تَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾ وَكَيْفَ أَخَافُ مَآ
أَشْرَكْتُمْ وَلَا تَخَافُونَ أَنَّكُمْ أَشْرَكْتُم
بِٱللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزِّلْ بِهِۦ عَلَيْكُمْ سُلْطَٰنًا ۚ
فَأَىُّ ٱلْفَرِيقَيْنِ أَحَقُّ بِٱلْأَمْنِ ۖ إِن كُنتُمْ
تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨١﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَلَمْ
يَلْبِسُوٓا۟ إِيمَٰنَهُم بِظُلْمٍ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمُ
ٱلْأَمْنُ ۖ وَهُم مُّهْتَدُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

The Quran here gives an outstanding example of a person who uses the human observation and mind in thinking about the power behind the various phenomena of the universe. Ibrahim (Abraham), the father and forefather of many prophets, lived among

the Chaldeans, who had great knowledge and adoration of stars and astronomical bodies. Through careful and accurate observation and analysis, Abraham was able to draw conclusions from the creation to the Creator. He traced the fascinating signs of God's creation and order in the universe, one after the other, until he realized that there is an utmost power behind and beyond all that the human being can perceive on the basis of the observation provided by the human senses. The Quran takes the reader through Abraham's search for enlightenment and certitude. This Prophet was able to note and prove the folly of idol worship [e.g. 21:51-70, 37:83-98]. Then he followed his common sense whenever he was impressed by something such as the shining stars, to realize that they disappear after they appear, can never maintain their existence or position, nor have any effect on others' destiny since they follow in their orbits laws that the Creator has appointed for them, whatever superstitions and ignorance may claim. The Lord of the whole universe is far beyond any of those shining bodies whatever their attractive magnificence may be.

Abraham's sensory and sensible journey in what he saw in the universe represents continuous guidance for the human being about the use of sensory observation and intellectual analysis to reach the proper result and a right judgment of the truth. The stars, the moon, and the sun, whatever their size or light may be, are discovered in the end to have something in common: they are not permanent, and their presence or absence have no effect on the human future in this life, let alone what may follow after death.

Abraham's approaches in quest of the truth are impressive and educational for the whole of humanity through the centuries. He never cared about any superstitious threats made by his people about their gods' curse and punishment, and instead he used his mind to search for the truth. Feeling fully secure about his beliefs, he presented the clarity of truth and the feelings of security it offers and called the attention of his people to the contradictions and insensibility of their beliefs, which were a result of various kinds of fear from their own-selves, from nature and from others, so "*which of the two parties has more right to feel secure? .... It is those who have attained to faith, and have not obscured their faith by wrongdoing that are in true security, and it is they that have found the right way.*"

The Originator of the heavens and the earth; how could it be that He should have a child, when He never has had a mate, and it is He who has created all things? But He has full knowledge of everything. That then is God, your Lord, there is no god but He, the Creator of everything, worship then Him alone, and it is He who has everything in His care and guard.

No vision [of His creatures] can encompass Him, whereas He encompasses all others' vision, and [creatures]; He alone is All-subtle and unfathomable, All-aware.

Now have come to you from your Lord means

بَدِيعُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ أَنَّىٰ يَكُونُ لَهُۥ وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ تَكُن
لَّهُۥ صَٰحِبَةٌ ۖ وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ ۖ وَهُوَ
بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٠١﴾ ذَٰلِكُمُ ٱللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ ۖ
لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ خَٰلِقُ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ
فَٱعْبُدُوهُ ۚ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ وَكِيلٌ
﴿١٠٢﴾ لَّا تُدْرِكُهُ ٱلْأَبْصَٰرُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ
ٱلْأَبْصَٰرَ ۖ وَهُوَ ٱللَّطِيفُ ٱلْخَبِيرُ ﴿١٠٣﴾

for clear vision and insight. Whoever, therefore, chooses to see, does so for his [/her] own gain; and whoever chooses to remain blind, does so to his own loss; and I am not a watcher over [or keeper of] you. [6:101-104]

قَدْ جَآءَكُم بَصَآئِرُ مِن رَّبِّكُمْ ۖ فَمَنْ أَبْصَرَ
فَلِنَفْسِهِۦ ۖ وَمَنْ عَمِىَ فَعَلَيْهَا ۚ وَمَآ
أَنَا۠ عَلَيْكُم بِحَفِيظٍ ﴿١٠٤﴾

As God's particular natural reality is beyond human sensory perception, He presents Himself in the Quran through His attributes and qualities or "beautiful names" [7:180; 17:110; 20:8; 59:22-24] of which there are ninety nine [reported by al-Tirmidhi, Ibn Hibban, al-Hakim in *al-Mustadrak*, and al-Bayhaqi in *Shu'ab al-Iman*, and indicated as authentic by al-Suyuti]. These divine attributes help the reader to form some perception of God and His relation to His creation, including the human beings. They also present the moral ideals for the believer to guide his/her behavior. However, one realizes that God's attributes have their uniqueness and unreachability in their quality and range, and some of them should never be contemplated by the human being since they are exclusively divine, such as "the One who knows all that is beyond the perception of any created/ *'Alim al-ghayb,*" "the One who holds absolute sway over all that exists/ "*al-Qahhar,*" the Compelling/ "*al-Jabbar,*" "the-sublime to whom all greatness belongs/ *al-Mutakabbir*" etc. Among God's attributes is "*Latif,*" an Arabic word that denotes something that is "extremely subtle in quality, and therefore intangible and unfathomable," as Muhammad Asad explains. He explains that "Whenever this term occurs in the Quran in reference to God in conjunction with the term Khabir, All aware, it is invariably used to express the idea of its inaccessibility to human perception, imagination, or comprehension, as contrasted with His own All-Awareness" [see apart from 6:103, also 22:63, 31:16, 33:34, and 67:14]. Asad also remarks that in the two instances where the combination of [these two attributes] carries the definite article "*al*" [6:103 and 67:14] after the pronoun he, the expression has the meaning of "He alone is unfathomable" implying that this quality is unique and absolute to Him [note 89 on 6:103]. Also, Asad writes that utterly remote is He from all imperfection and from the incompleteness which is implied in the concept of having progeny.... "God is unique since nothing [is] like unto Him [42:11], and there is nothing that could be compared to Him. [112:4]. "The fact that He is indefinable," continues Asad "makes it clear that the 'attributes' of God mentioned in the Quran do not circumscribe His reality but, rather, the perceptible effect of His activity on and within the universe created by Him" [ibid, n.88 on 6:10]. In addition to this viewpoint, the attribute 'Latif' in Arabic can refer to God's grace and compassion, through which He always deals with his living creatures, (including the human beings) whether they are obedient to his teachings or not, even during what appears to be times of hardship and difficult circumstances.

Such a presentation of "God" in the Quran helps the human being understand and feel God's relation with His creations, by using the human privileges of intellectual conception and abstraction. It is up to every individual to use his/her intellect and spiritual insight to reach his/her highest human potential, or to minimize or to ignore these and react only to concrete sensuous objects: "*They are like cattle; nay, they are more erratic; it is they who are [truly] the neglectful*" [7:179].

Follow what has been revealed unto you by your Lord; there is no god but He, and turn away from those who associate others with God.
Had God willed, they would not have associated others with Him; hence, We have not appointed you a watcher over [or a keeper of] them; neither are you responsible for their conduct.
Do not revile those upon whom others call instead of God [or those who call upon them], lest they - out of spite - revile God in their ignorance. Thus have We let each people see their own doing as good as they wish. In the end, to their Lord they must all return, and He shall then make them realize truly all that they did. [6:106-108]

اتَّبِعْ مَآ أُوحِيَ
إِلَيْكَ مِن رَّبِّكَ ۖ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ
وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٠٦﴾ وَلَوْ شَآءَ
ٱللَّهُ مَآ أَشْرَكُوا۟ ۖ وَمَا جَعَلْنَٰكَ عَلَيْهِمْ
حَفِيظًا ۖ وَمَآ أَنتَ عَلَيْهِم بِوَكِيلٍ ﴿١٠٧﴾
وَلَا تَسُبُّوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ
فَيَسُبُّوا۟ ٱللَّهَ عَدْوًۢا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ
زَيَّنَّا لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ عَمَلَهُمْ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِم
مَّرْجِعُهُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ
﴿١٠٨﴾

God allows the human will and abilities of every individual to search for the Creator of the creation and to discover His relation to the human beings. He could have created the human being like the angel, who knows God by nature and worships Him alone, but instead He enabled every human being to act freely so that he/she would be justly accountable in the end for all that he/she willingly did in this life. A Prophet is not sent by God to impose on anyone the truth revealed by Him, and God's judgment about what every human being believes or does, and His requital for it will be in the eternal life to come.

A human being may be influenced by certain personal physical, psychological, intellectual or social background, or by complexes from the past or illusions about the future, and by the conscious and unconscious effects of his/her surroundings. One who calls people to God and His right path has to be aware of such influences over those who are addressed in order to avoid unnecessary resentment and resistance as much as possible. Unless the presentation of new thinking or behavior is done with intelligence and wisdom, not only will a negative rejection be expected, but also an unfair attack on the truth and dissension of the faith. It is better for those who believe and disbelieve to agree upon the avoidance of any escalation of argument that may destroy human relations and render any mutual future understandings impossible as well as disturb some believers. The believers have to always keep in mind their Lord's guidance that "*it may be that God will develop affection between you and those whom you [now] hold as enemies; for God has power [over all things], and God is Most Forgiving, Most Gracious*" [60:7]. God's grace, compassion, and justice ought to be represented in the behavior of the believers in Him towards those who deny Him and reject His message. Accordingly those who have followed their common sense and have used their minds and hearts to accept the truth are required to avoid any provocation to others who deny and reject God's message, or any

response to them in an insulting way, lest these, in their turn, desecrate the Muslims' belief and thus the conflict escalates and creates a personal barrier. As the presence of human shortcomings is natural, God's teachings and their followers are simply helping the human being overcome his/her weaknesses. The teachings are not by any means permitting the hiding of God's light, but it encourages that people ought to be exposed to it "with wisdom and impressive exhortation, and through the most persuasive argument" [16:125].

Say: "Am I, then, to desire anyone but God for judgment, when, it is He who has sent down to you the Book, clearly spelling out the truth?" And those whom We have given the Book aforetime know that this one, too, has been sent down, step by step, from your Lord with the truth. Never be, then, of those who doubt. [6:114]

أَفَغَيْرَ ٱللَّهِ أَبْتَغِى حَكَمًا وَهُوَ
ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنزَلَ إِلَيْكُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ مُفَصَّلًا ۚ
وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ يَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُۥ
مُنَزَّلٌ مِّن رَّبِّكَ بِٱلْحَقِّ ۖ فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ
ٱلْمُمْتَرِينَ ﴿١١٤﴾

This verse emphasizes the strong relation between all the messages and revealed books of God to His successive prophets conveyors of these messages. This relation can be recognized in these messages and books, and the followers of earlier revelations can realize that the Quran has come from the same divine source and may react to it accordingly. However, their reluctance to accept the message of Muhammad, should not throw any doubt on it. They themselves in the depth of their own selves may clearly see the truth, and God's judgment in the end will settle the difference about all that on which people differ in this world's life.

Surely, your Lord is God, who has created the heavens and the earth in six [extremely extensive] periods of time, and is established on the Throne. He draws the night over the day, following it in swift pursuit; and the sun, the moon, and the stars [all] are subservient by His command. Verily, His are the creation and the command; blessed be God, Lord of all the worlds.
Call unto your Lord humbly and in the secrecy of your hearts; He loves not those who transgress the bounds of what is right. And do not spread corruption on earth after it has been so well ordered; and call unto Him with true awe and sublime hope; surely, God's grace is ever near to those who do good. [7:54-56]

إِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ
ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ
فِى سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ ٱسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى ٱلْعَرْشِ
يُغْشِى ٱلَّيْلَ ٱلنَّهَارَ يَطْلُبُهُۥ حَثِيثًا
وَٱلشَّمْسَ وَٱلْقَمَرَ وَٱلنُّجُومَ مُسَخَّرَٰتٍۭ
بِأَمْرِهِۦٓ ۗ أَلَا لَهُ ٱلْخَلْقُ وَٱلْأَمْرُ ۗ
تَبَارَكَ ٱللَّهُ رَبُّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٥٤﴾ ٱدْعُوا۟
رَبَّكُمْ تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفْيَةً ۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُحِبُّ
ٱلْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾ وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا۟ فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَٰحِهَا وَٱدْعُوهُ خَوْفًا
وَطَمَعًا ۚ إِنَّ رَحْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ مِّنَ
ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾

The Quran repeatedly mentions that the creation occurred in "*six days,*" which is translated above into "*[extremely extensive periods] of time*", since the Arabic word for day "*yawm*" can denote any period of time and not necessarily the 24 hours that we know as a day [e.g. see the verses indicating "a day" for God: 22:47, 70:4]. The earthly 24 hour day is merely a result of the earth's rotation around itself in front of the sun; thus it is directly related to what has followed the creation of the universe, and cannot therefore be applied to the time of creation itself.

God's power of creation and His commands to His creatures are exercised constantly through the laws that control all His creation. The image given in the Quran of night and day in their swift succession and the benefits of each can be appreciated by any human being whatever his/her intelligence and knowledge may be. The sun, the moon and the stars prove an order that reveals God's power, care and control. It is only He who creates, and He who controls all creation and the whole being. Therefore, to communicate with God, the Lord and Sustainer of all creatures, the human being should be humble, and should practice this in the depth and secrecy of one's heart, avoiding any inclination to show off his/hers religiosity or piety to others. God's guidance has to be observed in all human actions, and how to worship Him ought to be the utmost in this respect.

A worshipper of God should be consistent in following His guidance in all areas, especially in maintaining the environmental and social order, by avoiding the spread of pollution in the universe or corruption in the human society. One prays for God's goodly acceptance with longing and love in his/her heart, but he/she simultaneously feels the fear of failure to achieve the goal due to any mistake on his/her side. God is All-forgiving and Most Gracious, but one who communicates with Him has to do his/her best to clear him/her from all the spiritual-moral obstacles that may cause the attempted communication with the Lord to be a failure.

Do they associate [with God] that which creates nothing, and they themselves are created, and that which has no power to help them, and neither can they help themselves! If you call them to guidance, they will not follow you; equal it is [the result] to you whether you call them or you keep silent.
Surely, those whom you call upon apart from God are but created beings subservient to God's power like yourselves. Call then upon them, and let them answer you, if what you claim is true! [7:191-194]

أَيُشْرِكُونَ مَا لَا يَخْلُقُ شَيْـًٔا وَهُمْ
يُخْلَقُونَ ﴿١٩١﴾ وَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ لَهُمْ
نَصْرًا وَلَآ أَنفُسَهُمْ يَنصُرُونَ ﴿١٩٢﴾ وَإِن
تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَى ٱلْهُدَىٰ لَا يَتَّبِعُوكُمْ ۚ سَوَآءٌ
عَلَيْكُمْ أَدَعَوْتُمُوهُمْ أَمْ أَنتُمْ صَـٰمِتُونَ
﴿١٩٣﴾ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ
عِبَادٌ أَمْثَالُكُمْ ۖ فَٱدْعُوهُمْ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا۟
لَكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ صَـٰدِقِينَ ﴿١٩٤﴾

The verses call the human being who enjoys common sense to think about things that people blindly believe in to be mighty gods, such as stars, idols, influential living people, righteous dead ones, or other s owing to dominant ideas and superstitions, and to see

that these have no independent self-existence, and cannot support others. They are all created by God and are subject to His laws and command, and however powerful any human being may be, his/her power is limited to his possession of life and power, and he/she becomes powerless when either is lost.

And they worship, apart from God, what can neither hurt nor benefit them, saying, "These are our intercessors with God". Say: "Are you telling God of anything He knows not either in the heavens or on earth? Limitless is He in His Glory, and High be He exalted above all that they associate with [Him]!"

And [know that] all humanity were once but one single people, and then they fell into variance. And had it not been for a word that had already gone forth from your Lord [to allow them free will], all their differences would have been settled [through imposition] between them [from the beginning].

And they [who deny stubbornly the truth] say, "Why has no miraculous sign ever been sent down unto him [Muhammad] from his Lord?" Say, then, "The knowledge of that is beyond the reach of human perception belongs to God alone. Wait, then, [until such a sign may be brought out by God's will], I too shall be waiting with you."

And whenever We let people taste [some of Our] grace after hardship has touched them; they show [their] guile towards Our messages! Say: "Swifter is God in His [might and perfect] planning. Surely, Our [heavenly] messengers are recording all that you are guilefully devising".

It is He who enables you [using His laws in the universe] to travel through land and sea; and when you are on ships and they sail on with them [who are on board] in a favorable wind, and they rejoice at it, there comes a severe storm and waves approach them from all sides, and they think they are encompassed, they call unto God, sincere [at that moment] in

وَيَعْبُدُونَ مِن
دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنفَعُهُمْ
وَيَقُولُونَ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ شُفَعَٰٓؤُنَا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ قُلْ
أَتُنَبِّـُٔونَ ٱللَّهَ بِمَا لَا يَعْلَمُ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَلَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ سُبْحَٰنَهُۥ وَتَعَٰلَىٰ
عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿١٨﴾ وَمَا كَانَ ٱلنَّاسُ
إِلَّآ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً فَٱخْتَلَفُوا۟ ۚ وَلَوْلَا كَلِمَةٌ
سَبَقَتْ مِن رَّبِّكَ لَقُضِىَ بَيْنَهُمْ فِيمَا فِيهِ
يَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿١٩﴾ وَيَقُولُونَ لَوْلَآ أُنزِلَ
عَلَيْهِ ءَايَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦ ۖ فَقُلْ إِنَّمَا ٱلْغَيْبُ
لِلَّهِ فَٱنتَظِرُوٓا۟ إِنِّى مَعَكُم مِّنَ ٱلْمُنتَظِرِينَ
﴿٢٠﴾ وَإِذَآ أَذَقْنَا ٱلنَّاسَ رَحْمَةً مِّنۢ
بَعْدِ ضَرَّآءَ مَسَّتْهُمْ إِذَا لَهُم مَّكْرٌ فِىٓ
ءَايَاتِنَا ۚ قُلِ ٱللَّهُ أَسْرَعُ مَكْرًا ۚ إِنَّ
رُسُلَنَا يَكْتُبُونَ مَا تَمْكُرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ هُوَ
ٱلَّذِى يُسَيِّرُكُمْ فِى ٱلْبَرِّ وَٱلْبَحْرِ
حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا كُنتُمْ فِى ٱلْفُلْكِ وَجَرَيْنَ بِهِم
بِرِيحٍ طَيِّبَةٍ وَفَرِحُوا۟ بِهَا جَآءَتْهَا رِيحٌ
عَاصِفٌ وَجَآءَهُمُ ٱلْمَوْجُ مِن كُلِّ مَكَانٍ
وَظَنُّوٓا۟ أَنَّهُمْ أُحِيطَ بِهِمْ ۙ دَعَوُا۟ ٱللَّهَ

their faith in Him alone: "If you do save us from this, surely we shall be among the grateful."
Yet, when He has saved them, behold, they act outrageously on earth, in violation of all right. O people! All your outrageous deeds are bound to fall back against your own selves; it is [merely] an enjoyment of the life of this world [that you get]; then in the end to Us is your return, and whereupon We shall make you truly know all that you were doing before.
[10:18-23]

مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ ٱلدِّينَ لَئِنْ أَنجَيْتَنَا مِنْ
هَٰذِهِۦ لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلشَّٰكِرِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾ فَلَمَّآ
أَنجَىٰهُمْ إِذَا هُمْ يَبْغُونَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ
ٱلْحَقِّ ۗ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ إِنَّمَا بَغْيُكُمْ
عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِكُم ۖ مَّتَٰعَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ
ثُمَّ إِلَيْنَا مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَنُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ
تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

False gods, whether they are one's innate self or else, cannot in fact hurt or benefit anybody by their own independent power. Being faced with such a fact, the worshippers of these false gods might give themselves an excuse for their behavior by claiming that what or whom they worship are just their intercessors to God! What a big lie they are telling to themselves, as well as to others and to God Himself, who knows everything in heaven or on earth.

How did such contradictory views among human beings about their Creator and their destiny develop? All humanity was created one, and all God's messages to them in different times and places were in essence one: to worship the One God and observe righteousness in dealing with others. However, human selfishness, shortsightedness and other shortcomings, split people into various groups with different views and beliefs. God's successive messages to diverse peoples present the facts and principles that provide common grounds to human beings in spite of their differences, and persuade them to compete in good deeds while they cooperate for collective benefit. However, they have been left free to their own convictions, as to whether they should follow or reject the messages of God, so that everyone would be justly accountable on the Day of Judgment about all that he/she freely decided and did. People ought not to demand a miraculous sign from God as a precondition for belief in Him, since nature and revelation provide signs for those who use the human abilities granted to them, and human beings have to use their senses and minds and reach their own conviction freely on their own. However, there are those who demand what is beyond human perception as the only evidence that they would accept for a divine message. This is against God's will to let the human being be tested in this world's life only through the human abilities and free will. God's "word" and law for this world's life will never be broken, whatever people's demand for such breaking may be, whether motivated by defiance or curiosity.

The verses call attention to a human weakness that is obvious and frequent in day to day life. One has to work hard against human shortsightedness and moodiness in order to enjoy stability in this life and eternal happiness in the life to come. In spite of all human intellectual and material progress, the human spirit may behave throughout the vicissitudes of life as one aboard a ship sailing in a turbulent sea. One rejoices, feels secure and,

perhaps, also arrogant when the the winds are favorable and the ship goes smoothly, but when a storm comes and the passenger realizes danger, and he/she cannot find support except in God, he/she vows to observe His guidance if He saves him/her. However, these vows are forgotten in many cases as soon as the danger ends. The ups and downs of life may lead the human being to realize that neither he/she nor any of the false gods that he/she worship enjoys independent or absolute power in this world. A human being feels his/her need for the help and support of the real Supreme Power, when one realizes that he/she is in trouble, and no other human being or power other than God can offer this help or support. But as soon as one is relieved, he/she may not only forget God and His help, but may also behave and persuade others to behave against righteousness and justice [see also 6:63-4; 7:189-190; 11:10; 16:53; 17:83; 29:65; 31:32; 39:8, 49; 41:15, 50; 70:20-1; 96:6; and for the opposite case 11:9; 17:83; 41:49; 89:15-16]. Such myopic people do not realize that the destructive consequences their evil behavior shall have on their own selves, will be evidence against them on the Day of Judgment when they are requited with what they deserve in the eternal life to come. Arrogance and shortsightedness, restrict the human vision, and thus one may not realize this world life is short, whatever its pleasures may be.

That is God, your Lord, the Ultimate Truth; what is there, after truth, but error? How, then, are you turned about?

فَذَٰلِكُمُ ٱللَّهُ رَبُّكُمُ ٱلْحَقُّ ۖ فَمَاذَا بَعْدَ ٱلْحَقِّ إِلَّا ٱلضَّلَٰلُ ۖ فَأَنَّىٰ تُصْرَفُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

Thus the word of your Lord, is proved true against those who are bent on evil doing, they, believe not.

كَذَٰلِكَ حَقَّتْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ فَسَقُوٓا۟ أَنَّهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

Say: "Of these that you associate with God, can any originate creation [of life] and then bring it forth anew?" Say: "It is God [alone] who originates creation [of all life] and then brings it forth anew. How perverted, then, is your thinking?"

قُلْ هَلْ مِن شُرَكَآئِكُم مَّن يَبْدَؤُا۟ ٱلْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُۥ ۚ قُلِ ٱللَّهُ يَبْدَؤُا۟ ٱلْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُۥ ۖ فَأَنَّىٰ تُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

Say: "Of these that you associate with God, is there any that can guide you unto the truth?" Say: "It is God alone who guides to the truth. Is then He who guides to the truth worthier to be followed, or one who guides not unless guided? What, then, is the matter with you, how do you judge?"

قُلْ هَلْ مِن شُرَكَآئِكُم مَّن يَهْدِىٓ إِلَى ٱلْحَقِّ ۚ قُلِ ٱللَّهُ يَهْدِى لِلْحَقِّ ۗ أَفَمَن يَهْدِىٓ إِلَى ٱلْحَقِّ أَحَقُّ أَن يُتَّبَعَ أَمَّن لَّا يَهِدِّىٓ إِلَّآ أَن يُهْدَىٰ ۖ فَمَا لَكُمْ كَيْفَ تَحْكُمُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

But most of them follow only conjecture and, conjecture is of no value with regard to the truth. Surely, God has full knowledge of all that they do. [10:32-36]

وَمَا يَتَّبِعُ أَكْثَرُهُمْ إِلَّا ظَنًّا ۚ إِنَّ ٱلظَّنَّ لَا يُغْنِى مِنَ ٱلْحَقِّ شَيْـًٔا ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمٌۢ بِمَا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

Thinking about the Creator after observing His creation proves consistence and sensibility, and missing such logic would only lead to errors. Those who constantly deviate from straight thinking and behavior and who neglect what makes sense are abusing the human intelligence gifted by God, and will consequently suffer from hindering this power. When God's word or laws in nature are carried out such people are crippling their potential from experiencing active feelings, thinking, and finding out about the material and living worlds, especially regarding the human being and his/her destiny in this life and in the life after. Such a deviation in thinking and behavior cannot lead to a proper belief in God, since this requires a correct use of human intellectual, psychological, and spiritual potential. False gods, human or otherwise, can neither have the power of creation, nor the control over what has already been created. They can give no guidance to different creatures, including the human being, through instinct or through the mind.

The Quran has repeatedly stressed a general principle of the utmost value that guessing and conjecture cannot lead to the truth, for the human being has to use material experimentation or abstract reasoning to achieve this goal. Thus the Quran has repeatedly challenged and condemned "*those who considered as false anything that they have not already known, or that no explanation about it has reached them*" [10:39]. This essential requirement of objective evidence has been re-emphasized in the following verses.

Surely, unto God belongs whoever is in the heavens and whoever is on earth. Those who call upon any apart from God are not really following associates [of God that they are sure about]; they merely follow conjecture, and they do nothing but guessing. [10:66]

أَلَآ إِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَمَن فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ وَمَا يَتَّبِعُ ٱلَّذِينَ
يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ شُرَكَآءَ ۚ إِن
يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا ٱلظَّنَّ وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَخْرُصُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾

They say, "God has taken to Him a son," limitless is He in His Glory; He is All-self-sufficient; to Him belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth. Have you any evidence whatever for such [a claim]? Do you say about God that which you cannot know? [10:68]

قَالُوا۟ ٱتَّخَذَ
ٱللَّهُ وَلَدًا ۗ سُبْحَٰنَهُۥ ۖ هُوَ ٱلْغَنِىُّ ۖ
لَهُۥ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ
إِنْ عِندَكُم مِّن سُلْطَٰنٍۭ بِهَٰذَآ ۚ أَتَقُولُونَ
عَلَى ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾

The Quran has repeatedly argued against ascribing offspring to God, to refute the belief held by the Arab polytheists, at the time of the advent of Islam that angels were the daughters of God, [16:57; 17:40; 37:149-153, 43:16, 52:39] as well as that held by the Christians, who were in the north, east, and south of the Arabian peninsula that Jesus was the son of God [2:116, 6:101, 10:68, 17:111, 18:4-5, 19:35, 88-93; 21:26, 23:91, 25:2, 72:3, 112:3].

According to the Islamic theology of pure and strict oneness of God and the basic concept that *"there is nothing like Him"* [42:11] and that there is nothing comparable to Him [112:4], "God is far from any imperfection such as would be implied in the necessity (or logical possibility) of having 'progeny' either in a literal or a metaphorical sense," as Muhammad Asad states it [note 96 on 2:116].

And if your Lord had so willed, whoever is on earth would surely have attained to faith, all of them, all together; would you then think that you could compel people to become believers?
No human being can attain to faith otherwise than by God's leave [that allows every individual a free will], and it is He who lets evil be upon those who do not use their reason.
Say: "Consider whatever there is in the heavens and on earth?" But of what avail could all the signs and warnings be to people who [have blocked their senses and minds, and consequently] will never believe? [10:99-101]

وَلَوْ شَآءَ رَبُّكَ لَآمَنَ مَن فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ كُلُّهُمْ جَمِيعًا ۚ أَفَأَنتَ تُكْرِهُ
ٱلنَّاسَ حَتَّىٰ يَكُونُوا۟ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٩٩﴾
وَمَا كَانَ لِنَفْسٍ أَن تُؤْمِنَ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ
وَيَجْعَلُ ٱلرِّجْسَ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ
﴿١٠٠﴾ قُلِ ٱنظُرُوا۟ مَاذَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ وَمَا تُغْنِى ٱلْـَٔايَٰتُ وَٱلنُّذُرُ
عَن قَوْمٍ لَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٠١﴾

Had it been God's will not to grant the human being a free will, His omnipotence could have made all humanity receptive to belief in the One God, but such an imposed faith would not allow them to benefit from their differences, nor to develop their personalities and societies. Freedom of faith goes with the freedom of human will, and those who attain to faith should resist any temptation of forcing the faith on others. The divine principle of justice that secures the human dignity and intelligence has been stated strongly in the Quran above and in other places, such as: "*There is no coercion in matters of faith*" [2:256; see also 11:28] and accordingly each one will be judged on his/her own merits.

Faith should emerge from an active use of the human mind and free will. The presence and use of these potent means are according to God's plan and to His will - "God's leave" in the wording of the verse - and thus the human being has been provided with faculties and capacities that allow him/her to consider and judge freely. Human beings should let these faculties and capacities function and they should develop them to observe the universe and trace the human behavior individually and in the society, past and present. If this is not done and if we neglect such capable vehicles they will become useless, and God's signs in the universe, in living creatures, especially the human being, in the human society and in history, or in God's revelations to His prophets would land on deaf ears, blind eyes, and unthinking minds.

وَ لَقَدْ ذَرَأْنَا لِجَهَنَّمَ
كَثِيرًا مِّنَ ٱلْجِنِّ وَ ٱلْإِنسِ ۖ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ
لَّا يَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا وَ لَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ لَّا يُبْصِرُونَ
بِهَا وَ لَهُمْ ءَاذَانٌ لَّا يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَآ ۚ
أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ كَٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ ۚ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ
هُمُ ٱلْغَٰفِلُونَ ﴿١٧٩﴾

And We have destined for hell many of the invisible beings [jinn] and human beings [as a result of evil-doing]; they have hearts [and minds] with which they fail to really comprehend, and they have eyes with which they fail to perceive, and they have ears with which they fail to hear. They are like cattle; nay, they are more erratic; it is they who are [truly] the neglectful. [7:179]

قُلْ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ إِن
كُنتُمْ فِى شَكٍّ مِّن دِينِى فَلَآ أَعْبُدُ ٱلَّذِينَ
تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَ لَٰكِنْ أَعْبُدُ ٱللَّهَ
ٱلَّذِى يَتَوَفَّىٰكُمْ ۖ وَ أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ
ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٠٤﴾ وَ أَنْ أَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ
لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا وَ لَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ
﴿١٠٥﴾ وَ لَا تَدْعُ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا
يَنفَعُكَ وَ لَا يَضُرُّكَ ۖ فَإِن فَعَلْتَ فَإِنَّكَ
إِذًا مِّنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٠٦﴾ وَ إِن يَمْسَسْكَ
ٱللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ فَلَا كَاشِفَ لَهُۥٓ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ وَ إِن
يُرِدْكَ بِخَيْرٍ فَلَا رَآدَّ لِفَضْلِهِۦ ۚ يُصِيبُ بِهِۦ
مَن يَشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِۦ ۚ وَ هُوَ ٱلْغَفُورُ
ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٠٧﴾ قُلْ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ قَدْ
جَآءَكُمُ ٱلْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّكُمْ ۖ فَمَنِ ٱهْتَدَىٰ
فَإِنَّمَا يَهْتَدِى لِنَفْسِهِۦ ۖ وَ مَن ضَلَّ
فَإِنَّمَا يَضِلُّ عَلَيْهَا ۖ وَ مَآ أَنَا۠ عَلَيْكُم
بِوَكِيلٍ ﴿١٠٨﴾ وَ ٱتَّبِعْ مَا يُوحَىٰٓ إِلَيْكَ ۚ
وَ ٱصْبِرْ حَتَّىٰ يَحْكُمَ ٱللَّهُ ۚ
وَ هُوَ خَيْرُ ٱلْحَٰكِمِينَ ﴿١٠٩﴾

Say: "O people! If you are in doubt as to what my faith is, then [know that] I worship not those you worship apart from God, but I worship God alone who shall cause you [all] to die, and I have been bidden to be among those who believe [in Him alone].
And set your face steadfastly towards the [true] faith, turning away from all that is false, and never be among those who associate others with Him.
And, thus, do not call on any apart from God; such can neither benefit nor hurt you; and if you do it, you shall certainly be among the evildoers.
And if God does touch you with affliction, there is none who can remove it but He, and if His will is that you get a something good, there is none who can turn away His bounty; He causes it to reach whomsoever He wills of His servants. And He is truly the All-forgiving and the Most Gracious.
Say: "O people! Now the truth has come to you from your Lord, and therefore whosoever chooses to follow the guidance does so only for his [/her] own good, and whosoever chooses to go astray does so only for his [/her] own loss; and I am not responsible for [or watching over] you."
And [as for yourself, O Prophet] follow what is revealed to you, and be patient and persistent until God gives His judgment, as He is the best of all judges. [10:104-109]

The Prophet and Conveyor of God's message, who was receiving God's revelation constantly, had naturally no doubt in his own mind about his message, and he declared his faith clearly and persistently to all. He reminded everyone that he was worshipping only God whose Almightiness will be felt by all when they are touched by death. The revelation that a prophet receives and spreads invites serious human thought about the universe and about the human life and death. God's message not only develops and harmonizes the individual's potentials, but it also guides him/her to use his/her individual faculties and abilities within a community and a society, and thus he/she would be a believer "among those who believe in Him alone." God allows good and evil, happiness and sadness, to exist in cycles in this life, so as to test the human being by both and every individual is justly judged. It is not against God's mercy and grace that He allows evil, injustice, pain and unfulfillment to exist in this world's life, since the true and eternal life will be in the Hereafter, where absolute justice and fulfillment are attained by all.

Faith in God supports the believer in cases of failure or success, and does not allow him/her to be hopeless or haughty during these critical times. If the believer is touched with something bad, he/she ought to be patient, since he/she realizes that this life is not the end but will be followed by an eternal one based on absolute justice. And if the believer reaches success, he/she is sure that it is from God whose laws reward those who work hard and well, and feels thankful and grateful to the One who has granted him/her all means of success. Thus the believer in the One God enjoys balance and self-control whatever the changes of this world's life may be, as a tradition of the Prophet points out [reported by Muslim, Ibn Hanbal and Ibn Majah]. The faith in God has its implications and effects on the individual stability and tranquillity and on the social solidarity. It represents the "truth" and "righteousness" that overcome human selfishness and shortsightedness. It is the responsibility of every human being to make decisions according to his/her free will, and to gain or lose his/her individual integrity and maintain or undermine the social integration. However, those who present God's message of human balance and betterment should not always expect people to be rational and to follow common sense; they need to be patient and persistent and never give up, and God's judgment of what is right or wrong will certainly prevail in the end.

"O my two fellow-prisoners! Which is better and more sensible: many divine lords different from one another, or the One God, who holds absolute sway over all that exists?"
"Whatever you worship apart from Him is nothing but [empty] names which you have formulated, you and your forefathers, for which God has never brought any warrant. Judgment [as to what is right and what is wrong] rests with God alone; [and] He has

يَٰصَٰحِبَيِ
ٱلسِّجۡنِ ءَأَرۡبَابٞ مُّتَفَرِّقُونَ خَيۡرٌ أَمِ ٱللَّهُ
ٱلۡوَٰحِدُ ٱلۡقَهَّارُ ﴿٣٩﴾ مَا تَعۡبُدُونَ مِن
دُونِهِۦٓ إِلَّآ أَسۡمَآءٗ سَمَّيۡتُمُوهَآ أَنتُمۡ
وَءَابَآؤُكُم مَّآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ بِهَا مِن سُلۡطَٰنٍۚ

bidden that you should worship none but Him; this is the [one] ever-true faith with genuine value, but most people know not." [12:39-40]

إِنِ ٱلْحُكْمُ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ ۚ أَمَرَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ إِيَّاهُ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلدِّينُ ٱلْقَيِّمُ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

This is part of the presentation of the faith in the One God given by Prophet Joseph, when he was sent unjustly to prison, to two persons he found there. He did not talk to them from above as one who has been favored by God to be distinctive in his knowledge and capability of right judgement [12:22], but instead addressed them as fellow-prisoners, something that emphasized the common grounds between all of them. This is an approach that should be informative and inspiring for everyone who presents God's message to others. After such an encouraging start, a concise argument followed about the rationality of monotheism and the irrationality of polytheism. Can one who enjoys common sense really think that belief in numerous and conflicting gods is more sensible than belief in the One and only God, whose power is absolute? The oneness of God is rational and runs parallel with His Almightiness and absolute power on one side, as well as with the order and harmony in the universe, life and all His creation on the other [e.g. 21:22; 23:91].

When people speak of other gods, they are mentioning names that are nothing but an invention by the speaker and/or his/her forefathers which has no reality. God alone is the truth and the one who has power, knowledge and authority to tell what is right in this matter, and with Him rests the final judgment. Prophet Joseph is an example of the believer who does not miss any chance to present to others what he/she believes to be right even in prison and to those who are supposed to be offenders, but in a rational and impressive way.

Say: "This is my way; with full consciousness I and whoever follow me call to God. Limitless in His Glory is God; and I will never be among those who associate others with Him." [12:108]

قُلْ هَٰذِهِۦ سَبِيلِىٓ أَدْعُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ عَلَىٰ بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا۠ وَمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَنِى ۖ وَسُبْحَٰنَ ٱللَّهِ وَمَآ أَنَا۠ مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٠٨﴾

Islam, like all of the successive messages of God, stresses the oneness of God as the central fact which is essential for rightful thinking and righteous behavior. Consciousness of God can be reached through the various human faculties: sense perception, intellectual inference or spiritual intuition. The conveyor of God's message and those who really follow it in its true sense, call every human being as an individual, as well as all human beings as a whole, to be fully conscious of this truth: through all these faculties, so that there would be no neglect of any part of or split in the human personality or the universal reality.

And those who stubbornly deny the truth say: "Why has no miraculous sign ever been sent down to him [Muhammad] from his Lord?" But you are only a warner; and every people have a guide [to the truth in God and within their own selves].
God knows what every female bears [in her womb], and by how much the wombs may shrink or swell; and everything with Him has its measure [according to its role and purpose], the One who knows all that is beyond the reach of a creature's perception as well as all that can be perceived by a creature, the All-great, the All-exalted.
It is all alike [to Him] whether any of you speaks in secrecy or openly, and whether one tries to hide [his/her deeds] during the night or walks forth overtly by day.
Every one has attendants[angels] before him[/her] and behind him[/her] watching him[/her] by God's command. Verily, God does not cause the condition of people to change unless they themselves change what is in their own inner selves. And when God wills people to suffer [as a result of their own deeds], there is none who could turn this back; and they have none who could support or protect them from Him. [13:7-11]

وَيَقُولُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لَوْلَآ
أُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ ءَايَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦٓ ۗ إِنَّمَآ أَنتَ
مُنذِرٌ ۖ وَلِكُلِّ قَوْمٍ هَادٍ ﴿٧﴾ ٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ
مَا تَحْمِلُ كُلُّ أُنثَىٰ وَمَا تَغِيضُ
ٱلْأَرْحَامُ وَمَا تَزْدَادُ ۖ وَكُلُّ شَىْءٍ
عِندَهُۥ بِمِقْدَارٍ ﴿٨﴾ عَٰلِمُ ٱلْغَيْبِ
وَٱلشَّهَٰدَةِ ٱلْكَبِيرُ ٱلْمُتَعَالِ ﴿٩﴾ سَوَآءٌ
مِّنكُم مَّنْ أَسَرَّ ٱلْقَوْلَ وَمَن جَهَرَ بِهِۦ
وَمَنْ هُوَ مُسْتَخْفٍۭ بِٱلَّيْلِ وَسَارِبٌۢ بِٱلنَّهَارِ
﴿١٠﴾ لَهُۥ مُعَقِّبَٰتٌ مِّنۢ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ
خَلْفِهِۦ يَحْفَظُونَهُۥ مِنْ أَمْرِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا۟ مَا
بِأَنفُسِهِمْ ۗ وَإِذَآ أَرَادَ ٱللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ سُوٓءًا
فَلَا مَرَدَّ لَهُۥ ۚ وَمَا لَهُم مِّن دُونِهِۦ مِن
وَالٍ ﴿١١﴾

The universe and life are full of natural signs of creation and order that point to the Creator, the One All-mighty and Omnipotent God. If some people might challenge that they would only believe God's message if it was proved by "supernatural" miracles, then the Prophet should not be shocked or distressed since his message, as all other messages of God, was merely to call and warn, and following its guidance or rejecting it is the responsibility of the addressed people and what they choose freely in their given circumstances.

The verses then present some of the encompassing knowledge of the All-knowing. The development of the pregnancy and delivery, the evolvement of various faculties of the fetus and embryo, and the formation of the future personality of the baby that reaches its functions after a long process with all its numerous factors, but all this can be known in advance only by God, who puts laws and order for all His creation in perfectly calculated measure and coordination. He knows all that is beyond the reach of the perception of any creature, including that of the human being, and He knows what the human being may

hide or display. The "attendants" over every human being may be angels set by God's command to guard and protect, or they may be some wordly means through which the human being himself/herself tries to obtain support and help to reach his/her goals regardless of God's will and guidance, according to the different views of the classical commentators, but the former seems to have gained more supporters. However, God's favors and blessings to the human being are beyond counting, and it is still the human responsibility to get the best of them and be grateful to the Giver. The "attendants" would not stop the human being from his/her own self-destructiveness if he/she deliberately chooses to do this for himself/herself.

The Quran opens the eyes of every human being to the simple but very important law of human change, which applies to both individual physical, psychological, intellectual and spiritual-moral change, as it applies to social change: "*God does not cause the conditions of a people to change unless they themselves change what is in their own inner selves*" [12:11; see also 8:53]. A change toward the better or the worse cannot be expected by a mere divine interference: it must be an outcome of what the people themselves decide and carry out, in their material and moral conditions. "This is an illustration of the divine law of cause and effect (*sunnat Allah*) which dominates the lives of both individuals and communities, and makes the rise and fall of civilizations dependent on people's moral qualities," [Muhammad Asad: note 26 on 13:11] and the comprehensive development of human and material circumstances. If the people turn their own material and moral conditions deliberately to a worse state which is against all human merits and common sense, they will suffer the consequences of their deterioration, and any power cannot protect them from their own self-destruction as ordained by God's rules of social change that are as accurate and continual as the rules which control the succession of the day and night [3:26-27].

Say: "Who is the Lord of the heavens and the earth?"
Say: "[It is surely] God."
Say: "Then have you taken for yourselves others rather than Him to be your patrons and supporters, such as have no power either to bring benefit to or to avert harm from themselves?"
Say: "Is the blind equal to one who sees? Or are the depths of darkness equal to light?
"Or have they ascribed to God associates who have created the like of what He has created, so the creation is all alike to them [and confusing]?"
Say: "God is the Creator of everything, and He is the One, who holds absolute sway over all that exists." [13:16]

قُلْ
مَن رَّبُّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ قُلِ ٱللَّهُ ۚ
قُلْ أَفَٱتَّخَذْتُم مِّن دُونِهِۦٓ أَوْلِيَآءَ لَا
يَمْلِكُونَ لِأَنفُسِهِمْ نَفْعًا وَ لَا ضَرًّا ۚ قُلْ
هَلْ يَسْتَوِى ٱلْأَعْمَىٰ وَ ٱلْبَصِيرُ أَمْ هَلْ
تَسْتَوِى ٱلظُّلُمَٰتُ وَ ٱلنُّورُ ۚ أَمْ جَعَلُوا۟
لِلَّهِ شُرَكَآءَ خَلَقُوا۟ كَخَلْقِهِۦ فَتَشَٰبَهَ
ٱلْخَلْقُ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ قُلِ ٱللَّهُ خَٰلِقُ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ
وَهُوَ ٱلْوَٰحِدُ ٱلْقَهَّٰرُ ﴿١٦﴾

This is another Quranic verse that emphasizes the oneness of God and it calls the attention to the divine creation, in its genuineness and uniqueness. Those gods which people associate with the One God have created nothing that may mislead any serious observer. Since God alone has the power to create in the true sense of the word, "that is to bring into being something that did not exist either in its entirety or in its components before this particular act of creation," as Muhammad Asad has pointed out. It is God only who "when He wills a thing to be, He but says unto it: "Be, and it is" [2:117, also 3:47, 59, 16:40, 19:35, 36:82, 40:68].

Those who believe, and whose hearts find their rest in the remembrance of God; surely, in the remembrance of God do hearts find their rest. Those who attain to faith and do righteous deeds, theirs is blessedness [in this world's life] and a pleasant resort [in the eternal life to come]. [13:28-29]

ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَتَطۡمَئِنُّ
قُلُوبُهُم بِذِكۡرِ ٱللَّهِۗ أَلَا بِذِكۡرِ ٱللَّهِ
تَطۡمَئِنُّ ٱلۡقُلُوبُ ﴿٢٨﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ
وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ طُوبَىٰ لَهُمۡ وَحُسۡنُ
مَـَٔابٖ ﴿٢٩﴾

The signs of God in His creation are not only external; those, such as the human mind and heart and their development, are internal in the human being's inner-self. Blessedness is a state of rest and fulfillment: physically, intellectually, and morally. The faith in the One God secures the balance and stability of the individual from the depth of his/her own self in facing the ups and downs of this world's life, as well as the equality and togetherness of the society. There will furthermore be a happy end and complete blessedness and fulfillment in the beauteous home of rest in the eternal life to come, after the struggle of this life is over. As the previous verse [13:11] states, it is from the depth of the human self that any human change starts, for the better or for the worse.

And God does know what you conceal, and what you reveal. And those they call upon apart from God create nothing, and they themselves are created.
[They are really] dead, not living, and they do not know when they shall be raised from the dead.
Your God is the one God; and those who believe not in the life to come; their hearts deny [stubbornly] this [truth], and they are haughty.
Truly, God does know what they conceal, and what they reveal; verily, He loves not the haughty. [16:19-23]

وَٱللَّهُ يَعۡلَمُ مَا تُسِرُّونَ وَمَا تُعۡلِنُونَ ﴿١٩﴾
وَٱلَّذِينَ يَدۡعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ لَا
يَخۡلُقُونَ شَيۡـٔٗا وَهُمۡ يُخۡلَقُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾
أَمۡوَٰتٌ غَيۡرُ أَحۡيَآءٖۖ وَمَا يَشۡعُرُونَ
أَيَّانَ يُبۡعَثُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ إِلَٰهُكُمۡ إِلَٰهٞ وَٰحِدٞۚ
فَٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤۡمِنُونَ بِٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ قُلُوبُهُم
مُّنكِرَةٞ وَهُم مُّسۡتَكۡبِرُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾ لَا جَرَمَ
أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعۡلَمُ مَا يُسِرُّونَ وَمَا يُعۡلِنُونَۚ
إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلۡمُسۡتَكۡبِرِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾

God is the true Lord and the All-knowing of what is hidden or apparent. Everything else and everyone else are merely His creation, and they simply manifest His power and glory. If human beings submit themselves to a star, a natural power, or a great person, even if this great person is a prophet or a saint, they kill, in themselves, the characteristic intellectual and spiritual-moral merits of the human being and thus render themselves without life in its true sense. They limit their existence to the biological level, and exhaust their energy by narrowing their perspective to this life with all its sharp fluctuations and vicissitudes. Those who do not wish to believe in God and in the life to come, are in many cases merely following their ego-centrism and arrogance, and see themselves above accountability. Everything that one hides in his/her mind and heart, or that he/she spreads to few or many people, including the real motives behind denying what one realizes in himself/herself to be true, is fully known by God. Those who reject God's guidance out of selfishness and haughtiness are the real losers of His grace and support as He does not love the haughty and arrogant. They realize their insubstitutable loss when they become certain that they can never be self-sufficient or fully-fulfilled in this life, and far more so in the eternal life to come.

And if God were to call people [immediately] to account for their evil-doing, [on earth in this life] He would not leave, a single living creature upon its face, but He gives them respite for a term-set [by him]; and when the end of their term comes they shall not put it back for a single moment, nor put it forward. [16:61, see also 35:45]

وَلَوْ يُؤَاخِذُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلنَّاسَ بِظُلْمِهِم
مَّا تَرَكَ عَلَيْهَا مِن دَآبَّةٍ وَلَٰكِن يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ
إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۖ فَإِذَا جَآءَ أَجَلُهُمْ
لَا يَسْتَـْٔخِرُونَ سَاعَةً ۚ وَلَا يَسْتَقْدِمُونَ
٦١

God's plan is not to make His judgement and His subsequent requital occur in this life, in order to give the human being in general, a suitable time for a fair test with the chance for self-correction and improvement. This essential principle about this life and God's justice is repeatedly stressed through the whole Quran [e.g. 6:2, 60; 11:3; 14:10; 18:58; 20:129; 29:53; 39:42; 40:67; 42:14; 71:4]. If people were punished for every wrong they do as soon as they do it in this world's life and there is no place for God's forgiveness and the person's self-correction and repentance, then this world's life would come to a halt, and there would be no chance for human or world development. Thus, God gives people respite to allow them a suitable time for change for the better or for the worse. When the term of life in this world which is set by God expires, every person will be taken to judgement and subsequent requital, and any attempt to extend or shorten this term will be in vain. The Quran repeatedly stresses the concept of the individual's full accountability for every deed through the belief in the afterlife, since wrongdoing has its relative consequences of suffering in this world and righteousness is relatively rewarded in this world, and the real fulfillment and complete requital are in the life to come [e.g. 16:97, 20:123-124].

Say, "Call upon God, or call upon the All-merciful, by whatever name you call upon Him, [He is always the One], and hence be sure that His are the most beautiful names [and attributes of perfection]. And be not loud in your prayer, nor say it in too low a voice, but seek a way in between. And say, "All praise is due to God, who begets no offspring, and has no associate in His dominion, nor has He any need for a supporter from humbleness [that He has never had and will never have] and extol His Limitless Greatness. [17:110-111]

قُلِ ٱدْعُواْ ٱللَّهَ أَوِ ٱدْعُواْ
ٱلرَّحْمَٰنَ ۖ أَيًّا مَّا تَدْعُواْ فَلَهُ
ٱلْأَسْمَآءُ ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ ۚ وَلَا تَجْهَرْ بِصَلَاتِكَ
وَلَا تُخَافِتْ بِهَا وَٱبْتَغِ بَيْنَ ذَٰلِكَ سَبِيلًا
﴿١١٠﴾ وَقُلِ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى لَمْ يَتَّخِذْ
وَلَدًا وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُۥ شَرِيكٌ فِى ٱلْمُلْكِ
وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُۥ وَلِىٌّ مِّنَ ٱلذُّلِّ ۖ
وَكَبِّرْهُ تَكْبِيرًا ﴿١١١﴾

If God's nature and exact image cannot be grasped by the human perception, His names or attributes [referred to as a whole in other verses 7:180; 20:8; 59:24 and specified throughout the whole Quran in relevance to the context in each case] can help our limited thinking to conceive of His glory and His relationship to His creation. Besides, the human beings can be also inspired by these names as ideals that should guide their mortality, while always realizing the inequity between the Creator and any of His creations. The Quran and the Sunna of the Prophet indicate 99 names or attributes for God who will always be One, regardless of the name or attribute with which one addresses Him (some are mentioned in 59:22-24). He is not only the All-merciful but also the Most Gracious and Mercy-giving. These last two attributes of God have to be mentioned whenever one starts reciting a chapter (sura) of the Quran, and thus are repeated more than once in every prayer during the day, emphasizing the unconditional and all-embracing quality and exercise of mercy and grace by God "*who has willed upon Himself the law of grace and mercy*" [6:12, 54].

And to Him belongs whosoever is in the heavens and on earth, and those who are with Him never feel self-conceit when they worship Him, nor grow weary [thereof].
They extol His limitless glory by night and by day, and never failing [therein]. Have they taken earthly beings as gods, that will raise the dead?
Were there, in the heavens or on earth, gods other than the One God, they would have surely both fallen into ruin; but limitless in His glory is God, the Lord of the throne [far] above any of what people may describe Him

وَلَهُۥ مَن
فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ وَمَنْ عِندَهُۥ
لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِۦ وَلَا
يَسْتَحْسِرُونَ ﴿١٩﴾ يُسَبِّحُونَ ٱلَّيْلَ
وَٱلنَّهَارَ لَا يَفْتُرُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾ أَمِ ٱتَّخَذُوٓاْ
ءَالِهَةً مِّنَ ٱلْأَرْضِ هُمْ يُنشِرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ لَوْ
كَانَ فِيهِمَآ ءَالِهَةٌ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا
فَسُبْحَٰنَ ٱللَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

with. He cannot be called to account for whatever He does, but they will be called to account. And yet, have they taken for worship [other] gods apart from Him? Say: "Bring out evidence for what you are claiming; here is what those who are with me have been referring to, and there was what those before me were referring to," [and neither can support your claim]. Nay, but most of them do not make a serious effort to know the truth well, yet they stubbornly turn away [from it].

And before your time We never sent any conveyor of [Our] message except with Our revelation [which he had to convey to people] that there is no deity save Me, [and that] therefore you worship Me [alone].

And [yet] some say: "The All-merciful has taken to Him a son!" Limitless is He in His glory, those [to whom they ascribe such a relationship] are [but His] worshippers raised by Him to honor. They outstrip Him not in speech, and they act at His command. He knows what is before them, and what is behind them, and they never intercede for any but those whom He has graced with His goodly acceptance, and they themselves stand in reverent awe of Him. And if any of them were to say, "I am a god beside Him", such a one We should requite with hell; thus do we requite all evildoers. [21:19-29]

لَا يُسْـَٔلُ عَمَّا يَفْعَلُ وَهُمْ يُسْـَٔلُونَ
(٢٣) أَمِ ٱتَّخَذُوا۟ مِن دُونِهِۦٓ ءَالِهَةً ۖ قُلْ
هَاتُوا۟ بُرْهَـٰنَكُمْ ۖ هَـٰذَا ذِكْرُ مَن مَّعِىَ
وَذِكْرُ مَن قَبْلِى ۗ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ
ٱلْحَقَّ ۖ فَهُم مُّعْرِضُونَ (٢٤) وَمَآ
أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ مِن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِىٓ
إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُۥ لَآ إِلَـٰهَ إِلَّآ أَنَا۠ فَٱعْبُدُونِ
(٢٥) وَقَالُوا۟ ٱتَّخَذَ ٱلرَّحْمَـٰنُ وَلَدًا ۗ
سُبْحَـٰنَهُۥ ۚ بَلْ عِبَادٌ مُّكْرَمُونَ (٢٦) لَا
يَسْبِقُونَهُۥ بِٱلْقَوْلِ وَهُم بِأَمْرِهِۦ يَعْمَلُونَ
(٢٧) يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ
وَلَا يَشْفَعُونَ إِلَّا لِمَنِ ٱرْتَضَىٰ وَهُم مِّنْ
خَشْيَتِهِۦ مُشْفِقُونَ (٢٨) ۞ وَمَن يَقُلْ
مِنْهُمْ إِنِّىٓ إِلَـٰهٌ مِّن دُونِهِۦ فَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِيهِ
جَهَنَّمَ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِى ٱلظَّـٰلِمِينَ (٢٩)

The above verses underline certain basic arguments and principles related to the faith in the One God. In the beginning [21:19-22] we find the argument that the belief in the existence of different gods implies either contradiction in their wills and decisions if they are all equal in having absolute power or limitations in the powers of each and a lack of order and coordination if there is division of power among them. The two situations are problematic since contradictory wills and decisions of equal al-mighty gods would lead to chaos in the universe, while a god with limited power cannot be a convincing god. Besides, different gods may possess different moral ideas, according to their different attributes and attitudes.

Then comes the belief in the full and perfect justice of God, which leads the believer to submit his/her whole self to His will and guidance without making himself/herself the center of the world in considering right and wrong, good and evil. Human beings have to be called to account, by others in this life, or by Him alone on the Day of Judgement, while

God cannot be called to account since all apart from Him are simply His creation [21:23]. Accordingly, any human being who puts himself/herself above accountability, implicitly or explicitly, is requiring from the people to deal with him as god. This shows how inspiring the faith in the One God is, with regard to human rights, and the human equality, and with regard to accountability about them and about all one's deeds in this world's life.

Afterwards, the Quran teaches that any claim should be based on concrete observation and convincing logic [21:24]. The fundamental requirement for a fair and productive argument has been repeatedly stressed throughout the whole Quran [e.g. beside the above 21:24, see also 2:111, 10:68, 27:64, 28:75, 37:156-157, 40:56].

In the verse 21:25 it is concisely and impressively stated that the essence of all successive messages of God is one: "that there is no God but I; therefore worship and serve Me" [see also 5:72-3, 117, 7:59, 65, 73, 85, 11:50, 61, 84, 16:36, 21:92, 23:23, 32, 27:45, 29:16, 36...] As "Islam" in Arabic means "submission" which is meant to be to God alone, all the successive messengers of God taught, "Islam" in its wider and comprehensive sense [e.g. 2:112, 131-133, 136, 3:20, 52, 64-83, 84, 4:125, 5:44, 111, 21:108, 22:34, 27:44, 28:53, 29:46; 31:22].

According to the fundamental and clear principle of all messages of God - that He is One and all worship is due to Him alone - all whom God honors such as angels or prophets or others are merely His worshippers who know how they should sincerely obey Him, and this is the reason for their closeness to God and the honor they receive from Him [21:26-29]. Accordingly, none of them is expected to intercede or argue for anyone unless both the intercessor and the person on whose behalf they are interceding are accepted by God. Therefore, none of those honored persons can claim that he is God or a partner of God, since he knows his real place and knows that anyone who misinterprets God's favor, whoever he may be, deserves the due requital from God's justice which is never biased. The case of Jesus, whom the Muslims believe to be a prophet and a conveyor of God's message of God, while it is claimed by others that he is the son of God, is an obvious example in this case [see also 4:171-172, 5:75, 110-11, 116-118].

In this way, the above verses present very serious and valuable points related to the faith in the One God, which shape the thinking and feeling of the believer. The faith in the One God cannot be separated from the belief in His justice in which there is no place for favoritism, the belief in human rights and equality and accountability, and in the oneness of this message which has established these principles through successive revelations. The order and harmony in creation and the oneness of the Lord Creator is not only the message of Islam as preached by Muhammad and those who were "with him", but also was preached by all the previous prophets. It is the message that secures a balance within the human being in his/her totality with all the physical, psychological, intellectual, moral, and spiritual dimensions, as well as a rapport between each human being and his/her mate, all human beings, and the whole world around them.

Say: "Unto whom belongs the earth and all beings thereon if you may really know?"

قُل لِّمَنِ ٱلْأَرْضُ
وَمَن فِيهَآ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾

They will answer, "To God!" Say: "Will you not, then, be mindful?"
Say: "Who is the Lord of the seven heavens, and the mighty throne?"
They will answer, "[All are] God's". Say, "Will you not, then, be always conscious of Him?"
Say: "In whose hand is the mighty dominion over everything; and who can protect [all] while none can protect against Him? [Say] if you may really know."
They will reply "[All are] God's". Say: "How then can you be deluded?"
Nay, but we have brought them the truth, and yet they indeed are merely lying [to themselves and to others].
Never did God take to himself any offspring, nor has there ever been any deity side by side with Him; [for if this was the case] each deity would surely have stood apart [from the others] in whatever one had created, and they would surely have [tried to] prevail over one another: Limitless in His glory is God, [far] above whatever people may define.
He knows all that is beyond the reach of a created being's perception; highly exalted be He above any they may associate [with Him]. [23:84-92]

سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ ۚ قُلْ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾
قُلْ مَن رَّبُّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ ٱلسَّبْعِ وَرَبُّ
ٱلْعَرْشِ ٱلْعَظِيمِ ﴿٨٦﴾ سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ ۚ
قُلْ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿٨٧﴾ قُلْ مَنۢ بِيَدِهِۦ
مَلَكُوتُ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ وَهُوَ يُجِيرُ وَلَا يُجَارُ
عَلَيْهِ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾ سَيَقُولُونَ
لِلَّهِ ۚ قُلْ فَأَنَّىٰ تُسْحَرُونَ ﴿٨٩﴾ بَلْ
أَتَيْنَٰهُم بِٱلْحَقِّ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَكَٰذِبُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾ مَا
ٱتَّخَذَ ٱللَّهُ مِن وَلَدٍ وَمَا كَانَ مَعَهُۥ مِنْ
إِلَٰهٍ ۚ إِذًا لَّذَهَبَ كُلُّ إِلَٰهٍۭ بِمَا خَلَقَ
وَلَعَلَا بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ ۚ سُبْحَٰنَ ٱللَّهِ
عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿٩١﴾ عَٰلِمِ ٱلْغَيْبِ
وَٱلشَّهَٰدَةِ فَتَعَٰلَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٩٢﴾

These verses refer to the historical fact that on the eve of Islam the Arabs, or at least some of them, like others who truly follow their feelings and thinking, believed in a supreme god who is the sovereign and almighty. However, these people ignored what they felt and thought and contradicted it by believing in other gods instead of believing in Him alone. The above verses stress what is mentioned in the verse [21:22] "*Were there in the heavens or on earth, gods other than the One God, they would have surely both fallen into ruin.*" If there were multiple gods, a split between them would have been expected as each would have a rival with the others on the grounds of his/her creation and power, and would try to prevail. How would the universe in its accurate order be maintained and controlled in such chaotic disputes and conflicts?

The order and harmony in the cosmos and in the living creatures manifest the oneness and power of the Creator. It is delusion to think of other than the One God, if one considers for a moment the differences that such multi-directions in the nature and merits and decisions of two or more deities would lead to in running the universe.

The verses emphasize again that God has never taken unto himself any offspring, whether angels or Jesus. God is high above all such relationships. He is the One true God who cannot be compared with any of His creatures. He is the One who only knows what can not be perceived by any creature and what may be perceived by any.

Have they never reflected within their own themselves?
Not but in truth and for a term set [by Him], did God create the heavens and the earth, and what is between them; yet there are many people who stubbornly deny that they should meet their Lord [on the Day of Resurrection].
Have they not journeyed about the earth, and observed what happened in the end to those before them? They were greater in power than them; and worked the earth and built it up more than they have done; there came to them their conveyors of [God's] message with clear signs and evidence of truth, and God never wronged them, but it was they who wronged their own selves.
And [in all cases], evil is bound to the end of those who do evil, as they give the lie to God's messages, and deride them.
It is God who originates the creation, and then brings it forth again, and in the end, unto Him you all shall be brought back. [30:8-11]

أَوَ لَمْ
يَتَفَكَّرُوا۟ فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ ۗ مَّا خَلَقَ ٱللَّهُ
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضَ وَ مَا بَيْنَهُمَآ إِلَّا
بِٱلْحَقِّ وَ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۗ وَ إِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ
ٱلنَّاسِ بِلِقَآئِ رَبِّهِمْ لَكَٰفِرُونَ ﴿٨﴾ أَوَ لَمْ
يَسِيرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَيَنظُرُوا۟ كَيْفَ كَانَ
عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ كَانُوٓا۟ أَشَدَّ مِنْهُمْ
قُوَّةً وَ أَثَارُوا۟ ٱلْأَرْضَ وَ عَمَرُوهَآ أَكْثَرَ
مِمَّا عَمَرُوهَا وَ جَآءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُم
بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ ۖ فَمَا كَانَ ٱللَّهُ لِيَظْلِمَهُمْ
وَلَٰكِن كَانُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿٩﴾ ثُمَّ
كَانَ عَٰقِبَةَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَسَٰٓـُٔوا۟ ٱلسُّوٓأَىٰٓ ۚ أَن
كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ وَ كَانُوا۟ بِهَا
يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿١٠﴾ ٱللَّهُ يَبْدَؤُا۟ ٱلْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ
يُعِيدُهُۥ ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿١١﴾

An awareness of the universe would help a person understand its creation and order, and an awareness of the human history would enlighten a person about the human destiny. There has been a pattern rising and falling for individuals, societies, civilizations and political powers. Social and political developments and changes have laws just as cosmic and biological ones do [3:26-27].

No one who has some worldly power or advantage enjoys it forever. He/she is allowed it according to God's laws in this life [e.g. 3:26, 7:128-129, 21:105, 22:40-41, 24:55, 47:38]. Everyone will be at the receiving end of the use or abuse of power in this life, since one of God's laws that rule human societies is that "*evil is bound to be the end of those who do evil,*" [30:10] and that when people deviate from using their common sense and instead ignore the guidance of their Lord in His creation and revelation, they strive for their own self-destruction. They will be requited for their deeds in the eternal life to come when God brings His creation forth again, and gives a due full and accurate

reckoning for every individual in this previous period of life and then they all will see that "*it was not God who wronged them, but it was they who wronged their own selves*" [30:9].

Extol, then, God's limitless glory, when you reach the evening hours, and when you come to the morning.

And to Him is due all praise, in the heavens and on earth; late in the day as well as in mid-day.

It is He who brings forth the living from the dead, and brings forth the dead from the living, and He revives the earth after it has been lifeless, and thus shall you be brought forth [from death to life].

And among His signs [and wonders] is that He has created you from dust; and then you become human beings spread far and wide.

And among His wonders is that He created for you mates from among yourselves that you might find restfulness [and satisfaction], and He has engendered between you affection, and tenderness; surely, in that are signs for people who think.

And among His signs [and wonders] is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the diversity of your tongues and hues; surely, in that are signs [and wonders] for those who really have knowledge.

And among His signs [and wonders] is your sleep at night and in the daytime, and your [ability for] seeking of His bounty; surely in that are signs for people who listen.

And among His signs [and wonders] is that He shows you the lightning that bears [both] fear and hope, and that He sends down water from the sky, giving life thereby to the earth after it had been lifeless; surely in that are signs for people who use their minds.

And among His signs [and wonders] is that the skies and the earth stand firm by His command, then in the end when He calls you forth out of the earth with a single call, you shall all

فَسُبْحَٰنَ ٱللَّهِ حِينَ
تُمْسُونَ وَ حِينَ تُصْبِحُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ وَ لَهُ
ٱلْحَمْدُ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ
وَعَشِيًّا وَ حِينَ تُظْهِرُونَ ﴿١٨﴾ يُخْرِجُ
ٱلْحَىَّ مِنَ ٱلْمَيِّتِ وَ يُخْرِجُ ٱلْمَيِّتَ مِنَ
ٱلْحَىِّ وَ يُحْىِ ٱلْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا ۚ
وَكَذَٰلِكَ تُخْرَجُونَ ﴿١٩﴾ وَ مِنْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦٓ أَنْ
خَلَقَكُم مِّن تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ إِذَآ أَنتُم بَشَرٌ
تَنتَشِرُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَ مِنْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦٓ أَنْ خَلَقَ
لَكُم مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَٰجًا لِّتَسْكُنُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهَا
وَ جَعَلَ بَيْنَكُم مَّوَدَّةً وَ رَحْمَةً ۚ إِنَّ فِى
ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ وَ مِنْ
ءَايَٰتِهِۦ خَلْقُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ
وَ ٱخْتِلَٰفُ أَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَ أَلْوَٰنِكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ فِى
ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّلْعَٰلِمِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾ وَ مِنْ
ءَايَٰتِهِۦ مَنَامُكُم بِٱلَّيْلِ وَ ٱلنَّهَارِ
وَ ٱبْتِغَآؤُكُم مِّن فَضْلِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ
لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَسْمَعُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ وَ مِنْ
ءَايَٰتِهِۦ يُرِيكُمُ ٱلْبَرْقَ خَوْفًا وَ طَمَعًا
وَيُنَزِّلُ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَيُحْىِۦ بِهِ
ٱلْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَآ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ
لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ وَ مِنْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦٓ أَن
تَقُومَ ٱلسَّمَآءُ وَ ٱلْأَرْضُ بِأَمْرِهِۦ ۚ ثُمَّ إِذَا
دَعَاكُمْ دَعْوَةً مِّنَ ٱلْأَرْضِ إِذَآ أَنتُمْ

[straight-away] come forth.
Unto Him belongs every being that is in the heavens and on earth; all are devoutly obedient to Him.
And it is He who originates the creation, then brings it forth again; and for Him this can happen with more ease. He is the Supreme ideal [of whatever you may think] in the heavens and the earth; and He alone is the All-mighty, All-wise.
He does propound to you a parable drawn from your own life: would you [agree to] have from those whom your right hands possess, partners in whatever We have provided for you as sustenance who are fully equal to you, and whom you would fear as you might fear one another? Thus do We clearly spell out these messages to people who use their minds.
But nay, the evil-doers [merely] follow their own whims without relying on any knowledge [of what is right]. Then, who could guide those whom God has [thus] let go astray and they have none to support them?
So set you your face steadfastly towards the one pure faith, turning away from all that is false, [the faith] that is in accordance with the nature which God has created, but most people do not realize it, and be not among those who associate others with Him, [and/or] who have broken the unity of their faith and have become [several] sects; each party rejoicing in what they themselves hold [as beliefs]. [30:17-32]

تَخْرُجُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾ وَ لَهُۥ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ كُلٌّ لَّهُۥ قَٰنِتُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾ وَ هُوَ
ٱلَّذِى يَبْدَؤُا۟ ٱلْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُۥ وَ هُوَ
أَهْوَنُ عَلَيْهِ ۚ وَ لَهُ ٱلْمَثَلُ ٱلْأَعْلَىٰ فِى
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ وَ هُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ
ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٢٧﴾ ضَرَبَ لَكُم مَّثَلًا مِّنْ
أَنفُسِكُمْ ۖ هَل لَّكُم مِّن مَّا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَٰنُكُم
مِّن شُرَكَآءَ فِى مَا رَزَقْنَٰكُمْ فَأَنتُمْ فِيهِ
سَوَآءٌ تَخَافُونَهُمْ كَخِيفَتِكُمْ أَنفُسَكُمْ ۚ
كَذَٰلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾
بَلِ ٱتَّبَعَ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوٓا۟ أَهْوَآءَهُم بِغَيْرِ
عِلْمٍ ۖ فَمَن يَهْدِى مَنْ أَضَلَّ ٱللَّهُ ۖ وَ مَا
لَهُم مِّن نَّٰصِرِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾ فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ
حَنِيفًا ۚ فِطْرَتَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّتِى فَطَرَ ٱلنَّاسَ
عَلَيْهَا ۚ لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ
ٱلدِّينُ ٱلْقَيِّمُ وَ لَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا
يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ ۝ مُنِيبِينَ إِلَيْهِ وَ ٱتَّقُوهُ
وَ أَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَ لَا تَكُونُوا۟ مِنَ
ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٣١﴾ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ فَرَّقُوا۟ دِينَهُمْ
وَ كَانُوا۟ شِيَعًا ۖ كُلُّ حِزْبٍۭ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ
فَرِحُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

A human being, who enjoys sound senses and thinking, can reflect on the events of his/her daily life, from the time he/she rises at the beginning of the day, to the midst of his/her work during the whole day and until the time when he/she goes to bed at its end. The five daily prayers are distributed throughout the day, from its beginning to its end to help the believer reflect on a certain number of hours and their happenings, and to remember the Lord Supreme beyond all universal and human development. In addition to recounting the human's activities during the course of one day, earning one's living out of God's bounty, and receiving rest during sleep, the verses call attention to the phenomenon of life in all the living creatures in general and the human beings in particular, and the cycle of this life in its limited term, and the interaction between the animate and the inanimate

in producing and maintaining life. As for the human life, it originated from dust but it spreads through the creation of the two sexes and the attraction between them that is created by God and combines love and kindness. As a result of marriage and spreading through the earth, humanity has become diverse in its tongues and colors, although equal in human essence and merits. Every language, culture, racial features and colors are going through continuous changes which develop new and different groupings in the human race, but this is merely one component in the whole magnificent and huge universe "*Certainly the creation of the heavens and the earth is greater than the creation of the human beings, yet most people recognize not [such a significant fact]*" [40:57]. Therefore, God's signs and wonders in creation of the heavens and the earth and the cosmic order are underlined in the above verses in general, with particular reference to lightning and rain and their effects on life [30:17-19, 24]. Contemplating in these facts about the universe and life, the verses point out that the bringing forth of life after death is within God's power and human expectations, since this is easier than creating it in the first place. It is God alone who has the power to do all that, and to maintain what He has created in such order. How can one associate with the Omnipotent Creator some of His creatures, while one cannot accept as equal partner any who is under one's authority? The faith in the One God and the adherence to His message and guidance comply with the human nature and fulfill its potential to the maximum, "*the ever-true faith, though most people do not realize it.*" Deviating from God's message that complies with human nature and the universe, would lead to splits and disputes instead of order and harmony, as each grouping would be centered around conflicting egoistic feelings and ideas, and each would no more represent the grace of God in its universality and inclusiveness, but the human sectarianism in its rigidity and exclusiveness.

It is He who has created the skies without supports that you can see, and He has set on the earth mountains standing firm, lest it should shake with you, and He has spread through it living creatures of all kinds. And We send down water from the sky, and thus We cause every kind illustrious and rewarding to grow in pairs.
Such is the creation of God: show me, then, what others than Him may have created. Nay, but the evildoers are merely in obvious stray.
[31:10-11]

خَلَقَ
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ بِغَيْرِ عَمَدٍ تَرَوْنَهَا ۖ وَأَلْقَىٰ
فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ رَوَٰسِىَ أَن تَمِيدَ بِكُمْ وَبَثَّ
فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ دَآبَّةٍ ۚ وَأَنزَلْنَا مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ
مَآءً فَأَنۢبَتْنَا فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ زَوْجٍ كَرِيمٍ
﴿١٠﴾ هَٰذَا خَلْقُ ٱللَّهِ ۚ فَأَرُونِى مَاذَا
خَلَقَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن دُونِهِۦ ۚ بَلِ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ
فِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿١١﴾

Going from the creation to the Creator, the verses call attention to the huge space with all its stars and planets suspended in it according to God's laws even though there are no visible supports, the earth and its equilibrium in its amazingly speedy rotation and the various kinds of life on it, the process of rain and subsequent vegetation and the way in

which living creatures, including plants, multiply. All these are of God's creation, and what other gods than He could create? God's creation of the universe is combined with His maintenance of its order, and His creation of life is combined with His laws of reproduction. The order and harmony of the universe and its dynamism, self-adjustment and interactions, and the continuation of life through self-reparation and reproduction point to the oneness and omnipotence of the creator: "*... no fault you may see in the creation of the All-merciful; turn your vision through it one time after another: can you see any flaw?*" [67:3].

Have you not seen that God has subjected to you what is in the heavens and what is on earth [through His laws of nature] and has granted you generously His overwhelming blessings and favors, both visible and invisible. And yet among people there is such a one who argues about God, without knowledge or guidance, or a [divine] light- giving book.
And when they are told to follow what God has sent down, they answer, "No, we but follow that which we found our forefathers believing and doing" What? Even though Satan was calling them to the suffering of the blazing fire? [31:20-21]

أَلَمْ
تَرَوْا أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَخَّرَ لَكُم مَّا فِى
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ مَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَ أَسْبَغَ
عَلَيْكُمْ نِعَمَهُۥ ظَٰهِرَةً وَ بَاطِنَةً ۗ وَ مِنَ
ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يُجَٰدِلُ فِى ٱللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ
وَلَا هُدًى وَ لَا كِتَٰبٍ مُّنِيرٍ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَ إِذَا قِيلَ
لَهُمُ ٱتَّبِعُوا مَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ قَالُوا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ
مَا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ ءَابَآءَنَآ ۚ أَوَ لَوْ كَانَ
ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ يَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ ٱلسَّعِيرِ ﴿٢١﴾

God has given the human being the physical, intellectual, and psychological-spiritual abilities to subdue the forces of nature around him/her, however mighty or complicated these forces may be. God's bounties and blessings are lavished on us at all times, within our own bodies and selves and outside in the world where we live. Sometimes they are perceived and sometimes they are beyond the human perception. But there are people who both lack the knowledge that they have developed themselves, and do not ask others who know for guidance; moreover they deprive themselves from the light of the divine revelation. The deniers of God, whether in the past or the present, cannot introduce any more convincing explanation about the creation of the cosmos and its laws and order, or the creation of life and its development would end in all living creatures. They may like to speak vaguely or ambiguously about a prime factor or the prime motive. Rather, God's knowledge about His creation is more accurate and reasonable, and God's power and Control is infinite, "*I did not have them as witnesses at the creation of the heavens and the earth, nor even at their own creation*" [18:51]. The atheists are just substituting the belief in God with a contrary "belief" that denies God without excluding the psychological and philosophical elements of belief. However, those who stubbornly denied the truth in the past

were content to merely follow the traditions of their ancestors, without any new and positive effort to think about such old traditions and to evaluate them. They follow passively, believing that they are showing reverence in this way to their forefathers, although they are causing themselves to suffer from the evils of what they blindly imitate in this life and in the life to come.

مَّا
خَلْقُكُمْ وَ لَا بَعْثُكُمْ إِلَّا كَنَفْسٍ وَٰحِدَةٍ ۚ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَمِيعٌۢ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٢٨﴾ أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ
ٱللَّهَ يُولِجُ ٱلَّيْلَ فِى ٱلنَّهَارِ وَ يُولِجُ
ٱلنَّهَارَ فِى ٱلَّيْلِ وَ سَخَّرَ ٱلشَّمْسَ
وَ ٱلْقَمَرَ كُلٌّ يَجْرِىٓ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى
وَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ﴿٢٩﴾ ذَٰلِكَ
بِأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلْحَقُّ وَ أَنَّ مَا يَدْعُونَ مِن
دُونِهِ ٱلْبَٰطِلُ وَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلْعَلِىُّ
ٱلْكَبِيرُ ﴿٣٠﴾

[For Him] the creation of you all, and the resurrection of you all is but as [the creation and resurrection of] a single soul; surely, God is All-hearing and All-seeing.
Have you not seen how that God makes the night to come through the day, and makes the day come through the night; and how He has made the sun and the moon subservient [to His law and for your benefit], each running its course for a term set [by Him]; and that God is fully aware of all that you do?
That is because God alone is the Ultimate Truth, and that because whatever else they call apart from Him is merely a falsehood; and that God alone is the All-high, the All-great. [31:28-30]

In view of God's almightiness and infinitude, the creation and resurrection of all mankind is just as that of a single soul. However, the mass resurrection does not diminish from the individual responsibility and judgement of every human being on his/her own individual merits.

Another example of God's might is that He merges night into day and day into night in any given place in a gradual and unshocking transition. The Time of day is different from place to place on the earth according to that place's longitude, and the length of day and night on the earth differ according to each place's latitude and the earth's angle with the sun at each latitude. Each of the sun and moon follows God's laws and accurate timing; "*Neither may the sun overtake the moon, nor can the night outstrip the day, since all of them float through space [according to God's laws for the universe]*" [36:40].

The wonderful varieties, complexities, and gradations in creation are harmoniously blended in one wholeness and totality that is run flawlessly through co-related laws and order, manifesting the One God, the Ultimate and Eternal Truth with whom whatever may be put as an associate or equal would be merely a falsehood. He alone is the Exalted, and the truly Great.

O human beings! Be conscious of your Lord, and stand in awe of the [coming] Day on which no parent will be of any avail to his[/her] child nor a child will be of any avail whatever for his [/her] parent.
Surely, God's promise [of resurrection and the life to come] is true; let not then the life of this world delude you, and let not a deluded one about God delude you.
Surely, with God alone rests the knowledge when the last hour will come; and He is the One who sends down rain; and He [alone] knows what is in the wombs [regarding its future development and abilities]. And no human being knows [definitely] what he [/she] will earn tomorrow, and no human being knows in what land he [/she] will die. Surely, Go [alone] is All-knowing, All-aware. [31:33-34]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ ٱتَّقُوا۟ رَبَّكُمْ وَٱخْشَوْا۟
يَوْمًا لَّا يَجْزِى وَالِدٌ عَن وَلَدِهِۦ وَلَا
مَوْلُودٌ هُوَ جَازٍ عَن وَالِدِهِۦ شَيْـًٔا ۚ إِنَّ
وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقٌّ ۖ فَلَا تَغُرَّنَّكُمُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ
ٱلدُّنْيَا وَلَا يَغُرَّنَّكُم بِٱللَّهِ ٱلْغَرُورُ ﴿٣٣﴾
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عِندَهُۥ عِلْمُ ٱلسَّاعَةِ وَيُنَزِّلُ
ٱلْغَيْثَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِى ٱلْأَرْحَامِ ۖ وَمَا
تَدْرِى نَفْسٌ مَّاذَا تَكْسِبُ غَدًا ۖ وَمَا
تَدْرِى نَفْسٌۢ بِأَىِّ أَرْضٍ تَمُوتُ ۚ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿٣٤﴾

The first of the above verses stresses how individual God's judgement will be in the life to come. On that Day, no person can help another, however closely related and loving they may have been in this life; even a parent cannot take the judgement for his/her child, and vice versa. Each will be judged personally for what he/she has done in this life.

The illusion of this world's life and its pleasures, Satan's temptation and human weakness and shortsightedness may deceive us, erasing the thought of the Day of Judgement and the life to come from our minds. However, God's promise about what is coming will certainly be fulfilled. One's last day of life in this world may come suddenly today or tomorrow or when one never expects it to come.

The last verse concisely presents some signs of God's knowledge and power. He knows when this life will come to its end, and He causes through His laws in the universe the rain to bring down life to all living creatures. God knows what is really in a mother's womb, not simply what can be apparent in the fetus or embryo, even with developed genetic determinations. He also knows the deeply rooted intellectual and psychological-spiritual potentials, whether future developments will allow what is in the womb to be born and grow healthily or not, and how the continuous development of this tiny reproduction would be. In the human life, many internal and external factors interact, and the final results of such an interaction may not possibly be anticipated. Accordingly, a material or spiritual gain or loss may happen at any moment without expectation. Accidents of various kinds and death caused by known and unknown factors come to the human being without anticipation. Death can come at any place on one's way to any destination. God alone is the One who is All-knowing and All-aware of the whole past, present and future, and no human being should be deluded by what may be noticeable on the surface, since

there is in the depth what is far beyond the human knowledge, *"and you have been granted of knowledge only a little"* [17:85].

Say: "Who is it that provides for you sustenance, out of the heavens and the earth?"
Say: "It is God; and surely either we or you are on the right path or obviously in serious error."
Say: "Neither shall you be considered accountable for whatever we may be guilty of, nor shall we be considered accountable for whatever you are doing."
Say: "Our Lord will bring us together [on the Day of Judgement], then will judge between us and lay open the whole truth in all justice; and He is alone the One who clears up all truth, the All-knowing."
Say: "Show me those whom you have joined with Him as patrons!
Nay, but He alone is God, the All-mighty, the All-wise."
We have not sent you [O Muhammad] otherwise than to all human beings at large, to bear good tidings and warning as well, but most people do not really know [such a fact].
They say: "When will this promise [of resurrection and judgement] come to pass if you [who believe in it] are telling the truth?"
Say: "There has been appointed for you a day that you shall not put back, nor advance by a single moment." [34:24-30]

قُلْ مَن يَرْزُقُكُم مِّنَ
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ قُلِ ٱللَّهُ ۙ
وَإِنَّآ أَوْ إِيَّاكُمْ لَعَلَىٰ هُدًى أَوْ فِى ضَلَٰلٍ
مُّبِينٍ ﴿٢٤﴾ قُل لَّا تُسْـَٔلُونَ عَمَّآ أَجْرَمْنَا
وَ لَا نُسْـَٔلُ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾ قُلْ يَجْمَعُ
بَيْنَنَا رَبُّنَا ثُمَّ يَفْتَحُ بَيْنَنَا بِٱلْحَقِّ وَ هُوَ
ٱلْفَتَّاحُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿٢٦﴾ قُلْ أَرُونِىَ ٱلَّذِينَ
أَلْحَقْتُم بِهِۦ شُرَكَآءَ ۖ كَلَّا ۚ بَلْ هُوَ ٱللَّهُ
ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٢٧﴾ وَ مَآ أَرْسَلْنَٰكَ إِلَّا
كَآفَّةً لِّلنَّاسِ بَشِيرًا وَ نَذِيرًا وَ لَٰكِنَّ
أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾ وَ يَقُولُونَ
مَتَىٰ هَٰذَا ٱلْوَعْدُ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾
قُل لَّكُم مِّيعَادُ يَوْمٍ لَّا تَسْتَـْٔخِرُونَ عَنْهُ
سَاعَةً وَ لَا تَسْتَقْدِمُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

This is another Quranic presentation of fundamentals of the Islamic faith: the Oneness of God the Lord and the Sustainer, the individual responsibility of each human being and the absoluteness of God in His judgement which is inescapable and its time cannot be pulled back or pushed forward.

One can notice how the Quran puts the case discussed in these verses in an objective way with neutral language. A dialogue is assumed between those who believe in the One God and those who ascribe divinity to others beside Him. For the sake of a fair argument, there is no definition at the beginning to state which party is right and which is wrong. What a great teaching for an argument or dialogue of such importance!

The verse [28] above states the universality of the message of Islam. It is not meant for a certain family, tribe, or people, but for the whole humanity; it brings good tidings

about what will occur in this life and the life to come to those who follow God's guidance, while it warns those who reject or deviate from the truth and righteousness. Each one will bear the consequences of his/her own decision and deeds to a certain extent in this life, and will be fully judged in the eternal life which surely will follow in the exact time as decided by God, and cannot be delayed or advanced for a single moment by anybody. It is the time now in this life for each human being to do what is righteous, and to avoid what is evil, and thus the good tidings are fulfilled in the whole human life in its two stages: the present transitory one and the eternal one to come.

O people! It is you who are in need of God; whereas He alone is the Self-Sufficient and free of all wants, and the Worthy of all praise.
If He so wills, He can take you away and bring forth a new creation; that is surely no great matter for God.
And no bearer of burdens shall be made to bear another's burden, and if one heavy-burdened soul calls for [its] load to be carried [by another], nothing thereof will be carried [for it] even it be one's near of kin. You but reach with your warning those who observe in awe [the judgement] of their Lord who is beyond the reach of their perception, and keep up prayer, and whoever purifies himself[/herself] does so for the good of his [/her] own self; and to God is all journeys' end.
Not equal are the blind and the seeing person; nor the depths of darkness and the light; nor the [cooling] shade and the torrid heat. And not equal are the living and the dead. God causes whomever He wills to hear [according to the human free will that God has granted], but you cannot make to hear those [who are dead of heart like the dead] in graves.
You are no other than a warner.
Surely, We have sent you with the truth as a bearer of good tidings and a warning; and there never was a people who had no warner.
And if they give you the lie, those before them gave the lie [to the truth, when] the conveyors of the message came to them with clear signs, and [earlier concise] books of wisdom, and the [detailed] enlightening book.

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا
ٱلنَّاسُ أَنتُمُ ٱلْفُقَرَآءُ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَ ٱللَّهُ
هُوَ ٱلْغَنِىُّ ٱلْحَمِيدُ ﴿١٥﴾ إِن يَشَأْ يُذْهِبْكُمْ
وَ يَأْتِ بِخَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ ﴿١٦﴾ وَ مَا ذَٰلِكَ
عَلَى ٱللَّهِ بِعَزِيزٍ ﴿١٧﴾ وَ لَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ
وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ ۚ وَ إِن تَدْعُ مُثْقَلَةٌ إِلَىٰ
حِمْلِهَا لَا يُحْمَلْ مِنْهُ شَىْءٌ وَ لَوْ كَانَ ذَا
قُرْبَىٰ ۗ إِنَّمَا تُنذِرُ ٱلَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ
رَبَّهُم بِٱلْغَيْبِ وَ أَقَامُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ ۚ وَ مَن
تَزَكَّىٰ فَإِنَّمَا يَتَزَكَّىٰ لِنَفْسِهِۦ ۚ وَ إِلَى
ٱللَّهِ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٨﴾ وَ مَا يَسْتَوِى
ٱلْأَعْمَىٰ وَ ٱلْبَصِيرُ ﴿١٩﴾ وَ لَا ٱلظُّلُمَـٰتُ
وَ لَا ٱلنُّورُ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَ لَا ٱلظِّلُّ وَ لَا
ٱلْحَرُورُ ﴿٢١﴾ وَ مَا يَسْتَوِى ٱلْأَحْيَآءُ
وَ لَا ٱلْأَمْوَٰتُ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُسْمِعُ مَن يَشَآءُ ۖ
وَ مَآ أَنتَ بِمُسْمِعٍ مَّن فِى ٱلْقُبُورِ ﴿٢٢﴾
إِنْ أَنتَ إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ ﴿٢٣﴾ إِنَّآ أَرْسَلْنَـٰكَ
بِٱلْحَقِّ بَشِيرًا وَ نَذِيرًا ۚ وَ إِن مِّنْ أُمَّةٍ
إِلَّا خَلَا فِيهَا نَذِيرٌ ﴿٢٤﴾ وَ إِن يُكَذِّبُوكَ
فَقَدْ كَذَّبَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ جَآءَتْهُمْ
رُسُلُهُم بِٱلْبَيِّنَـٰتِ وَ بِٱلزُّبُرِ وَ بِٱلْكِتَـٰبِ
ٱلْمُنِيرِ ﴿٢٥﴾ ثُمَّ أَخَذْتُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ۖ

In the end I took those who denied stubbornly the truth [to their requital], and how awesome was My condemnation.
Have you not seen that God sends down water from the sky, and therewith We bring forth plant produce of diverse hues, and in the mountains there are streaks of white and red of various shades, as well as [others] raven black. And so human beings and beasts and cattle, diverse are their hues. Of all His servants, those who feel truly in awe of God are those who have knowledge; surely, God is All-mighty, All-forgiving. [35:15-28]

فَكَيْفَ كَانَ نَكِيرِ ﴿٢٦﴾ أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ
أَنزَلَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِۦ
ثَمَرَٰتٍ مُّخْتَلِفًا أَلْوَٰنُهَا ۚ وَمِنَ ٱلْجِبَالِ
جُدَدٌۢ بِيضٌ وَحُمْرٌ مُّخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَٰنُهَا
وَغَرَابِيبُ سُودٌ ﴿٢٧﴾ وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ
وَٱلدَّوَآبِّ وَٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَٰنُهُۥ
كَذَٰلِكَ ۗ إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى ٱللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ
ٱلْعُلَمَٰٓؤُا۟ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ غَفُورٌ ﴿٢٨﴾

The faith in God is a human need since it is essential for the individual to avoid complexes of arrogance and superiority towards some people, and of humiliation and inferiority towards others. The faith in God establishes equality and balance in the depth of hearts and minds. However, God is in no need of the human being, but He supports and helps all His creatures, including the human being, every moment generously and unconditionally "*Of the bounties of your Lord We bestow freely on both these [who seek the good of the life to come while they drive out the good of this world's life] and those [who only seek the immediate pleasures of this world's life], and the bounties of your Lord are never confined [to one group]*" [17:20]. God chooses to deal with His creatures graciously and mercifully, although the Almighty can blot out any human individual or society when they reject God's guidance for righteousness if it were His will. People are tested in this world since they are allowed to freely do what they want. An individual or a society may often go through the worldly consequences of righteousness or transgression, but full justice in requital is secured only in the eternal life that will follow this present fleeting one. In the final divine judgement and eternal justice combined with grace, everyone will be accountable for what he/she did, and will be by no means able to escape his/her responsibility or throw some of the burden of it on the shoulders of others.

Good and evil, light and darkness, and life and death stand distinct from one another in God's messages to people in this life. In nature as well as in humanity, diversity in kinds and colors is present, but one who is endowed with knowledge can penetrate the surface to realize how God's plan and laws maintain nature and humanity in a harmonious order and interaction. How highly regarded and strongly urged is deep and genuine knowledge that stimulates and guides the thinking about the Creator!

Fascinating is the diversity of colors and shades of colors in rocks and minerals, plants and animals, and the interaction between the various natural factors. The heat of the sun leads to evaporation of the water on earth, and wind and the presence of mountains help the condensation of clouds and the fall of rain which secures life in areas which may be far from water resources. Such interaction and complementation, in spite of apparent differences, manifest how organized and coordinated are the different elements and powers in this universe, and how sophisticated is the divine order in the physical and

biological spheres.

Those seeking genuine knowledge go far beyond the surface to observe natural phenomena in their totality, and thus they acquire - after such a traversing and penetrating journey - a wider perspective and a deeper knowledge of the creation in its inter-relation and wholeness, and they become closer to knowing the Creator in His omnipotence.

In such a profound knowledge, spiritual individualization, variation and gradation are even more vast than in the physical and biological spheres. Nevertheless, common order and general laws are also present. Those who know and believe can penetrate to the inner reality while grasping its diversity. It is they who have genuine and not superficial knowledge who are able to appreciate how the Creator is All-great, All-wise, and feel from the depth of their hearts and minds His power, care and grace.

To any who desires a harvest in the life to come, We shall increase his [/her] harvest; and to any who desires [but] a harvest in this world's life, We give him [/her] thereof, but he [/she] will have no share in the life to come. [42:20]

مَن كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ ٱلْأَخِرَةِ نَزِدْ
لَهُۥ فِى حَرْثِهِۦ ۖ وَمَن كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ
ٱلدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِۦ مِنْهَا وَمَا لَهُۥ فِى ٱلْأَخِرَةِ
مِن نَّصِيبٍ ﴿٢٠﴾

God's will and laws in this world, allow one who works hard exclusively for its material benefits and pleasures to gain the rewarding results of his/her work whatever his/her beliefs and righteousness may be. However, such a person will be depriving him/herself of the blessings and rewards of the good human relations as a result of observing righteousness which are felt materially and morally in this world's life, and a far greater loss will be realized in the eternal life which will follow the short one of this world. These blessings and rewards will surely be received by those who work for the hereafter and conduct their life in this world spiritually and morally according to this ultimate goal [see also 11:15-16, 17:18-21], and thus get the best in both worlds: the transient and the eternal [e.g. 2:201; 3:148; 7:156; 10:64; 16:122; 28:77; 29:27].

Respond to your Lord's message, before there comes a Day from God that cannot be turned back, on which you will have no place of refuge nor will there be for you any chance for denial [of any wrong you did before].
But if then they turn away, We have not sent you to be a keeper or guardian over them; it is for you only to convey [the message]. And behold, if We let the human being taste grace from Us, he [/she] does exult in it, but when some affliction befalls [any of] them as a result of what their own hands have brought forth; then, surely, the human being is ungrateful.

ٱسْتَجِيبُوا۟ لِرَبِّكُم مِّن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِىَ يَوْمٌ
لَّا مَرَدَّ لَهُۥ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ مَا لَكُم مِّن مَّلْجَإٍ
يَوْمَئِذٍ وَمَا لَكُم مِّن نَّكِيرٍ ﴿٤٧﴾ فَإِنْ
أَعْرَضُوا۟ فَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَٰكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا ۖ
إِنْ عَلَيْكَ إِلَّا ٱلْبَلَٰغُ ۗ وَإِنَّآ إِذَآ أَذَقْنَا
ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ مِنَّا رَحْمَةً فَرِحَ بِهَا ۖ وَإِن
تُصِبْهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌۢ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ فَإِنَّ
ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ كَفُورٌ ﴿٤٨﴾ لِّلَّهِ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ

To God alone belongs the dominion over the heavens and the earth. He creates whatever He wills; He bestows the gift of female children on whomever He wills, and the gift of male children on whomever He wills, or gives both male and female [to whomever He wills], and causes to be barren whomever He wills. Surely, He is All-knowing, All-powerful. [42:47-50]

وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَآءُ ۚ يَهَبُ لِمَن
يَشَآءُ إِنَٰثًا وَ يَهَبُ لِمَن يَشَآءُ ٱلذُّكُورَ
﴿٤٩﴾ أَوْ يُزَوِّجُهُمْ ذُكْرَانًا وَ إِنَٰثًا ۖ
وَيَجْعَلُ مَن يَشَآءُ عَقِيمًا ۚ إِنَّهُۥ عَلِيمٌ قَدِيرٌ
﴿٥٠﴾

The Day of Judgement will definitely come, and no one can escape accountability or refuge from God's judgement, nor have any chance for denying what he/she already did. The message of God warns certainly the people about that future, but the prophet and conveyor of God's message has only to convey the message and address the minds and hearts, not to impose, compel or watch over them, since each individual human being has his/her intellect and free will.

The verses also remind us that human beings may be in many cases shortsighted and moody, and thus are tempted toward momentary joy or outrage and ungratefulness. But one can overcome human limitations through profound thinking and knowledge. A true observation of and contemplation about God's creation and His laws and order in it would lead the human mind and heart to realize His power and wisdom. Reproduction and parenthood secure the continuation of the human race in this world in a marvelous way that deeply affects the life of the family and the society. The proportion of males and females both in the family and in the society has its various consequences. A couple who may have no children have the advantage of a deep companionship and blessed time, and can find a way to make up for what they are missing within the family or in the society. The faith in God takes the believer beyond the floating problems of the narrow scope of life to the limitless depths and widths of self-exploration and self-development, and the magnificent richness of togetherness.

Nay, but they say, "We found our fore-fathers agreed unanimously in their successive generations on what to believe, and we find ourselves guided in following their traces."
Just in the same way, whenever We sent a warner before you to any town, those among them who lost themselves entirely in the pursuit of pleasures and luxuries, always said: "We found our forefathers following a tradition in belief, and we are certainly following in their footsteps."
[Each warner] said, "What! Even if I bring you a better guidance than you found your

بَلْ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّا
وَجَدْنَآ ءَابَآءَنَا عَلَىٰٓ أُمَّةٍ وَ إِنَّا عَلَىٰٓ
ءَاثَٰرِهِم مُّهْتَدُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾ وَ كَذَٰلِكَ مَآ
أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ فِى قَرْيَةٍ مِّن نَّذِيرٍ إِلَّا
قَالَ مُتْرَفُوهَآ إِنَّا وَجَدْنَآ ءَابَآءَنَا عَلَىٰٓ
أُمَّةٍ وَ إِنَّا عَلَىٰٓ ءَاثَٰرِهِم مُّقْتَدُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾
قَٰلَ أَوَ لَوْ جِئْتُكُم بِأَهْدَىٰ مِمَّا
وَجَدتُّمْ عَلَيْهِ ءَابَآءَكُمْ ۖ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّا بِمَآ

fore-fathers following?" Those who stubbornly denied the truth usually] responded, "We reject what you are sent with, denying that there is any truth in it."
And so We inflicted our retribution on them; see then what was the end of those who [stubbornly] rejected [the truth]. [43:22-25]

أُرْسِلْتُم بِهِۦ كَٰفِرُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ فَٱنتَقَمْنَا
مِنْهُمْ ۖ فَٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلْمُكَذِّبِينَ
﴿٢٥﴾

The Quran here argues with those who stubbornly reject the belief in the One God and the life to come, after calling the human attention in many previous verses to God's creation, including the human being, and the laws, order, interaction and coordination that control this huge and multifarious creation. Were these creations created out of nothing, or by no one, or for no purpose? Did they come into existence by accident? Did they create themselves? The deniers of the One God cannot present an alternative to the idea of creation and the Wise and Omnipotent Creator that may be more convincing for them or for others. They repeatedly stated to different conveyors of God's message that they were following that which their forefathers believed and did generation after generation. They supported the status quo in the social life and the faith as well, and they were against any change, since they were mainly enjoying a privileged luxurious life, and they were absorbed in the pursuit of the pleasures of this world. However, such short-sightedness, ego-centrism and materially oriented minds lead by time to self-destruction. These selfish materialists find themselves unable to meet the ups and downs of life and adjust themselves to its contrasts and maintain their steadfastness, endurance and productivity in the changing circumstances, and thus they fail to survive in the long term.

The All-merciful! It is He Who has taught the Quran.
He has created the human being; He has imparted unto him [/her] how to [articulate thought and] express himself [/herself] well in speech.
The sun and the moon act [in running through their appointed courses and carrying out their functions] in a well-calculated manner. And the stars and the trees — both prostrate themselves [to the Creator in submitting to His laws].
And the heaven has He raised high, and He set up the balance [through His whole creation and through His messages to human beings].
Transgress not the balance [and justice in all your dealings and inter-relations].
And measure always accurately with [all] fairness, and cut not the measures short.

ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ ﴿١﴾ عَلَّمَ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ ﴿٢﴾
خَلَقَ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ ﴿٣﴾ عَلَّمَهُ ٱلْبَيَانَ ﴿٤﴾
ٱلشَّمْسُ وَٱلْقَمَرُ بِحُسْبَانٍ ﴿٥﴾ وَٱلنَّجْمُ
وَٱلشَّجَرُ يَسْجُدَانِ ﴿٦﴾ وَٱلسَّمَآءَ
رَفَعَهَا وَوَضَعَ ٱلْمِيزَانَ ﴿٧﴾ أَلَّا تَطْغَوْا
فِى ٱلْمِيزَانِ ﴿٨﴾ وَأَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلْوَزْنَ
بِٱلْقِسْطِ وَلَا تُخْسِرُوا۟ ٱلْمِيزَانَ ﴿٩﴾

وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَضَعَهَا لِلْأَنَامِ ﴿١٠﴾ فِيهَا فَٰكِهَةٌ
وَٱلنَّخْلُ ذَاتُ ٱلْأَكْمَامِ ﴿١١﴾ وَٱلْحَبُّ
ذُو ٱلْعَصْفِ وَٱلرَّيْحَانُ ﴿١٢﴾ فَبِأَيِّ
ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿١٣﴾

And the earth has He set down for all living beings; offering fruits, and date palms with sheathed clusters [of dates], and grains growing up in their blades and husks, and fragrant plants.
Which then of your Lord's bounties [and powers] would you both deny? [55:1-13]

The style and themes of this sura may support the view that it was revealed in Mecca "Makka", although another view also existed among the classical scholars that it was revealed in Medina. One can find in its content and form a splendid Quranic presentation of the faith in the One God, whose relation with His creation is mere grace and mercy, an attribute of God with which the sura starts, and consequently it acquires its name. The verses call attention to the revelation of the Quran and to the creation of the human being and the universe, since each one contains an equilibrium within itself as well as in its inter-relations with others. The movements of the sun and the moon and other stars in their orbits, the presence of space and the growth of different plants -such as cereals, fruits, dates, flowers and others- are based on accurate reckoning, definite laws and perfect coordination; for example, neither may the sun overtake the moon, nor can the night usurp the time of day, since each floats along its own orbit through space [in accordance with our laws] [36:40], *"and We caused [life] of every kind to grow on it [the earth] in a balanced manner"* [15:19]. The same reckoning, laws, and coordination can be noticed in the human being's characteristic faculties; be they spiritual, intellectual, psychological and physical; *"We have indeed created the human being in the finest configuration"* [95:4]. The Quran teaches the human being how to maintain harmony within him/herself, with other human beings, and with the universe: *"So set you your face steadfastly towards the one pure faith, turning away from all that is false, [the faith] that is in accordance with the nature which God has created, but most people do not realize it"* [30:30]. The whole universe in its various components and phenomena in its forms of life are controlled by intact laws; they are maintaining a magnificent order and balance in their correlations, which manifest as a whole God's power and wisdom and His grace to His living creatures. In relation to the human being in particular, there is a balance of different powers that has to be maintained within the individual. There is also the moral and social equilibrium that one has to observe in his/her relations with others, so as not to transgress the bounds of what is right. Justice is central to the attainment of such an equilibrium and stability in the society. The avoidance of both extremes in the moral judgement of right and wrong, and accordingly the behavior, keeps the human individual psychologically and practically balanced from within, and socially balanced with others, just as the cosmos and biological life are kept balanced through the physical order.

According to most classical commentators the sura [al-Rahman], in which the above verses belong, repeatedly addresses the human beings and the invisible beings [jinn]: *"which, then, of the favors of your Lord will you both deny?"* It seems that these invisible beings are different from human beings in essence and nature [15:27, 55:14-15], but they have certain intellectual abilities, and so they are both addressed by the Quran

although it may be assumed that they will respond differently to it due to their different nature. The prominent commentator on the Quran, Al-Razi, on the other hand, mentioned as a possibility for the reason behind the use of the dual form of address in the repeated verse of the sura that it applies to men and women, a view which Muhammad Asad considered "the most obvious explanation." Yusuf Ali wrote that, "The whole Sura is a symphony of duality which leads up to unity. ... All creation is in pairs [e.g. 51:49, 36:36]. Justice is the conciliation of two opposites to unity, the settlement between [two unjust extremes]. The things and concepts mentioned in this sura are in pairs: man and outer nature, sun and moon; herbs and trees; heavens and earth; fruit and corn; human food and fodder for cattle; things nourishing and things sweet smelling; and so on throughout the sura. Then there is man and jinn."

سَبَّحَ لِلَّهِ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ
وَ هُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿١﴾ لَهُۥ مُلْكُ
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ يُحْىِۦ
وَيُمِيتُ ۖ وَ هُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٢﴾
هُوَ ٱلْأَوَّلُ وَ ٱلْأَخِرُ وَ ٱلظَّٰهِرُ
وَ ٱلْبَاطِنُ ۖ وَ هُوَ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٣﴾ هُوَ
ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضَ فِى
سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ ٱسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى ٱلْعَرْشِ ۚ يَعْلَمُ
مَا يَلِجُ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَ مَا يَخْرُجُ مِنْهَا
وَمَا يَنزِلُ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَ مَا يَعْرُجُ فِيهَا ۖ
وَ هُوَ مَعَكُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ ۚ وَ ٱللَّهُ بِمَا
تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٤﴾ لَهُۥ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ وَ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ ٱلْأُمُورُ
﴿٥﴾ يُولِجُ ٱلَّيْلَ فِى ٱلنَّهَارِ وَ يُولِجُ
ٱلنَّهَارَ فِى ٱلَّيْلِ ۚ وَ هُوَ عَلِيمٌۢ بِذَاتِ
ٱلصُّدُورِ ﴿٦﴾ ءَامِنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَ رَسُولِهِۦ
وَ أَنفِقُوا۟ مِمَّا جَعَلَكُم مُّسْتَخْلَفِينَ فِيهِ ۖ
فَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مِنكُمْ وَ أَنفَقُوا۟ لَهُمْ أَجْرٌ
كَبِيرٌ ﴿٧﴾ وَ مَا لَكُمْ لَا تُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ ۙ

All that is in the heavens and on earth extols the limitless glory of God, as He alone is the All-mighty, the All-wise.
To Him belongs the dominion over the heavens and the earth; it is He who grants life and deals death; and He has power over everything.
He is the First and the Last, and the Outward as well as the Inward; and He has full knowledge of everything.
It is He who created the heavens and the earth in six [extensive] periods of time, and is established on the throne. He knows all that comes to the earth and all that comes forth out of it. And He is with you wherever you are; and God sees all that you do.
To Him belongs the dominion over the heavens and the earth; and all matters go back to God.
He makes the night to enter into the day, and makes the day to enter into the night, and He has full knowledge of what is inside the hearts [of all people].
Believe in God and the Conveyor of His Message, and spend [on those in need and for the needs of the society as a whole] out of that unto which He has made you trustees, and those of you who have attained to faith and spend [on the needy individuals and for the social well-being] shall have a mighty reward.
And why should you not believe in God, while

the Conveyor of His message is calling you to believe in your Lord, and He has taken your pledge [using your intellectual and spiritual faculties granted by Him to you] if you are truly believers [in God's blessings to you].
It is He who sends down on His servant clear messages to bring you forth from the depths of darkness into the light, and surely God is to you All-kind, Most Gracious. [57:1-9]

وَٱلرَّسُولُ يَدْعُوكُمْ لِتُؤْمِنُوا۟ بِرَبِّكُمْ وَقَدْ
أَخَذَ مِيثَٰقَكُمْ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٨﴾ هُوَ
ٱلَّذِى يُنَزِّلُ عَلَىٰ عَبْدِهِۦٓ ءَايَٰتٍۭ بَيِّنَٰتٍ
لِّيُخْرِجَكُم مِّنَ ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ إِلَى ٱلنُّورِ
وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِكُمْ لَرَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٩﴾

These verses mention some other attributes of God, rather than the well known ones such as the "All-mighty, All-knowing, Truly-wise, Lord of all dominion..." He is the First and the Last, as "His being is eternal, without anything preceding His existence and without anything outlasting the infinity of His existence" as Muhammad Asad concisely explains. Besides, "He is the transcendental cause of all that exists, and at the same time imminent in every phenomenon of His creation." Although the human senses and intellect cannot grasp the exact nature and image of God and He cannot be seen in the present world [see e.g. 2:55, 7:143], there is conceivable evidence of God's existence and providence manifested all around us. As the prominent commentator al-Zamakhshari put it, God's existence is evident in the effects of His activity, whereas He himself is beyond the physical perception of human senses. The following tradition of the Prophet reported by Muslim may help in understanding the attributes mentioned in the above verses: "You are the First, so there was nothing before You; and You are the Last so there is nothing after You; and You are the Outward or Evident so there is nothing above You [in clarity], and You are the Inward or the Hidden [the One who is fully aware of whatever may be hidden], so there is nothing unreached by You."

God created the heavens and the earth in six periods of time, since the Arabic word "*yawm*" that is used in the Quran may denote any period of time and cannot be restricted to its current usage for an earthly day of twenty-four hours, since this would be irrelevant in circumstances different from those of the earth in its relation to the sun, especially those which preceded the creation of the solar system. The Quran stated that a day for God may be like a thousand years of the days that we reckon in our world [22:47], or even fifty thousand of our years [70:4]. Yusuf Ali stated that "certain external forms of the universe were by God's command completed in six periods of evolution. But His creative process still goes on, and He is still, and will always be, on His throne of authority knowing all and guiding all affairs". God knows all that is on the earth, and in the earth and the heavens, and all that is in between them, and all the developments that all His creation go through.

The continuous succession of day and night in different lengths according to different seasons is a daily manifestation of God's power and wisdom and His grace for the living beings. His knowledge penetrates the depth of the human self as it penetrates the physical darkness of the night. Every affair must finally go back to Him, since all that may occur is controlled by His laws. Whenever power or wealth in their various material, intellectual or spiritual forms are held by a human being, they are entrusted to this person by

God so as to see how he/she would deal with it to fulfill his/her individual and social responsibilities in this life. The human being has been established on earth as a trustee of God [2:30; see also 11:61], and he/she is tested through the abilities and faculties that he/she has been granted by God. One who is entrusted with any power cannot assume his/her absolute right to it, instead he/she has to use it according to what the truster, "God," requires. Any power can only be developed through the society and it is therefore natural and fair that the society should have a right over the individual earnings from using his/her power through interrelations with the society. The social right in the different forms of individual abilities is categorized by the jurists as "the right of God", since the belief in God and the life to come means a genuine liberation from selfishness and greed. Every individual has to use what God has entrusted him/her with, according to God's guidance that was promised to be sent to humanity [2:38-39, 20:123-126], and to the spiritual and intellectual abilities that the human being has been provided with and ought to benefit himself/herself and others with [7:172, 39:9, 91:7-10]. He/she should pledge to him/herself to respect and use his/her intellectual and spiritual merits properly before making a judgement about any case, especially about a message from God that bears His help to the human being as He has promised. He should also be grateful to God the Bountiful and Gracious Giver who entrusted the human being with power to be used to the best of his/her abilities.

اعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّمَا ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ
وَلَهْوٌ وَزِينَةٌ وَتَفَاخُرٌۢ بَيْنَكُمْ وَتَكَاثُرٌ فِى
ٱلْأَمْوَٰلِ وَٱلْأَوْلَٰدِ ۖ كَمَثَلِ غَيْثٍ أَعْجَبَ
ٱلْكُفَّارَ نَبَاتُهُۥ ثُمَّ يَهِيجُ فَتَرَىٰهُ مُصْفَرًّا ثُمَّ
يَكُونُ حُطَٰمًا ۖ وَفِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ
شَدِيدٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَرِضْوَٰنٌ ۖ وَمَا
ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنْيَآ إِلَّا مَتَٰعُ ٱلْغُرُورِ ﴿٢٠﴾
سَابِقُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ
عَرْضُهَا كَعَرْضِ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ
أُعِدَّتْ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِۦ ۚ
ذَٰلِكَ فَضْلُ ٱللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ
ذُو ٱلْفَضْلِ ٱلْعَظِيمِ ﴿٢١﴾ مَآ أَصَابَ مِن
مُّصِيبَةٍ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِىٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ إِلَّا
فِى كِتَٰبٍ مِّن قَبْلِ أَن نَّبْرَأَهَآ ۚ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ

Know [O people] that the life of this world is but a play and a passing delight and an adornment and a cause of boasting among you, and of greed and rivalry for more and more wealth and children. It is as a rain whose vegetation delights the tillers of the soil; but then it withers and you see it turning yellow, and in the end it crumble away. In the [eternal] life to come it is [either] suffering severe, or being blessed by God's forgiveness and His goodly acceptance, and the life of this world is nothing but a joy of self-delusion. Vie with one another, hastening to forgiveness from your Lord, and a garden as vast as the heavens and earth, which has been readied for those who have attained to faith in God and the conveyors of His message. That is the bounty of God, which He grants on whomever He wills; and God is of bounty abounding. No affliction can ever befall on earth, or your own selves, but comes according to what has been decided previously [in Our knowledge] before We bring it into existence; that is truly

easy for God.
This may let you avoid [excessive] sorrow about whatever [good] has escaped you or [excessive] exultation about whatever [good] has come to you; and God loves not one who swaggers and acts boastfully. [57:20-23]

عَلَى ٱللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ﴿٢٢﴾ لِّكَيْلَا تَأْسَوْا۟ عَلَىٰ
مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا تَفْرَحُوا۟ بِمَآ ءَاتَىٰكُمْ ۗ
وَٱللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ ﴿٢٣﴾

When this world becomes the goal and the end for some people, they become so indulged in its pleasures that they lose their own balance, and by their shortsightedness and ego-centrism cause the society as a whole to lose balance. The Quran, through the above verses and many others, enlightens the minds and the hearts about the reality of this life and puts it into perspective in relation to the long-term happiness and fulfillment of the human being throughout his/her whole life in this life and in the life to come. People race in this present life for wealth and children and power, and in doing so waste much of their energy beyond the reasonable and legitimate limits in this respect through acts of greed and jealousy and rivalry, and in fluctuating moods of swaggering and depression according to the ups and downs of life. They hurt their own selves and their societies in their narrow scope, since they are wasting their valuable life in accumulating wealth by all means, then spending it on luxuries and in what may hurt them physically and spiritually, while their fellow human beings are dying of hunger, cold or disease. Such people may be indulging themselves in childish behavior, while they are missing the meaning and happiness of a genuine life.

The pleasures of this world's life are legitimate if they are enjoyed in a balanced way and put into the right perspective. God's bounties in this world are open to all human beings [e.g. 17:18-21] and the rain mentioned above is a good example. Wise people make use of it in growing their plants and obtaining their yield, while others just admire the superficial and short-term appearances of growth, leaving the plants to fade away without caring, harvesting, storing, and benefitting from their nutrition or otherwise. This same shortsightedness leads to the same results with regard to those who are indulged in the personal worldly whims and pleasures, thus missing their purpose and lacking the commitment which can make life in this world more meaningful and rewarding and its pleasures more profound and durable.

This does not mean that human attributes of self-esteem and competitiveness are not legitimate, but they should be conducted for the doing of good, not for hurting others and ignoring social responsibility. Islam does not kill the individual merits or aim to shape all believers in one pattern; they have to vie with one another in following God's guidance and thus gaining God's rewards in this life and the life to come "*and for such a reward (of eternal paradise) let competitors compete*" [83:26]. But a legitimate competition and race should not push the successful to haughtiness or the failing to depression. Faith in God and the eternal life to come would help the human personality to maintain balance and stability, and accordingly there would be no waste in the human energy and productivity.

Human beings by their nature as created by God enjoy a free will to choose and decide, but the homosapiens should consider the consequences of his/her choices and

should not be disillusioned by superficial and unenduring glitter. Righteous behavior secures the individual and social balance, and thus the whole physical, intellectual and psychological-spiritual energy of the human being is maintained and developed comprehensively at its best. As the Prophet's tradition indicates: "The believer's condition is always good: whenever he[/she] is at ease he[/she] thanks God and this is good for him/her, and whenever he[/she] is in a hardship he[/she] is patient and this is good for him[/her]" [reported by Muslim, Ibn Hanbal and Ibn Majah]. Realizing that God is always the source, the ultimate goal and the end of everything, would make the individual more balanced, and the society more united, cooperative and solidified.

لَّا تَجِدُ قَوْمًا
يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَ الْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ يُوَادُّونَ
مَنْ حَادَّ اللَّهَ وَ رَسُولَهُ وَ لَوْ كَانُوا
ءَابَاءَهُمْ أَوْ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ أَوْ إِخْوَانَهُمْ أَوْ
عَشِيرَتَهُمْ أُولَٰئِكَ كَتَبَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ
الْإِيمَانَ وَ أَيَّدَهُم بِرُوحٍ مِّنْهُ وَ يُدْخِلُهُمْ
جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ
فِيهَا رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَ رَضُوا عَنْهُ
أُولَٰئِكَ حِزْبُ اللَّهِ أَلَا إِنَّ حِزْبَ
اللَّهِ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

You do not find people who [truly] believe in God and the Last Day who feel mutual cordiality with anyone who contends against God and the Conveyor of His message, even if they be their fathers or their sons or their brothers or their kinsfolk. It is those [true believers] in whose hearts He [God] has inscribed faith, and whom He has strengthened with inspiration from Himself, and whom He shall admit into gardens underneath which rivers flow, therein to abide; well-pleased is God with them, and well-pleased are they with Him; those are identically associated with God's cause; surely, those who are identically associated with God's cause shall attain to success. [58:22; see also 5:56; 35:6; 58:19]

The Quran here identifies and associates with God the believers in Him who follow and struggle for His cause and values, just as it identifies and associates with Satan those who care only about themselves and their wordly pleasure [58:19; see also 5:56; 35:6]. The Quran may use the word "supporters" or "those who are close to" (Arabic "*awliya*") for both parties [e.g. 2:257; 3:68, 122, 175; 4:75-77, 119; 6:121, 127-8; 7:27, 30, 55, 196; 10:62-3; 12:101; 16:63, 100; 18:50; 25:18; 29:22; 41:31; 42:31]. This gathering, which identifies and associates itself with the belief, represents a mere sect in which the loyalty is related to the group rather than to the principles and values, or at most to the belief in its form rather than its content. The Quran condemns such superficial and nominal identification with regard to the followers of the previous messages of God[e.g. 3:104, 110, 114; 5:79; 7:157; 9:71, 112; 16:90; 22:41; 24:21; 29:45; 31:17]. The gathering in God's name and identifying oneself with His cause and values aims to prevent passivity and exaggerated individualism. In such self-identification and association with God one reminds himself/herself at all times that he/she represents a message, not just his/her own self or a mere sect, but that he/she is part of a universal group on conceptual grounds, and that he/she is committed to a message basically calling for a moral and ethical reform. Under the name

of God, with which the believer in Him is identified and associated, all human beings are equal and all enjoy the dignity bestowed by God on all of the children of Adam [17:70], whatever their race, ethnicity, gender, faith or age may be. God only is the One who has none equal or similar to Him [42:11; 112:4]. Accordingly, gathering in the name of God does not merely add another communal group or universal block; rather it liberates human beings from closed entities to an open-ended one which embraces all the children of Adam, and stands for the common moral and ethical values that are recognized by all humans through their common sense and conventional thinking. The Arabic words "*ma'ruf*" and "*munkar*" which simply and literally represent the essential terms in Islam for virtue and vice mean what is "recognized as good" or "rejected as evil" by most people through common sense and sound thinking. Even those who are partisans and associates of Satan today should never be considered permanent enemies or a lost cause, since every human being, whatever his/her beliefs or actions today may be, is a potential supporter of good and virtue [60:7], and thus hostilities and conflicts should be restricted to the narrowest range [60:8-9].

هُوَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ
عَٰلِمُ ٱلْغَيْبِ وَ ٱلشَّهَٰدَةِ ۖ هُوَ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ
ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٢٢﴾ هُوَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا
هُوَ ٱلْمَلِكُ ٱلْقُدُّوسُ ٱلسَّلَٰمُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُ
ٱلْمُهَيْمِنُ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْجَبَّارُ ٱلْمُتَكَبِّرُ
سُبْحَٰنَ ٱللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ هُوَ ٱللَّهُ
ٱلْخَٰلِقُ ٱلْبَارِئُ ٱلْمُصَوِّرُ ۖ لَهُ ٱلْأَسْمَآءُ
ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ ۚ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُۥ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ وَ هُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٢٤﴾

He is God, besides Whom there is no other god; the One who knows all that is beyond the reach of a created being's perception as well as that which can be witnessed by a creature's senses or mind, He, the All-merciful, the Most Gracious.
He is God besides Whom there is no other god; the Sovereign Supreme, the Holy, the All-peace, the Giver of Faith [and Security], the One who controls and determines, the All-mighty, the All-compeller, the All-magnificent to whom all greatness belongs; glory be to God, above all that they associate [with Him].
He is God, the Creator, the Maker, the One who shaped all forms and appearances; His [alone] are the names Most Beautiful [and attributes of perfection]; all that is in the heavens and on earth, extols His limitless glory, and He is [alone] the All-mighty, the All-wise.
[59:22-24]

Here is mentioned a selection of the attributes of perfection (the most beautiful names) of God which are set in fascinating harmony with regard to form and complement each other in order to represent an integrated conception of perfection. The selection starts with an emphasis on the oneness of God in a very similar form to that used in the declaration of faith in Islam, "He is God, besides whom there is no other god." His power of creation is expressed in three attributes between which there is a fine but precise difference: the Creator, the Maker initially without a precedent and in a way suitable for the

function of what is made and its place in the total creation plan and free from whatever may be contradictory to this suitability, and the One who shapes all forms and appearances. Creation of the matter is just a part of a process, and the three attributes clarify that God alone is the One who gives His creation its form, properties, and features, including the giving of life in all its types and aspects to living creatures. The comprehensive divine knowledge of His creation and how it functions, is essential for the process as a whole. God knows what is beyond the reach of perception of any of His creation, in addition to the totality of that which can be partially perceived through the senses or intellect by any of His creatures. His Almightiness is indicated in the above verses by characteristic attributes, namely: The Sovereign Supreme, the Holy [who never misuses His power and authority], the One who controls and determines control, the All-mighty, the All-compeller - a name that may also mean the One who subdues wrong and restores right - as Asad chooses to interpret it, and the All-sublime to whom all greatness belongs. But whatever the powers of God may be in creation, sovereignty, knowledge and might, He is also the All-merciful, the Most Gracious and grace-giving, the All-peace, and the Giver of Faith and Security. Thus the relation of the All-mighty to His creation is a relation of grace and mercy, although He has always the supreme power and control. In the Islamic theology, the One God is All-mighty, whose justice is strict, His retribution severe, while at the same time He is the One who is All-loving, All-merciful, Most Gracious, All-forgiving. These attributes together are essential for a god, and they cannot be distributed between a duality or a trinity, but instead are present in the One who has them all. They represent the comprehensive perfection as an ideal with which the human beings can be guided, although they are fully aware that the quality and level of God's perfection in any attribute and in their total co-functioning are far beyond that for which any human being can aspire. Moreover, attributes such as sublimeness, exaltation and absolute sway are used only for the One whom none is like [42:11], and none equals Him [112:4]. Describing a human being in all his/her limitations and subjection to God with such words indicates condemnation and not praise.

Recite, in the name of your Lord, who has created, has created the human being of a suspending mixture [of sperm and egg]. Read, and your Lord is the Most Bountiful, who has taught [the human being] through the pen, taught the human being what he did not know.
Nay, surely, the human being becomes grossly overweening whenever he [/she] believes himself [/herself] to be self- sufficient. Surely, to your Lord is the returning [of all]. [96:1-8]

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ﴿١﴾ خَلَقَ
الْإِنسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ﴿٢﴾ اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ
الْأَكْرَمُ ﴿٣﴾ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ﴿٤﴾ عَلَّمَ
الْإِنسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ ﴿٥﴾ كَلَّا إِنَّ الْإِنسَانَ
لَيَطْغَىٰ ﴿٦﴾ أَن رَّآهُ اسْتَغْنَىٰ ﴿٧﴾
إِنَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ الرُّجْعَىٰ ﴿٨﴾

These were the earliest verses of the Quran revealed to Prophet Muhammad. In the first two verses we find the significant words which introduced the message to humanity: "read"- which refers to the essential faculty of the human intellect and its abilities in

self-expression through speech, and in developing and storing knowledge, and "the pen" - which refers to God's blessing by giving the human being that invaluable means of storing the spoken word, learning and teaching. The human intellect, speech, writing and reading are the great blessings of God, the Lord and Sustainer and Cherisher, to the human being who is created with these faculties and others which point to the Omnipotent Creator.

These early Quranic verses mention "The human being" in his/her universality without any restriction to any particular race, color, ethnicity, sex etc. The verses also refer to "knowledge" in general, without any restriction to any particular area of knowledge such as religion, as well as referring to the pen which is the invaluable means of recording, acquiring, and spreading knowledge and civilization for all humanity. The verses call attention to the creation and physical, intellectual, spiritual and moral growth of the human being, and implicitly teach how the human being should use his/her valuable senses and mind to observe facts and reach consequences about the human nature.

From a simple act between the spouses that results in the forming of a mixed suspension, a human being develops with collective and individual potentials. Such a multitudinous miracle that is repeated every day all over the world points to the Creator and to His purpose, for the existence of human life with all its strengths and weaknesses.

The maximum human potential can be reached by the individual and the society when they follow the guidance of the Creator, who is the Lord, Sustainer and Cherisher, and when they develop a direct and close relation between the Creator and the human being. The Prophet, who directly received the divine revelation was a representative of the whole human race which was addressed through him and was reminded by the essentiality of the development of individuals and societies in the various dimensions through knowledge.

However, the human being may isolate him/herself from the Creator and thus lose his/her wide and comprehensive perspective, and instead he/she becomes a prisoner of self-centrism, and selfishness. The individual in this state ignores his/her mutual relations with others and their effect on the individual efficiency, effectiveness, productivity and even happiness, and with such myopia he/she can only see his/her own efforts and the effects on himself/herself, ignoring how other efforts are coordinated with the individual effort to reach the outcome, and how the Creator and Protector is maintaining such a coordination of forces of nature and human beings, individual and collective, to secure the continuation of the universal and human order. In such an individual narrow-mindedness and shortsightedness causes the human being to turn himself/herself away from the blessings of universality and comprehensive knowledge to the evils of selfishness and limitation.

The human relation with God opens the heart and the mind to all His creation and to all humanity. Narrowing the human perspective makes the person think that he/she is alone in this world, and should dictate on others what he/she believes to be his/her right, whereas the inevitable return to God and the facing of His judgement, is a reminder to the human being of his/her creation, development and, the end of the journey in this world may help him/her to overcome arrogance and shortsightedness. God and human beings meet from the time of human creation and growth, through the development of knowledge and civilization, through the divine guidance, and meet finally in the end directly and

eternally in the life to come. Ignoring such a continuous relation poses serious and destructive effects, just as ignoring the One Creator, leads logically, psychologically and socially to the creation of dictators or tyrants who all want to impose their individual will on others in the family, the society or the world.

By the [passing] time! Surely, the human being is in the way of loss, save those who attain to faith, and do righteous deeds, and enjoin upon one another firm adherence to the truth and enjoin upon one another patience [and steadfastness, in facing the vicissitudes of life]. [103:1-3]

وَ ٱلۡعَصۡرِ ۝١ إِنَّ ٱلۡإِنسَٰنَ لَفِي خُسۡرٍ
۝٢ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ
ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ وَتَوَاصَوۡاْ بِٱلۡحَقِّ
وَتَوَاصَوۡاْ بِٱلصَّبۡرِ ۝٣

In this early sura that was revealed in Mecca, the Quran calls the human attention to how "the time" and its passing deserve observation of this physical phenomenon and its effects on individuals and societies. Throughout time, material and human developments, such as emergence, growth, decline and disappearance, all occur. The "never-resting" and the always "changing" time has been emphasized in different ways in human literature and art [see the previously mentioned verses [3:26-27, 139-140]. When time passes, it cannot be returned; and a person's life is just for a period of time. If the human being simply concentrates on momentary gains and pleasures during his/her limited life, without contemplating about the long term, the future, and the purpose of life, he/she is a loser. Shortsightedness consumes human energy and destroys endurance and persistence. Success may create arrogance that can stop the continuation and increase of success, as well as failure that may create a helplessness and hopelessness which makes the loss of one or a few battles appear to be the loss of the whole war and the end of the world. Faith in God makes the believer a good user of time in its whole range and changes, and not a prisoner of "the moment" and the status quo. As the Prophet accurately describes "The believer's is always good: whenever he [/she] is at ease he[/she] thanks God and this is good for him[/her], and whenever he[/she] is in hardship he[/she] is patient and this is good for him[/her]" [reported by Muslim, Ibn Hanbal and Ibn Majah].

However, the strong faith of the individual may not survive in isolation, so it needs to be maintained through the social support of others in enjoining adherence to the truth, patience and persistence whatever the ups and downs of life may be. In this way, all the believers will gain from different circumstances and will never be losers in the long term, even if they lose at a certain time. It was reported that this short sura was recited by the early believers whenever they parted from one another, to remind themselves of the required collective virtues of adhering to the truth and sticking to patience, and thus maintaining tranquility and stability within the individual and the society.

Say: "O you who [stubbornly] deny the truth!
" I worship not that which you

قُلۡ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلۡكَٰفِرُونَ ۝١ لَآ أَعۡبُدُ مَا

worship;
"nor do you worship that which I worship.
"And I will never worship that which you have [ever] worshiped;
"nor will you [ever] worship that which I worship.
"Unto you be your way, in what you believe, and unto me mine [and both can never meet or be compromised]." [109:1-6]

تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٢﴾ وَ لَآ أَنتُمْ عَٰبِدُونَ مَآ أَعْبُدُ
﴿٣﴾ وَ لَآ أَنَا۠ عَابِدٌ مَّا عَبَدتُّمْ ﴿٤﴾ وَ لَآ
أَنتُمْ عَٰبِدُونَ مَآ أَعْبُدُ ﴿٥﴾ لَكُمْ
دِينُكُمْ وَ لِىَ دِينِ ﴿٦﴾

Faith should be based on individual conviction. However, motives of worldly gains, loyalty to the forefathers or the community, or certain human weakness and superstitious attitudes may pressure and damage the human decisiveness in such a serious matter and consequently lead to serious ills for the individual and the society.

The verse presents a clear vision of the sharp distinction between the believers in the One God and the believers in other gods rather than Him. The latter group deny and try to deliberately and stubbornly conceal the truth (*kafir* in Arabic, a derivative from the verb *kafara* which originally means to hide), while they realize in themselves how they are really standing against common sense [6:33, 27:14]. These two parties can maintain their "human" relationship if both strive in this respect, but the doctrinal difference has to become obvious and recognized without any compromise. In the above sura, the distinction and the impossibility of any doctrinal compromise between both parties in the present or the future is stressed by repetition. Each party has full freedom of choice for its own way in thinking, decision making and behavior in this life. Each of the above beliefs has its individual and social implications and consequences in this life, as well as having the final judgement and requital of God in the eternal life that will follow this short one, and in which truth as a way of life will prevail. The believers in the One God are concerned with the clarity of their stand, but they never try to impose it on others or initiate hostilities and conflicts with others who believe differently from them, although they are sure of its soundness and hold fast persistently to it and resist any confusion [68:9]. In the end all will return to the One God for Judgement in the eternal life to come [2:256].

Say: "He is God, the One, God, the Eternal and Absolute and Everlasting Refuge.
"He has not begotten, and has not been begotten
"And equal to [and comparable with] Him is none." [112:1-4]

قُلْ هُوَ ٱللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ﴿١﴾ ٱللَّهُ ٱلصَّمَدُ ﴿٢﴾
لَمْ يَلِدْ وَ لَمْ يُولَدْ ﴿٣﴾ وَ لَمْ يَكُن
لَّهُۥ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ ﴿٤﴾

The Quran enlightens Muslims about God by indicating His attributes and qualities, since His nature and image are so far beyond any creature's limited perception, including that of the human senses and mind. However, we should realize that He has real existence, and not merely an abstract theorization. He is so close to us and so caring for us

and He is the One and Only God, to Whom worship is due; all other beings of which we can think are only His creatures and in no way are they equal to or comparable with Him. He is Eternal, without a beginning or an end, Absolute, not limited by time or place or subject to any change under any circumstances, the Supreme Reality, the uncaused cause of all that exists and the source of all existence, and the everlasting refuge. Accordingly, we must not think of Him as having a son or a father, for that would be using a biological pattern according to a human image. "His qualities and natures are unique," wrote Yusuf Ali in his notes on this sura, especially its last verse, while Muhammad Asad stated, "The fact that God is one and unique in every respect, without beginning and without end, has its logical correlate in the statement that 'there is nothing that could be compared with Him' [6:100], thus precluding any possibility of describing or defining Him. Consequently, the quality of His being is beyond the range of human comprehension or [even] imagination, which also explains why any attempts at depicting God by means of figurative representation or even abstract symbols must be qualified as denial of (or deviation from) the truth."

This clearly negates the idea of polytheism, a system in which people believe in many gods and many lords who may not be different in their image or in their behavior from those who have been supposedly created by them. This is against good reason, and leads to contradictions and probably conflicts within the deity, while the harmony in the universe and life reflect the oneness of the Maker. The oneness of God also complies with the oneness and totality of the human values, and so there is no split of virtues among several deities or representation of contradictory qualities such as good and evil or forgiveness and revenge in these deities.

God is "the Eternal" and "the Absolute" — the words chosen by Yusuf Ali to translate the Arabic word *al-Samad*. He explains the last one: "The absolute existence can only be predicated of Him; all other existence is temporal or conditional; and He is dependent on no person or things, but all persons or things are dependent on Him, thus negating the idea of gods and goddesses who ate and drank, wrangled and plotted, or depended on the gifts of worshippers ... etc." Muhammad Asad pointed out that God's attribute *al-Samad* occurs in the Quran only once, and is applied to God alone. It comprises the concepts of 'primary cause' and 'Eternal' Independent Being, combined with the idea (concept) that everything existing or conceivable goes back to Him as its source and is therefore dependent on Him for its beginning as well as for its continued existence."

The whole sura warns us especially against, the tendency to conceive of God according to our human pattern, whether through symbolization and abstraction or personalization and concretalization.

Say: "I seek refuge with the Lord of all human beings, The Sovereign Supreme of All human beings,
The God of all human beings, from the evil of the slinking whisperer who whispers in the hearts of people [whether such a whisperer is] from among the invisible forces [jinn] or from

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ ٱلنَّاسِ ﴿١﴾ مَلِكِ ٱلنَّاسِ
﴿٢﴾ إِلَٰهِ ٱلنَّاسِ ﴿٣﴾ مِن شَرِّ ٱلْوَسْوَاسِ
ٱلْخَنَّاسِ ﴿٤﴾ ٱلَّذِى يُوَسْوِسُ فِى صُدُورِ

among human beings." [114:1-6]

ٱلنَّاسِ ﴿٥﴾ مِنَ ٱلْجِنَّةِ وَ ٱلنَّاسِ ﴿٦﴾

The sura calls all human beings to seek the protection of God, the Lord and Sovereign Supreme of all humanity, against human weakness that may be exploited by elusive temptation from evil human beings or from invisible forces, which are called in Arabic jinn, a word that means hidden or invisible. The Quran combines evil human beings with the evil invisible beings or devils, *shaytan al-ins wa-l-jinn,* in several verses [e.g. 6:112]. In other places, the Quran indicates that a kind of alliance and cooperation may exist between the human and the invisible forces of evil e.g. 2:14; 3:175, 4:76, 6:71, 121, 7:27, 30, 17:27, 58:19]. The human being should seek the protection of God against these evil forces through prayers to Him as well as through following His guidance which strengthens the human will and resistance against the temptation of evil that tries to make use of human weakness and liability for allurement within one's own self, and from outside. As Yusuf Ali summed up his comments on this sura: "Evil insinuates itself in all sort of insidious forms within so as to sap man's will which was given to man by God, [thus misguiding the human freedom of choice]. This power of evil may be Satan, or his host of evil ones or evil men or the evil inclinations within man's own will; for there are 'evil ones among men and jinns, inspiring each other with flowery discourses by way of deception' [6:112]. They secretly whisper evil [from where they are not expected within one's own self] then withdraw to make their net [or trap] the more subtle and alluring". This internal sabotage cannot be overcome except through the protection and guidance of the Creator and Lord of all beings, who knows the human weaknesses, knows the ways of deception used by the evil human and invisible forces "jinn", and knows how the human being can be supported and guided against the forces of evil, which are able to undermine the individual, the society and the civilization if the human individuals are left to their weakness and liabilities."

THE ETERNAL LIFE TO COME

And yet there are among people those who take [for worship] others apart from God, as equal [with God]: they love them as God is loved; but those who have attained to faith love God more than all else. If they who are bent on evil-doing could but see, as they will be seeing the suffering [in the life to come], that to God alone belongs all might, and that God is severe in punishment. As [On the Day of Judgement] those who were followed [with adoration] would disown their own [adoring] followers, and they would see the suffering and all their means [of power or support] would be cut asunder, and those who [adoringly] followed would say: "If only we might have a second chance [in life], so as to disown them as they have disowned us!" Thus, shall God show them their deeds as bitter regrets for them, and never shall they have a way out of the fire. [2:165-167]

وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مِن دُونِ
ٱللَّهِ أَندَادًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ ٱللَّهِ ۖ
وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِّلَّهِ ۗ وَلَوْ يَرَى
ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوٓا۟ إِذْ يَرَوْنَ ٱلْعَذَابَ أَنَّ
ٱلْقُوَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ شَدِيدُ
ٱلْعَذَابِ ﴿١٦٥﴾ إِذْ تَبَرَّأَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتُّبِعُوا۟
مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّبَعُوا۟ وَرَأَوُا۟ ٱلْعَذَابَ
وَتَقَطَّعَتْ بِهِمُ ٱلْأَسْبَابُ ﴿١٦٦﴾ وَقَالَ
ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّبَعُوا۟ لَوْ أَنَّ لَنَا كَرَّةً فَنَتَبَرَّأَ
مِنْهُمْ كَمَا تَبَرَّءُوا۟ مِنَّا ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ يُرِيهِمُ
ٱللَّهُ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ حَسَرَٰتٍ عَلَيْهِمْ ۖ وَمَا هُم
بِخَٰرِجِينَ مِنَ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿١٦٧﴾

The above verses present a striking picture of God's judgement of every individual in the eternal life to come as a responsible human being who has been granted by God the essential requirements: the intellect and the free will. The accountability of every human being about all that he/she does in this world's life [e.g. 6:94, 164: 17:15; 19:80, 95; 35:18; 39:7; 52:21; 53:38-41; 74:38; 99:7-8], is the essence of the belief in the afterlife. This belief strongly establishes the individual responsibility and self-assertion, and thus any blind or unthoughtful following of other human beings or their ideas or beliefs would be quite meaningless and would betray the human intellectual and moral merits and responsibilities. However influential and powerful the followed person is in the short worldly life, he/she will be powerless in the eternal life to come. Moreover, such a person will try to distance himself/herself from his/her followers and will deny any responsibility about those who thought in this worldly life that they were gaining from his/her influence and power [see also 14:21-22; 33:67-68; 34:31-50; 40:47-48]. Feeling betrayed in this way, the followers will think about the impossible: that they might be returned to their previous life to distance themselves from the person whom they previously followed, just as he/she distances himself/herself from them in the afterlife. Such fruitless attempts of escape from

both parties, emphasize the need for responsibility and self-confidence from every person, since everyone is accountable for his/her own self, and not even the closest people to him/her, his/her parents, will be able to carry any of his/her burden in the end [6:3; 19:95; 31:33]. How penetrating is this picture of mutual renouncement of the followed and the followers for their previous shortsightedness, and how strong is its warning against the weaknesses of human personality and blind adherence: *"Thus, shall God show them their deeds, as [bitter] regrets for them, and never shall they have a way out of the fire."*

And all human beings will sally forth to appear before God all together [on the Day of Judgement]; and then the weak will say to those who were haughty, "We were but your followers; can you, then, be of any benefit to us in averting something of God's chastisement?" They will reply "If God had guided us, we would indeed have guided you. As for us, whether we may be [now] stricken by fear, or we may be patient, there is no way of escape." [14:21]

وَبَرَزُوا۟ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا فَقَالَ
ٱلضُّعَفَٰٓؤُا۟ لِلَّذِينَ ٱسْتَكْبَرُوٓا۟ إِنَّا كُنَّا لَكُمْ
تَبَعًا فَهَلْ أَنتُم مُّغْنُونَ عَنَّا مِنْ عَذَابِ
ٱللَّهِ مِن شَىْءٍ ۚ قَالُوا۟ لَوْ هَدَىٰنَا ٱللَّهُ
لَهَدَيْنَٰكُمْ ۖ سَوَآءٌ عَلَيْنَآ أَجَزِعْنَآ أَمْ
صَبَرْنَا مَا لَنَا مِن مَّحِيصٍ ﴿٢١﴾

This is another place where the Quran urges the individual to think independently, and shows how following any person blindly will be disastrous in the end for both the followers, who will not be excused, and for those who imposed on others to follow them [see the previously mentioned verse 2:165-167]. The weak followers failed to see that each individual bears his/her own personal responsibility and will stand on his/her own on the Day of Judgement [e.g. 17:13-14; 53:38-42; 74:38], and those who used their power of intelligence, wealth or authority to impose their own thinking or beliefs on others will fail to defend them, let alone support others. The belief in the individual accountability in the eternal life to come deepens the feeling of personal responsibility in this life, and liberates the human being from any blind allegiance whether it is developed by love or by force.

Those who stubbornly deny the truth do say, "We shall never believe in this Quran, nor in [any other revealed book] before it." Could you but see [how it will be on the Day of Judgement] when the evil-doers shall be made to stand before their Lord, hurling back and forth words [of blame] at one another. Those who were suppressed [on earth in the previous world's life] will say to the haughty ones, "Had it not been for you, we would certainly have been believers!" The haughty ones will say to those who were oppressed, "Did we bar you [by force] from

وَقَالَ
ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لَن نُّؤْمِنَ بِهَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانِ
وَلَا بِٱلَّذِى بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ ۗ وَلَوْ تَرَىٰٓ إِذِ
ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ مَوْقُوفُونَ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ يَرْجِعُ
بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ ٱلْقَوْلَ يَقُولُ ٱلَّذِينَ
ٱسْتُضْعِفُوا۟ لِلَّذِينَ ٱسْتَكْبَرُوا۟ لَوْلَآ أَنتُمْ
لَكُنَّا مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٣١﴾ قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ
ٱسْتَكْبَرُوا۟ لِلَّذِينَ ٱسْتُضْعِفُوٓا۟ أَنَحْنُ

following the guidance after it came to you? Nay, rather you yourselves were guilty."
Those who were suppressed will say to the haughty ones, "Nay, it was [your] devising night and day, [constantly] ordering us to reject [stubbornly the guidance of] God and to set up rivals to Him." They will feel remorseful within their own selves once they see the suffering; and We put fetters around the necks of those who stubbornly denied the truth; shall they be requited except for what they were doing?
Never did We send a warner to a community, but those who lost themselves entirely in the pursuit of the pleasures and luxuries of this world say, "Behold, we deny that there is any truth in that [message] with which you have been sent," and they would add, "Richer [than you] are we in wealth and in children, and we shall never be made to suffer." They said, "We are more abundant in wealth and children, and we shall not be made to suffer." Say: "Surely, my Lord grants abundant sustenance or gives it in a certain measure unto whomsoever He wills [as a test], but most human beings do not really know." It is not your wealth nor your children, that bring you nearer to Us; except for one who attains to faith and does righteousness; those are the ones for whom there awaits multiple recompense for what they did, and it is they who shall dwell secure in the lofty chambers [of paradise].
And those who strive against our messages to obstruct their effect, shall be given over to suffering. Say, "Surely, my Lord grants abundant sustenance or gives it in a certain measure to whomsoever He wills of His servants [as a test]; and whatever it be that you spend [on others seeking His godly acceptance] He replaces it, and He is the best of providers." [34:31-39]

صَدَدْنَٰكُمْ عَنِ ٱلْهُدَىٰ بَعْدَ إِذْ جَآءَكُم ۖ بَلْ
كُنتُم مُّجْرِمِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾ وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ
ٱسْتُضْعِفُوا۟ لِلَّذِينَ ٱسْتَكْبَرُوا۟ بَلْ مَكْرُ
ٱلَّيْلِ وَٱلنَّهَارِ إِذْ تَأْمُرُونَنَآ أَن نَّكْفُرَ
بِٱللَّهِ وَنَجْعَلَ لَهُۥٓ أَندَادًا ۚ وَأَسَرُّوا۟
ٱلنَّدَامَةَ لَمَّا رَأَوُا۟ ٱلْعَذَابَ ۚ وَجَعَلْنَا
ٱلْأَغْلَٰلَ فِىٓ أَعْنَاقِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ۚ هَلْ
يُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾
وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَا فِى قَرْيَةٍ مِّن نَّذِيرٍ إِلَّا قَالَ
مُتْرَفُوهَآ إِنَّا بِمَآ أُرْسِلْتُم بِهِۦ كَٰفِرُونَ
﴿٣٤﴾ وَقَالُوا۟ نَحْنُ أَكْثَرُ أَمْوَٰلًا
وَأَوْلَٰدًا وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُعَذَّبِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾ قُلْ إِنَّ
رَبِّى يَبْسُطُ ٱلرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَيَقْدِرُ
وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَمَآ
أَمْوَٰلُكُمْ وَلَآ أَوْلَٰدُكُم بِٱلَّتِى تُقَرِّبُكُمْ
عِندَنَا زُلْفَىٰٓ إِلَّا مَنْ ءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ
صَٰلِحًا فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ جَزَآءُ ٱلضِّعْفِ بِمَا
عَمِلُوا۟ وَهُمْ فِى ٱلْغُرُفَٰتِ ءَامِنُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾
وَٱلَّذِينَ يَسْعَوْنَ فِىٓ ءَايَٰتِنَا مُعَٰجِزِينَ
أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ فِى ٱلْعَذَابِ مُحْضَرُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾
قُلْ إِنَّ رَبِّى يَبْسُطُ ٱلرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ مِنْ
عِبَادِهِۦ وَيَقْدِرُ لَهُۥ ۚ وَمَآ أَنفَقْتُم مِّن
شَىْءٍ فَهُوَ يُخْلِفُهُۥ ۖ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ ٱلرَّٰزِقِينَ
﴿٣٩﴾

This is another place where the Quran stresses the individual responsibility for making one's decisions, especially when it is a matter of destiny [see also 2:166-167; 14:21;

33:67-68; 34:31-33; 40:47-48]. Following blindly those who enjoy social, economic or political power cannot be an excuse on the Day of Judgement, since no one with a burden can let another person help him/her in carrying it [e.g. 6:164; 17:15; 35:18; 39:7; 53:38-41; also 6:94; 52:21; 74:38]. Such various worldly powers make some people arrogant, and worldly pleasures reduce the human sensibility and sensitivity to truth. Thus, a keenness to maintain the status quo and preserve the existing privileges and luxuries in this life, however unjust and unjustified they may be, lead to a stubborn rejection of God's guidance of the present or the past. In the eternal life to come arrogance and stubbornness will have no place, as everything will be exposed and the truth will become clear: *"You were unmindful of this [Day of Judgement]; now We have removed what covered your vision, and sharp is your sight today"* [50:22]. Those who spent their previous lives blindly following others with power will experience painful regret, especially when their previous privileged patrons distance themselves from them and accept no blame for the absolute submission of their followers to their powers.

Social, economic and political powers can be fairly used when one realizes that they are granted by God through the people who have helped in various direct and indirect ways to develop these powers and who have to be served by this power. This serving should be in accordance with the divine guidance of justice that indicates individual and social mutual rights and duties. Meanwhile, those who have no power, have to stand firm in demanding their rights, and should never submit to injustice or give up their human dignity or their human intellectual and moral merits;*"It is He who has placed you as overlords on earth and raised some of you higher than others so that He might test you through what He has given you. Your Lord is swift in retribution [for those who deny His gifts and His guidance about justice]; yet He is All-forgiving and Most Gracious"* [6:165]. Those who do righteousness and pass the test successfully by fulfilling the human responsibility are on the right track of intellectual, psychological and spiritual self-development. They gain individual and social balance and stability in this present world's life, and their reward from the boundless bounties of God in the eternal life to come will be - in both quality and quantity - far beyond deeds or expectations.

And when they argue one with the other in the fire; the weak, then, say to those who were haughty, "We but followed you; can you now avail from us any of this fire?" Those who were haughty say, "We are all in it together. Truly, God has made His judgement between all [His] creatures." [40:47-48]

وَإِذْ
يَتَحَآجُّونَ فِى ٱلنَّارِ فَيَقُولُ ٱلضُّعَفَٰٓؤُا۟
لِلَّذِينَ ٱسْتَكْبَرُوٓا۟ إِنَّا كُنَّا لَكُمْ تَبَعًا فَهَلْ
أَنتُم مُّغْنُونَ عَنَّا نَصِيبًا مِّنَ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿٤٧﴾
قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱسْتَكْبَرُوٓا۟ إِنَّا كُلٌّ فِيهَآ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ قَدْ حَكَمَ بَيْنَ ٱلْعِبَادِ ﴿٤٨﴾

Here is more emphasis on the individual responsibility and accountability in the life to come, and on the psychological misery that those who choose to be indulged in the enjoyment of this life and deny the life to come will endure. One who follows has to use his/her own mind and see what he/she is going through and what the long-term

consequences will be, not just blindly follow someone who will never be willing nor able to take the responsibilities of his/her followers on him/herself [also 2:166-167; 6:164; 14:21; 17:15; 33:67-68; 34:31-33; 35:18; 39:7; 53:38-40. See previous comments on 2:166-167; 14:21; 34:31-33].

So when you have performed your acts of worship, [continue to] bear God in mind, as you would bear your own fathers in mind, or with a yet keener remembrance; there are people who say, "O Our Lord! Give to us in this world!" And such shall not partake in the [eternal] life to come. But there are others who say, "O Our Lord! Give us good in this world and good in the life to come, and keep us safe from the suffering through the fire!" These shall have their portion [of happiness] in return for what they have earned, and God is swift in reckoning. [2:200-202]

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُم مَّنَاسِكَكُمْ فَاذْكُرُوا
ٱللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ ءَابَآءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا ۗ
فَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَآ ءَاتِنَا فِى
ٱلدُّنْيَا وَمَا لَهُۥ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَٰقٍ
﴿٢٠٠﴾ وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَآ ءَاتِنَا فِى
ٱلدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً
وَقِنَا عَذَابَ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿٢٠١﴾ أُولَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ
نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا۟ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ سَرِيعُ
ٱلْحِسَابِ ﴿٢٠٢﴾

The place of this life in the mind and heart of the believer in God, in relation to the life to come, is well presented in the above verses. Believing in the eternity of the afterlife should not lead to an isolation from this world, just as the pleasures of this life should not let one forget its shortness and inevitable end, and the eternal life that will follow it. The true faith keeps the balance between the two sides, since the believer cannot reach the rewards of the other world except through his/her own work in this world [see also 28:77]. One can get the best of this life as long as he/she puts it in perspective, and controls his/her desires so as not to become the slave of personal momentary pleasures.

The human balance in dealing with this life requires a balance in using one's physical, intellectual and psychological-spiritual faculties integratively, and getting used to thinking about the consequences that follow, in order to plan for the long term and the future. However, this should not lead a person to isolate him/herself from others, or cutting him/herself off from the legitimate balanced enjoyment of this life and its pleasures [see 7:31-32; 18:7, 46]. Islam and its followers represent "*the middle way*" [2:143] in life that avoids going to one extreme or another.

This is the proper short term attitude of Islam: neither to denounce this world and urge Muslims to withdraw from it nor to allow Muslims to be so indulged in its pleasures that they ignore the use of the human intellectual and spiritual abilities on reflecting on the others and the future. It is significant that the above verses follow the Quranic teachings about the acts of pilgrimage, the important obligation in Islamic worship that ought to be done once in the whole life. Even in acts of mere worship, the balance of these benefits in this life, and in the afterlife as well, is underlined in the Quran [e.g. 2:183-186; 5:6; 9:103; 22:27-28; 29:45].

And when Ibrahim (Abraham) said, "O my Lord! Show me how you give life unto the dead." He said, "Have you not yet believed?" He [Abraham] answered, "Yes, but so that my heart may be at rest."
Said He, "Take, then, four birds and train them to be bound to you [following what you may instruct them]; later on place each [or part of each] of them on a [different] hill [around you where they are able to hear your voice]. Then call them, and they will come flying to you. And do know that God is All-mighty, All-wise. [2:260]

وَ إِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ رَبِّ أَرِنِى
كَيْفَ تُحْىِ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ ۖ قَالَ أَوَ لَمْ
تُؤْمِن ۖ قَالَ بَلَىٰ وَ لَٰكِن لِّيَطْمَئِنَّ
قَلْبِى ۖ قَالَ فَخُذْ أَرْبَعَةً مِّنَ ٱلطَّيْرِ
فَصُرْهُنَّ إِلَيْكَ ثُمَّ ٱجْعَلْ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ جَبَلٍ
مِّنْهُنَّ جُزْءًا ثُمَّ ٱدْعُهُنَّ يَأْتِينَكَ سَعْيًا
وَ ٱعْلَمْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٦٠﴾

The Arabic word "*juz'*" meaning part, into which the four birds were divided after which each was put separately on a hill in the area where Ibrahim [Abraham] lived, can be taken to mean that the birds were kept and distributed whole each on on a neighboring hill, or that the birds were slaughtered and cut into pieces. The pieces were distributed on neighboring hills, and then the bodies were reconstructed and revived by God's will, as Ibrahim called them to him, so that this would show him how the resurrection of human bodies can take place. However, the Arabic imperative "*surr*" means that Abraham had to train the birds to "incline" and become bound to him and follow what he might instruct them to do. The prominent commentator, Abu Muslim al-Asfahani, as quoted by al-Fakhr al- Razi in his voluminous commentary on the Quran, convincingly supported the interpretation that the birds were kept and distributed whole on the hills, stating that "if the human being is able to train birds in such a way as to make them come to the trainer as soon as he calls them wherever they may be, then it is obvious that God, whose will all His creation obey, can call life back into the human being by simply ordering: 'Be'." However, the understanding of the Quranic verse as ordering that the birds would be slaughtered and divided into parts which were distributed separately on the hills around is dominant among the commentators, and thus the incident represented a divine miracle shown specifically to Ibrahim, and not merely as a natural phenomenon.

Another important teaching of the verse is that God allows any question in order to accommodate a sincere search for the truth, even from a prophet who had strong faith and wide knowledge, and that such a person can ask such a daring question without causing his/her personality or faith to be put down.

To God belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth. Whether you bring out what is in your own selves or conceal it, God calls you to account for it; He [through His full justice and knowledge of each individual] will forgive whom He wills,

لِّلَّهِ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ مَا فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ وَ إِن تُبْدُوا۟ مَا فِىٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ
أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ يُحَاسِبْكُم بِهِ ٱللَّهُ ۖ فَيَغْفِرُ
لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَ يُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَآءُ ۗ وَ ٱللَّهُ

and will punish whom He wills (according to His All knowledge and justice), and God has the power over all things. [2:284]

عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٢٨٤﴾

The above verse stresses the accountability of every human being for all his/her deeds, whether they are planned or not and whether they are acted out openly or secretly. According to a tradition (*hadith*) of the Prophet, one who intends to do something evil and changes his/her mind and does not turn his/her intention into action will be rewarded for the change and forgiven for the previous evil intention [reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim].

Whoever desires the reward of this world, with God are the rewards of [both] this life and of the life to come; and God is All-hearing, All- seeing. [4:134]

مَّن كَانَ يُرِيدُ ثَوَابَ ٱلدُّنْيَا فَعِندَ
ٱللَّهِ ثَوَابُ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَ ٱلْأَخِرَةِ ۚ وَكَانَ
ٱللَّهُ سَمِيعًۢا بَصِيرًا ﴿١٣٤﴾

The Quran repeatedly stresses that the faith in God and the eternal life to come should not pull the human being from this full life and all its pleasures. Instead, the faith allows the believer the best of the pleasures of this world in a moderate and balanced way without ignoring or exhausting the human physical nature on the one side, or neglecting the unique human intellectual and spiritual merits on the other. Through this human balance, inspired by the faith in God and the eternal life to come, one gets the highest rewards of both worlds: *"And God grants them the rewards of this world, as well as the high rewards of the life to come, for God loves the doers of good"* [3:148].

Say: "Unto whom belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth?" Say: "Unto God. He has willed upon Himself the law of grace and mercy." He will assuredly gather you all together on the Day of Resurrection, of which there is no doubt. Those who have lost their own selves, refuse [stubbornly] to believe. [6:12]

قُل لِّمَن مَّا فِى
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ قُل لِّلَّهِ ۚ كَتَبَ
عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِ ٱلرَّحْمَةَ ۚ لَيَجْمَعَنَّكُمْ إِلَىٰ
يَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ ۚ ٱلَّذِينَ
خَسِرُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

In spite of God's supreme sovereignty and almightiness He is Gracious and Merciful. He guides the human beings in this world and requites them in the hereafter for their own benefit. The observance of God's guidance secures the human balance individually and socially, as well as the rewards in both this life and the eternal life to come. On the other hand, the rejection of God's guidance obstructs the fulfillment of all the human potentials and deprives the human being from a balanced life in this world, as well as from the rewards of the eternal life to come.

And they say, "There is nothing beyond our present life in this world, and never shall we be raised from the

وَ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنْ هِىَ إِلَّا
حَيَاتُنَا ٱلدُّنْيَا وَ مَا نَحْنُ بِمَبْعُوثِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

dead." If you could but see when they shall be made to stand before their Lord, [and] He will say, "Is not this the truth?" They will answer, "Yes, indeed, by our Lord!" He will say, "Taste, then, the suffering as a result of your [stubborn] refusal of the truth!"
Lost indeed are they who denounced as a lie to the meeting with God, till the Last Hour suddenly comes upon them; then, they cry, "Alas for us, that we did not negligently waste it!" On their backs, they shall be bearing the burden of their evil-doing; how evil the burden that they shall bear! Nothing is the life of this world but a play and a passing delight; and the Last Abode is by far better for those who are conscious of God. Will you not, then, use your minds? [6:29-32]

وَلَوْ تَرَىٰٓ إِذْ وُقِفُوا۟ عَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ
قَالَ أَلَيْسَ هَٰذَا بِٱلْحَقِّ ۚ قَالُوا۟ بَلَىٰ
وَرَبِّنَا ۚ قَالَ فَذُوقُوا۟ ٱلْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنتُمْ
تَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ قَدْ خَسِرَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا۟
بِلِقَآءِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءَتْهُمُ
ٱلسَّاعَةُ بَغْتَةً قَالُوا۟ يَٰحَسْرَتَنَا عَلَىٰ مَا
فَرَّطْنَا فِيهَا وَهُمْ يَحْمِلُونَ أَوْزَارَهُمْ
عَلَىٰ ظُهُورِهِمْ ۚ أَلَا سَآءَ مَا يَزِرُونَ
﴿٣١﴾ وَمَا ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنْيَآ إِلَّا لَعِبٌ
وَلَهْوٌ ۖ وَلَلدَّارُ ٱلْءَاخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لِّلَّذِينَ
يَتَّقُونَ ۚ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

The first of the above verses shows that there were, among the Arabs at the time of the message of Islam, those who did not believe in a resurrection and another life to come. The Quran reports the arguments of those who rejected the message of God, and thus teaches the believers to discuss any case honestly and objectively, initially within themselves as well as with others if they agree to have a discussion. Restricting the human intellect to concrete materialist reasoning and physical pleasures would reduce the human being to mere biological existence and functioning. The existence of high intellectual activities, intuition and artistic creativity proves that there are human intellectual and spiritual faculties beyond the sensory abilities. A comprehensive and balanced development of the human faculties is the responsibility of the individual and society, so that a lack of imagination and of super-conception would not cripple the human potentials and lead to a poor vision of the facts. Serious thinking about this life whatever its pleasures may be, leads the human mind to realize its limitations, injustice and unfulfillingness. Those who suppress or neglect this serious thinking will suddenly face the consequences, and then will realize that all that they gained in their previous delight if compared with the rewards - or the suffering - that often occur in the long-term in this life and definitely in the life to come were not worthwhile.

Lost indeed are they who treat as a falsehood that they must meet God, until the Last Hour suddenly comes upon them. Lost indeed is the person who loses the balance of the personal powers: physical, intellectual and psychological-spiritual; and the balance between this short life and the eternal life to come. Such a person bears the consequences of imbalance, short-sightedness and indulgence in the joys of the flesh only both in this world and in the life to come. When one realizes in the end this grave fault, it will be too late to change one's direction, and to release oneself from the accumulated outcome of the wrong behavior.

And We send the conveyors of [Our] messages only to bear good tidings and to warn; so those who believe and live righteously, upon them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve. But those who denounce as a lie Our signs and messages, suffering will afflict them, as a result of all their evil doing.

Say, "I do not say unto you, 'God's treasures are with me, nor that I know what is beyond the reach of human perception'; nor do I say unto you, 'I am an angel;' I only follow what is revealed to me." Say, "Are the blind and the one who sees equal?" Will you not then reflect?

And warn hereby those who fear that they will be gathered [for judgement] to their Lord; with none to support them before Him nor to intercede with Him; [warn them] so that they might become [fully] conscious of Him.

And drive not away those who call on their Lord at morning and evening, seeking His countenance [and only His acceptance]. You are in no way accountable for what they may do, nor are they in any way accountable for what you may do, and so when you drive them away, you would be among the wrong-doers.

Thus do We try people through one another, that they might ask: "Are these the ones that God has been gracious to from among us?" Does not God know best those who are grateful [to Him]? And when those who believe in Our messages come to you, say: "Peace be upon you. Your Lord has willed upon Himself the law of grace and mercy; whosoever of you does evil out of ignorance and thereafter repents and amends [his/her conduct and turns to righteousness], He is All-forgiving, Most Gracious. [6:48-54]

وَمَا نُرْسِلُ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ إِلَّا
مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ ۖ فَمَنْ ءَامَنَ
وَأَصْلَحَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ
﴿٤٨﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَـٰتِنَا يَمَسُّهُمُ
ٱلْعَذَابُ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَفْسُقُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾ قُل لَّآ
أَقُولُ لَكُمْ عِندِى خَزَآئِنُ ٱللَّهِ وَلَآ أَعْلَمُ
ٱلْغَيْبَ وَلَآ أَقُولُ لَكُمْ إِنِّى مَلَكٌ ۖ إِنْ
أَتَّبِعُ إِلَّا مَا يُوحَىٰٓ إِلَىَّ ۚ قُلْ هَلْ
يَسْتَوِى ٱلْأَعْمَىٰ وَٱلْبَصِيرُ ۚ أَفَلَا
تَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾ وَأَنذِرْ بِهِ ٱلَّذِينَ
يَخَافُونَ أَن يُحْشَرُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ لَيْسَ
لَهُم مِّن دُونِهِۦ وَلِىٌّ وَلَا شَفِيعٌ لَّعَلَّهُمْ
يَتَّقُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ وَلَا تَطْرُدِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ
رَبَّهُم بِٱلْغَدَوٰةِ وَٱلْعَشِىِّ يُرِيدُونَ
وَجْهَهُۥ ۖ مَا عَلَيْكَ مِنْ حِسَابِهِم مِّن
شَىْءٍ وَمَا مِنْ حِسَابِكَ عَلَيْهِم مِّن شَىْءٍ
فَتَطْرُدَهُمْ فَتَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلظَّـٰلِمِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾
وَكَذَٰلِكَ فَتَنَّا بَعْضَهُم بِبَعْضٍ لِّيَقُولُوٓا۟
أَهَـٰٓؤُلَآءِ مَنَّ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِم مِّنۢ بَيْنِنَآ ۗ
أَلَيْسَ ٱللَّهُ بِأَعْلَمَ بِٱلشَّـٰكِرِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾
وَإِذَا جَآءَكَ ٱلَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِـَٔايَـٰتِنَا فَقُلْ
سَلَـٰمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ ۖ كَتَبَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِ
ٱلرَّحْمَةَ ۖ أَنَّهُۥ مَنْ عَمِلَ مِنكُمْ سُوٓءًۢا
بِجَهَـٰلَةٍ ثُمَّ تَابَ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَنَّهُۥ
غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٥٤﴾

The conveyors of God's message have not been sent to repeal the human free-will and choice, but to convince and persuade, and to announce rewards for following God's guidance in this world's life and in the eternal life to come, and to warn those who ignore their intellectuality and spirituality, and indulge in following their own whims or others'

whims for the sake of short-term pleasures. The conveyors of God's message have no personal privilege: they never claimed authority over the knowledge of the treasures of God, and they merely carried out the message that was revealed to them. Accordingly, they had to extend the message to all people whom they could address, and they could not exclude any individual or group of people that seemed serious in seeking the truth, even if such a group was not liked by another or was looked upon as inferior. The justice taught by God and His message and its conveyors should be represented in spreading the message and in the behavior of the conveyor himself in carrying out His message, since he would be accountable for this, just as the addressees would be accountable for their own response to the message.

With regard to God's justice, there is no place for exception or favoritism. People have to follow God's teachings and observe justice in their mutual relations, regardless of power or weakness, or wealth or poverty. In following God's guidance and justice, their behavior will be rewarded by psychological and social stability and balance in this life and by eternal happiness in the life to come. However, God does not arbitrarily appoint certain people for His permanent grace and others for His permanent curse. The door is open for anyone who does something bad to stop by his/her free will, repent and act rightfully. God is presenting Himself in these verses as *"Your Lord who has willed upon himself the law of grace and mercy"* and the *"All-forgiving Most Gracious;"* as He presents Himself in other verses as the All-mighty and the One who holds absolute sway over all that exists and who is severe in retribution.

All the attributes of God help the human mind to conceive of what is beyond human perception, whether regarding God Himself and His relation with the human beings in this world, or His judgement and requital on one side and forgiveness and mercy on the other.

Say: "Bring forward your witnesses who could testify that God has forbidden [all] this [that you claim]". If they testify [falsely], bear not witness with them; and do not follow the desires of those who denounce our signs and messages as lies, and those who believe not in the life to come, and who hold others as equal to their Lord. [6:150]

قُلْ هَلُمَّ شُهَدَآءَكُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ
يَشْهَدُونَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ حَرَّمَ هَٰذَا ۚ فَإِن
شَهِدُوا۟ فَلَا تَشْهَدْ مَعَهُمْ ۚ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ
أَهْوَآءَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا وَٱلَّذِينَ لَا
يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ وَهُم بِرَبِّهِمْ يَعْدِلُونَ ﴿١٥٠﴾

The divine law is based on, and guarded by, the faith in the One God and the Day of Judgement. A believer cannot claim what he/she likes as the law of God, since such a believer knows that God is close to him/her, and is fully aware of what he/she may claim. He/she will certainly meet God on the Day of Judgement, when there will be no place for such lies or excuses. On the other hand, others may justify that to which they have been used or their superstitions by attaching them to God without any evidence, and they may show fearlessness of His judgement and retribution. The two parties can never meet or compromise. It is the essential factor for the success of the law of God that it works side

by side with the faith, and the believer's observance of the law is guarded by his/her belief in God's watchfulness in this world, and His final judgement and eternal requital in the eternal life to come.

Those who turn people away from God's path, aiming to show it as devious, and stubbornly deny the truth of the life to come. [7:45]

ٱلَّذِينَ يَصُدُّونَ عَن
سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَ يَبْغُونَهَا عِوَجًا وَ هُم
بِٱلْأٓخِرَةِ كَٰفِرُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

Crooked minds try to distort the message of God so as to turn people away from it, or to justify their own corrupted way of thinking and living. Restricting oneself to the momentary delights of this life and ignoring or denying the eternal life to come develops selfishness, shortsightedness and deception of oneself and of others in the human thinking and behavior. A person with such limitations always enjoys turning any one away from the right direction, so that that person becomes similar to him/her. Thus he/she does his/her best to show God's path as unrealistic or unreasonable through false claims and distortions. One who twists the facts in such a way ends up distorting his/her own intelligence and morality.

And those who denounce as lies Our messages, and the [truth of the] life to come, their doings shall end in failure; shall they, then, be recompensed except for what they have actually done? [7:147]

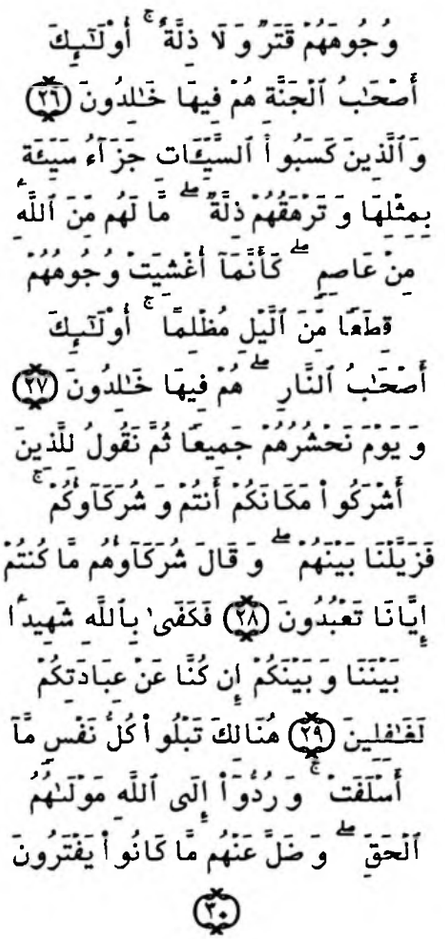
وَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا
وَلِقَآءِ ٱلْأٓخِرَةِ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَٰلُهُمْ ۚ هَلْ
يُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٤٧﴾

The Quran repeatedly emphasizes the "fruitlessness and vanity" of the deeds and aims of those who are attracted to the momentary delights of this life in this world [the Arabic root "*habita,*" to end in failure, is used in 16 Quranic verses]. Psychological and social imbalances represent the inevitable results of restricting the intellectuality and suppressing the spirituality while allowing ego-maniacal and materialist attitudes to swell and expand. The belief in God and the life to come regulates, controls and balances the human behavior of the individual, and the mutual relations in the society. In the absence of this belief, human energy may be excessively wasted in reacting to the ups and downs in this life, in superiority and inferiority complexes, and in shortsighted ego-centrism. When one comes to the inevitable end of this life journey, and faces what he/she had denied before, the "fruitlessness and vanity" of the swiftly passing life concretizes and becomes a reality beyond any doubt, and the more severe suffering begins and continues without end.

And God invites [people] to the abode of peace, and He guides whom He wills [according to one's free choice granted by Him] to a straight way.
The good-doers shall have the best [as a reward] and far more is it goodly [than any

وَ ٱللَّهُ يَدْعُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ دَارِ
ٱلسَّلَٰمِ وَ يَهْدِى مَن يَشَآءُ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ
مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٢٥﴾ ۞ لِّلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا۟
ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ وَ زِيَادَةٌ ۖ وَ لَا يَرْهَقُ

expectation]. No darkness nor humility shall strain their faces [on the Day of Resurrection]; it is they who are the inhabitants of paradise, therein to abide.
And those who have earned evil deeds, the requital for an evil deed shall be the like of it, and humility shall stress them; none shall they have to protect them from God; their faces shall be as covered with strips of the darkness of the night; it is they who are the inmates of the fire, therein to abide. And [this judgement shall be on] the Day on which We shall gather them all together, then We shall say to those who [in their lifetime] associated others with God, "Stand at your place, you and your partners [in that evil-doing]." Then, We shall separate them from one another, and their partners [in that evil-doing] shall say, "Not us you were worshipping. Enough is God for a witness between us and you; assuredly we were unaware of your worshipping [us]!" There and then will every human being clearly find out [the truth] about what he [/she] has done in the past, and all will be brought back to God, their true Lord Supreme, and all their invented falsehoods will have forsaken them. [10:25-30]



It is significant that, in the above verses, the Quran calls the eternal paradise in the life to come the "Home of Peace," as one of the attributes or names of God is The All-peace or The Source of Peace, *Al-Salam*. This Arabic word used to describe God and the Paradise is from the same root as Islam, the faith that gives the individual and the society in this life balance, peace and satisfaction.

The Quran here portrays some landmarks of the life to come, which are probably more specific and characterizing than what the Bible includes. It is called the "Home of Peace," for there is no fear or worry about the future, or disappointment about the present, or grievance about the past. Those who do good in this life will be bountifully rewarded in the life to come. On the other hand, those who do evil in this life, will get in the life to come a similar requital for their past evil doing, without any excess. These sometimes suffer frustration at present, and on the Day of Judgement they will definitely feel grievance and regret about the past, and fear about the future. None can defend them against God, including those whom they associated with Him in worship, whereas the good-doers will be freed from such sufferings and will enjoy the generous rewards of God.

As a conclusion to such a vivid portrait of those who will suffer and those who will

rejoice, the Quran stresses the individual accountability: *"There and then will every human being clearly find out [the truth] about what he [/she] has done in the past, and all will be brought back to God, their true Lord Supreme."* Such an impressive enlightenment aims to urge every individual to work hard in this life in order to avoid the suffering and enjoy the happiness of the eternal life to come.

As for those who only care for the life of this world and its attractions We shall recompense them in full for all that they have done therein, and they shall by no means be wrong. It is they for whom in the life to come there is only the fire, and all that they did before in that [previous life] shall end in failure, and worthless [thus] was all that they ever did. [11:15-16]

مَن كَانَ يُرِيدُ
ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَ زِينَتَهَا نُوَفِّ إِلَيْهِمْ
أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ فِيهَا وَ هُمْ فِيهَا لَا يُبْخَسُونَ
﴿١٥﴾ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَيْسَ لَهُمْ فِى
ٱلْأَخِرَةِ إِلَّا ٱلنَّارُ ۖ وَ حَبِطَ مَا صَنَعُوا۟
فِيهَا وَ بَٰطِلٌ مَّا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

God's justice determines this world for merely testing and trying the human beings, and then those who work hard for its material bounties will get full material recompensation of their hard work, whatever their beliefs may be. The sun and the moon, the wind and the breeze, the rain and the rivers, the different useful plants and animals, and all the natural forces are created for all humanity without discrimination. Every individual will be judged and requited in the life to come. There is no favoritism for the believers in this world; they have to work and there is no miraculous or gratuitous subsistence *"Of the bounties of your Lord We bestow freely on both these [who seek the good of the life to come while they drive out the good of this world's life] and those [who only seek the immediate pleasures of this world's life], and the bounties of your Lord are never confined [to one group]"* [17:20]. However, as the faith in God and the eternal life to come leads to a balanced life for the individual and the society, the material, psychological and social fruits of work will increase if they are combined with hard work, because of individual and social stability, not for any miraculous favor given only to the believers and not offered to others.

Whosoever does care only for the [enjoyment of] this swiftly passing life in this world [however unjustly he/she achieves it] We hasten for them therein whatever We will to whomsoever We will; but in the end We consign him [/her] to [the suffering] of hell, disgraced and humiliated. And whosoever does care for the [good of the] life to come, and strives for it as it ought to be striven for, and is a [true] believer withal - this is among those whose striving is received with favor [by God]. Of the bounties of your Lord

مَّن كَانَ يُرِيدُ
ٱلْعَاجِلَةَ عَجَّلْنَا لَهُۥ فِيهَا مَا نَشَآءُ لِمَن
نُّرِيدُ ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَا لَهُۥ جَهَنَّمَ يَصْلَىٰهَا
مَذْمُومًا مَّدْحُورًا ﴿١٨﴾ وَ مَنْ أَرَادَ
ٱلْأَخِرَةَ وَ سَعَىٰ لَهَا سَعْيَهَا وَ هُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ
فَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ كَانَ سَعْيُهُم مَّشْكُورًا ﴿١٩﴾ كُلًّا
نُّمِدُّ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ وَ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ مِنْ عَطَآءِ رَبِّكَ ۚ

We bestow freely on both these and those, and the bounties of your Lord are never confined [to one group]. See how We have bestowed more on some [in this world's life] than on others; but verily, the life to come will be far higher in ranks and far greater in grading and favoring. [17:18-21]

وَمَا كَانَ عَطَآءُ رَبِّكَ مَحْظُورًا ﴿٢٠﴾ ٱنظُرْ
كَيْفَ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ
وَلَلْـَٔاخِرَةُ أَكْبَرُ دَرَجَٰتٍ وَأَكْبَرُ تَفْضِيلًا
﴿٢١﴾

The above verses emphasize once more [as previously in 11:15-16] that God's law in this world is that whoever works hard obtains the results of his/her work, whatever his/her faith may be. God's justice allows every human being, or even every living creature, to benefit from the various natural sources: the heat, the light, the wind, the rain etc, whether they are used for a good or an evil purpose. The belief in God and the eternal life to come will secure more individual and social stability in this world life, and a greater reward is in store for the believer in the afterlife. However, any person can gain in this life to a certain degree according to his/her efforts, but neglecting the human spiritual potentials will have its effects in this life, and will ruin one's future in the eternal life to come. Those who do care for no more than the earthly material pleasures, can get them and may misuse them, while those who are broad minded and longsighted are able to go beyond the present world life in their thinking and behavior, and thus they get their legitimate share in their Lord's bounty in this world life, since they fulfill the requirements of work in order to get the rewards. When morality is based on and nurtured with the faith in the One God and the eternal life to come, it will be deepened in its psychological and social roots, and widened in its appeal to the masses and interaction with the whole human activities.

However, faith and morality have to be reflected and represented in hard work in this world life, in order to get the good of it according to the laws of nature that are established by the Creator. The faith in God and the eternal life to come intensifies the productivity of the believers, as they become more balanced and stable in facing the ups and downs in work in this world life: "grateful to God in times of ease, and patient in times of adversity", as the Prophet's tradition indicates [reported by Ibn Hanbal and Ibn Majah]. In this way, the believer gains in either case the good of this world life, and the far better rewards of the eternal life to come. Those who use their physical, intellectual and spiritual potentials together gain more success in their life, than others who may concentrate on material interests in this world only, since the former would be more persistent and balanced in coping with the natural vicissitudes of success and failure. However the great difference and sharp contrast between the two perspectives will be obvious in the eternal life to come, where the shortsighted materialists will be entirely losers, as *"verily, the life to come will be far higher in rank and far greater in grading and favoring."*

To any who desires a harvest in the life to come, We shall increase his [/her] harvest; and to any who desires [but] a harvest in this world's life, We give him [/her] thereof, but he [/she] will have no share

مَن كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ نَزِدْ
لَهُۥ فِى حَرْثِهِۦ ۖ وَمَن كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ
ٱلدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِۦ مِنْهَا وَمَا لَهُۥ فِى ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ

in the life to come. [42:20]

مِن نَّصِيبٍ ﴿٢٠﴾

God lets everyone have the fruits of his/her work in this world's life, while the requital for intention and fulfillment of obligations will be in the life to come. However, the belief in God and the life to come causes one to use his/her human intellectual and spiritual faculties, and secures individual and social stability and balance [also 11:15-16; 17:19-20. See previous comments on these verses].

God does grant the sustenance in abundance or according to a certain measure, to whomever He wills. And those [who are granted in abundance] rejoice in the life of this world, while this world's life, if compared with the life to come, is nothing but a swiftly passing enjoyment. [13:26]

ٱللَّهُ يَبْسُطُ ٱلرِّزْقَ
لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَيَقْدِرُ ۚ وَفَرِحُوا۟ بِٱلْحَيَوٰةِ
ٱلدُّنْيَا وَمَا ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنْيَا فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ
إِلَّا مَتَٰعٌ ﴿٢٦﴾

What God grants in the form of individual talents and skills, and of natural land resources, varies and differs from one case to another. However, each person is tested through what he/she is granted, and no human being or area is supposed to perish if the human energy is well-used and the essential cooperation is achieved. The human faculties and energy represent a common source for all people, through which a person who was not born in a rich family can secure his/her needs through his/her own abilities and may earn a great deal, or through social help if he/she is totally unable to earn his/her living, and a land with limited natural resources can develop other means for public income, relying on services and international cooperation. The individual and communities that start wealthy are tested as to how they would deal with their wealth and use it for their own and the common benefit, while the individuals and communities that start in hardship are tested as to how they survive and develop by using their talents and skills, and cooperating with others. Such a balance and interaction would be secured when one does not restrict the human intelligence and imagination to the bounds of the relatively very short life in this world.

Optimism, activity, balance and justice can be achieved through the belief in the eternal life to come. In this way, the individual and the community who are granted things in abundance should use such wealth wisely and responsibly, and those who do not find themselves in such circumstances should not lose hope, energy, or dignity, and should try hard to overcome their hardship. If understood properly, the belief in the eternal life to come will inspire, stimulate and develop human activity and stability in this world.

And whether we let you see [within your life-time, O Prophet, the fulfillment of] some of what We have promised to show them, or We cause you to die [before such a fulfillment], it is yours only

وَإِن
مَّا نُرِيَنَّكَ بَعْضَ ٱلَّذِى نَعِدُهُمْ أَوْ
نَتَوَفَّيَنَّكَ فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ ٱلْبَلَٰغُ وَعَلَيْنَا

to deliver the message, and Ours is the reckoning. [13:40]

ٱلْحِسَابُ ﴿٤٠﴾

This verse stresses the fact that the Prophet was merely a human being who had to deliver the message and had no authority over the people, and that every person is accountable only before God on the Day of Judgement. Such an emphasis does not give any person who may wish to practice an educational or political leadership and claim powers that are not his/hers, a chance to do so. Every individual's attitudes and deeds will be judged by God alone, who is the only One who knows all the visible and invisible circumstances of every person at any moment.

And those who left their homes in God's cause after having suffered wrong [on the account of their faith], We will assuredly give them a goodly place in this world,and their reward in the life to come will be far greater if they but knew; those who are steadfastly patient and in their Lord they put their trust. [16:41-42]

وَٱلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا۟ فِى ٱللَّهِ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا
ظُلِمُوا۟ لَنُبَوِّئَنَّهُمْ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً ۖ
وَلَأَجْرُ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ أَكْبَرُ ۚ لَوْ كَانُوا۟ يَعْلَمُونَ
﴿٤١﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا۟ وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ
يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

The belief in the eternal life to come was repeatedly nurtured during the Meccan period of the Prophet's message in order to strengthen the believers against the oppression they were facing. Some of them may have been forced to leave their homes and the environment in which they lived comfortably; the Quran told them that a good place would be secured for them in this world, materially and morally, whether it might be their previous home that they would return to or another place which would become their home. Besides, the reward in the eternal life to come will be greater and more definite for those who suffered in this life for the cause of God, as some may leave this world during the persecution and before securing a good place in it.

And every human being's destiny We have tied to his [/her own neck; and on the Day of Resurrection We shall bring forth for him [/her] a record which each will find spread wide open. [It will be said to him/her]: "Read your own record; sufficient is your own self to-day as a reckoner against you." [17:13-14]

وَكُلَّ إِنسَٰنٍ أَلْزَمْنَٰهُ طَٰٓئِرَهُۥ فِى
عُنُقِهِۦ ۖ وَنُخْرِجُ لَهُۥ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ كِتَٰبًا
يَلْقَىٰهُ مَنشُورًا ﴿١٣﴾ ٱقْرَأْ كِتَٰبَكَ كَفَىٰ
بِنَفْسِكَ ٱلْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكَ حَسِيبًا ﴿١٤﴾

The real destiny of every human being does not depend upon any superstition, related to birds, omens, stars or any other creature. It depends on one's own deeds, whatever they may be, and which will be recorded thoroughly and will be quite exposed to each person on the Day of Judgement. Nobody will be able to escape from such an accurate record, and each will have to admit all that he/she did, and thus he/she will make his/her

own reckoning and will be the witness against his/her own self.

And they say: "What! When we are reduced to bones and fragmented remains, shall we really be raised up again in a new creation?" Say: "Let you be stones of iron, or some creation that is more highly regarded in your minds!" Then they will say: "Who is it that will bring us back [to life]?" Say: "It is He who has originally brought you into being in the first place." Then they will shake their heads at you, and they will say, "When will that be?" Say, "It may possibly be approaching." On a Day when He will call you, and you will answer praising Him, and you will feel that you have but stayed [on earth] a little. [17:49-52]

وَقَالُوٓاْ أَءِذَا كُنَّا عِظَٰمًا وَرُفَٰتًا
أَءِنَّا لَمَبْعُوثُونَ خَلْقًا جَدِيدًا ﴿٤٩﴾
قُلْ كُونُواْ حِجَارَةً أَوْ حَدِيدًا ﴿٥٠﴾ أَوْ
خَلْقًا مِّمَّا يَكْبُرُ فِى صُدُورِكُمْ
فَسَيَقُولُونَ مَن يُعِيدُنَا ۖ قُلِ ٱلَّذِى
فَطَرَكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ ۚ فَسَيُنْغِضُونَ إِلَيْكَ
رُءُوسَهُمْ وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَىٰ هُوَ ۖ قُلْ
عَسَىٰٓ أَن يَكُونَ قَرِيبًا ﴿٥١﴾ يَوْمَ
يَدْعُوكُمْ فَتَسْتَجِيبُونَ بِحَمْدِهِۦ وَتَظُنُّونَ
إِن لَّبِثْتُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٥٢﴾

The arguments that the Quran reports about the One God or the Resurrection and the life to come are full of vividness. They make the reader feel that the different parties are arguing in front of him/her, challenging each other with arguments and counter-arguments. Even their actions such as the shaking of their heads, are portrayed. The Quran teaches the believer to argue with others in the best ethical and objective way, and to secure a fair argument that allows the other party to express openly his/her views, and never be shocked by anything that one may say.

One party asks whether there would be a new creation out of bones and bits that the human body will be reduced to. The answer to their doubt is that even if they may become stones or iron or anything that seems to them so impossible to be decayed or to receive life, still nothing is beyond the power of the All-mighty! Shaking his/her head in doubt, one who argues may ask in defiance when will such a miracle take place! No human being can actually appoint an exact time; the event will certainly occur, but when God decides that it should happen. It will happen all of a sudden, and one will feel that all his/her previous life has been too short and that it has come to an end too soon. As the Quran, pointed out: the human life on earth will appear to the person "but a little while," in comparison with the eternity of the life to come - as al-Tabari and al-Zamakhshari, the outstanding commentators on the Quran, explained. Praising God on that Day may emerge practically through the miracle of the Resurrection of life which manifests God's all-mightiness, or may occur from the resurrected believers, or may come out from all resurrected human beings, regardless of their beliefs. Whatever might have been one's short-sightedness in the previous life, the "new creation" will open all eyes and minds to the shocking and undeniable truth of the supreme Lord, His unique All-mightiness and His approaching judgement after the relatively too short previous life.

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ
إِن كُنتُمْ فِى رَيْبٍ مِّنَ ٱلْبَعْثِ فَإِنَّا
خَلَقْنَـٰكُم مِّن تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ
عَلَقَةٍ ثُمَّ مِن مُّضْغَةٍ مُّخَلَّقَةٍ وَ غَيْرِ مُخَلَّقَةٍ
لِّنُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ ۚ وَ نُقِرُّ فِى ٱلْأَرْحَامِ مَا نَشَآءُ
إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ثُمَّ نُخْرِجُكُمْ طِفْلًا ثُمَّ
لِتَبْلُغُوٓا۟ أَشُدَّكُمْ ۖ وَ مِنكُم مَّن يُتَوَفَّىٰ
وَمِنكُم مَّن يُرَدُّ إِلَىٰٓ أَرْذَلِ ٱلْعُمُرِ لِكَيْلَا
يَعْلَمَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ عِلْمٍ شَيْـًٔا ۚ وَ تَرَى ٱلْأَرْضَ
هَامِدَةً فَإِذَآ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْهَا ٱلْمَآءَ ٱهْتَزَّتْ
وَ رَبَتْ وَ أَنۢبَتَتْ مِن كُلِّ زَوْجٍۭ بَهِيجٍ ﴿٥﴾
ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلْحَقُّ وَ أَنَّهُۥ يُحْىِ
ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ وَ أَنَّهُۥ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ
﴿٦﴾ وَ أَنَّ ٱلسَّاعَةَ ءَاتِيَةٌ لَّا رَيْبَ فِيهَا
وَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَبْعَثُ مَن فِى ٱلْقُبُورِ ﴿٧﴾

O human beings! If you are in doubt as to the resurrection, [think about that] We have created you out of dust, then of [each of] a [male] sperm [and a female egg], then out of a mixed suspension [of both], then of a[n embryonic] lump that has been developed but is yet incomplete and indistinct; and this [account] is meant to make [your origin] clear to you.
And whatever We will [to be born] We cause to rest in the [mothers'] wombs for an appointed term; then We bring you forth as infants; then you may come of age; and some of you die [young], while some are kept alive until they reach a most abject stage, in which they know nothing after knowing somewhat. [And further] you see the earth dry and lifeless, then when we send down water to it, it quivers and swells, and puts forth every kind of lovely plant in a[n inborn] pair. All this points out that God alone is the Ultimate [Originator and Eternal] Truth, and that He alone brings the dead to life, and it is He who has power over everything.
And that the Last Hour is bound to come, no doubt of it, and that God will raise up from the dead all who are in their graves. [22:5-7]

Here is another argument about the "resurrection" and the life to come, that recalls the creation process in its different stages to show that the All-mighty Creator can bring back to life whom He created in the first place. Biologists can realize how the Quran is accurate in giving in a nutshell the early development of the human life, from a drop of sperm, to a suspended combination of the male sperm and the female egg that make the fetus, to the embryonic development in the womb for an appointed time until the delivery. Then follows the stages of growth outside the womb, from childhood to adulthood and then to old age, when the human life retrocedes to the weakness of early childhood. This points out how the All-mighty Creator has created human life and has developed it, and consequently He can bring it again when He wills.

Life is here around us in various forms and different stages. The earth appears as dead and is barren until God sends water to it and thus brings it into life, and plants can grow beautifully in a wonderful variety, through an existence of the twofold organs in each plant and a process of fertilization and reproduction. The Creator of this fascinating variety of beauty can surely create another life and a new world. The human physical growth ought to call the attention to the human spiritual growth, which has to be combined with

the physical in a healthy balanced life.

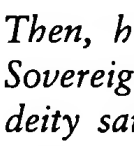
And [to a following generation] We sent to them a conveyor of [Our] message from among themselves, [saying], "Worship God alone! You have no god but He. Will you not, then, become conscious of Him?"
And the leading persons among his people, who stubbornly rejected the truth and denied that they would face another life to come, as they exulted [by their own choice] in the ease and plenty that We granted them in this worldly life, said, "This is but a [mortal] human being like yourselves: he eats of what you eat and drinks of what you drink. And, indeed, if you obey a [mortal] human being like yourselves, you will surely be the losers!"
"Does he promise you that after you die and become [mere] dust and bones, you shall be brought forth [to a new life]?" Far away, very away indeed is that which you are promised!
There is nothing but our present world's life; we die and we live [only once], and we shall never be raised up from the dead! He is only a man who has forged a lie against God, and we are not going to believe him!"
[The prophet sent to them] said, "O my Lord! Help me as they denounce my message as a lie!"
God said, "In but a little while they will surely be remorseful."
And the blast [of Our punishment] seized them justly and unavoidably, and We caused them to become as a scum on the surface of a torrent; so away with the evil-doing people!
Then We give rise after them to other generations. No people can hasten [the end of] their term [of life in this world], nor can they delay [it].
And We sent forth the conveyors of Our messages successively; whenever there came to a people their conveyor of the message they denounced him as a liar, and so We caused

فَأَرْسَلْنَا فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ أَنِ
اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرُهُ ۖ
أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾ وَقَالَ الْمَلَأُ مِن
قَوْمِهِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِلِقَاءِ
الْآخِرَةِ وَأَتْرَفْنَاهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا
مَا هَٰذَا إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يَأْكُلُ مِمَّا
تَأْكُلُونَ مِنْهُ وَيَشْرَبُ مِمَّا تَشْرَبُونَ
﴿٣٣﴾ وَلَئِنْ أَطَعْتُم بَشَرًا مِّثْلَكُمْ إِنَّكُمْ
إِذًا لَّخَاسِرُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾ أَيَعِدُكُمْ أَنَّكُمْ إِذَا
مِتُّمْ وَكُنتُمْ تُرَابًا وَعِظَامًا أَنَّكُم
مُّخْرَجُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾ هَيْهَاتَ هَيْهَاتَ لِمَا
تُوعَدُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ إِنْ هِيَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا
الدُّنْيَا نَمُوتُ وَنَحْيَا وَمَا نَحْنُ
بِمَبْعُوثِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا رَجُلٌ
افْتَرَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا وَمَا نَحْنُ لَهُ
بِمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ انصُرْنِي بِمَا
كَذَّبُونِ ﴿٣٩﴾ قَالَ عَمَّا قَلِيلٍ لَّيُصْبِحُنَّ
نَادِمِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾ فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الصَّيْحَةُ بِالْحَقِّ
فَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ غُثَاءً ۚ فَبُعْدًا لِّلْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ
﴿٤١﴾ ثُمَّ أَنشَأْنَا مِن بَعْدِهِمْ قُرُونًا
آخَرِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾ مَا تَسْبِقُ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ أَجَلَهَا
وَمَا يَسْتَأْخِرُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾ ثُمَّ أَرْسَلْنَا
رُسُلَنَا تَتْرَا ۖ كُلَّ مَا جَاءَ أُمَّةً رَّسُولُهَا

them to follow one another [in their end] and let them become as but tales; so away with a people who stubbornly refuse to believe! [23:32-44]

كَذَّبُوهُ ۚ فَأَتۡبَعۡنَا بَعۡضَهُم بَعۡضًا
وَجَعَلۡنَٰهُمۡ أَحَادِيثَ ۚ فَبُعۡدٗا لِّقَوۡمٖ لَّا
يُؤۡمِنُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

The above verses do not aim to recount the stories of particular prophets and how their communities received God's message, but to concisely underline that the stubborn rejection of the truth of God's message by the evil-doing people, and their arguments against the conveyors of God's message were almost the same. Here is another lively presentation of an argument about the eternal life to come. Those who were indulged in the abundant pleasures of this life and denied the eternal life to come, could not accept any other person with a wider perspective. They were submerged in the full indulgences of the present, and they liked to ignore the future or to deny it. The verses point out that the material luxuries of life may restrict the human thinking from going beyond a person's physical desires at any present moment, and thus may cause the human intelligence, imagination and spirituality to decline. Shortsightedness destroyed such people, who when they reached their end became dead leaves falling down and mere tales of the past.



Did you, then, think that We created you in mere idle play, and that you would not have to return to Us? Then, highly exalted be God, the Ultimate Sovereign, the Ultimate Truth: there is no deity save Him, the Lord on His throne of bounty and might! And whosoever calls side by side with God other than Him whereof he [/she] has no evidence, his [/her] reckoning is with his [/her] Lord; surely stubborn deniers of the truth will never attain to happiness and success. And say: "O my Lord! Grant me forgiveness and bestow Your mercy [upon me]; You are the Best of all the merciful." [23:115-118]

أَفَحَسِبۡتُمۡ أَنَّمَا خَلَقۡنَٰكُمۡ عَبَثٗا وَأَنَّكُمۡ
إِلَيۡنَا لَا تُرۡجَعُونَ ﴿١١٥﴾ فَتَعَٰلَى ٱللَّهُ
ٱلۡمَلِكُ ٱلۡحَقُّ ۖ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ رَبُّ
ٱلۡعَرۡشِ ٱلۡكَرِيمِ ﴿١١٦﴾ وَمَن يَدۡعُ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ
إِلَٰهًا ءَاخَرَ لَا بُرۡهَٰنَ لَهُۥ بِهِۦ فَإِنَّمَا
حِسَابُهُۥ عِندَ رَبِّهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُفۡلِحُ
ٱلۡكَٰفِرُونَ ﴿١١٧﴾ وَقُل رَّبِّ ٱغۡفِرۡ
وَٱرۡحَمۡ وَأَنتَ خَيۡرُ ٱلرَّٰحِمِينَ ﴿١١٨﴾

This argument emphasizes that one with a belief in God with all His wisdom cannot accept the idea of creating life without purpose. Every human being is allowed a free will. How, then can different individual intentions and deeds be left without a judgement as to what was good or right and what was evil or wrong? If there were no judgement, would a person who could not obtain justice during his/her life in this world, lose justice forever? How can pain and unfairness in human life be made up for? Would death and the grave be the end of both the righteous and the evil doing? The belief in God's final Judgement and requital, is consistent with, and cannot be set aside from, His wisdom, justice, perfection and holiness. The returning to God is inseparable from the belief in Him,

the Supreme Sovereign, the Ultimate Truth and the Lord. Invoking any other god beside God, or denying the return to Him would raise enormous logical, psychological and social problems that cannot be escaped, and those who think that such human deficiencies make their life in this world easier, will suffer in this world life, and will be thus in the long term accountable, at least, if not for their negligence, then for deceiving their own selves and others in the life to come. "The deniers of the truth will never win through or reach happiness and success" - as the above verse states, in contrast with those who attain to faith who "win" and "reach happiness and success" as the same sura assures in its first verse. However, God's justice cannot be separated from His mercy and forgiveness, and these are always there in spite of all human faults and wrong-doing, since they do not merely respond to human deeds but flow from God's nature and grace.

اللَّهُ نُورُ
السَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ الْأَرْضِ ۚ مَثَلُ نُورِهِۦ
كَمِشْكَوٰةٍ فِيهَا مِصْبَاحٌ ۖ الْمِصْبَاحُ فِى
زُجَاجَةٍ ۖ الزُّجَاجَةُ كَأَنَّهَا كَوْكَبٌ دُرِّىٌّ
يُوقَدُ مِن شَجَرَةٍ مُّبَٰرَكَةٍ زَيْتُونَةٍ لَّا شَرْقِيَّةٍ
وَلَا غَرْبِيَّةٍ يَكَادُ زَيْتُهَا يُضِىٓءُ وَ لَوْ لَمْ
تَمْسَسْهُ نَارٌ ۚ نُّورٌ عَلَىٰ نُورٍ ۚ يَهْدِى
اللَّهُ لِنُورِهِۦ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَ يَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ
الْأَمْثَٰلَ لِلنَّاسِ ۗ وَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌ
(٣٥) فِى بُيُوتٍ أَذِنَ اللَّهُ أَن تُرْفَعَ
وَيُذْكَرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُۥ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُۥ فِيهَا بِالْغُدُوِّ
وَ الْءَاصَالِ (٣٦) رِجَالٌ لَّا تُلْهِيهِمْ
تِجَٰرَةٌ وَ لَا بَيْعٌ عَن ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَ إِقَامِ
الصَّلَوٰةِ وَ إِيتَآءِ الزَّكَوٰةِ ۚ يَخَافُونَ
يَوْمًا تَتَقَلَّبُ فِيهِ الْقُلُوبُ وَ الْأَبْصَٰرُ
(٣٧) لِيَجْزِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنَ مَا عَمِلُوا۟
وَيَزِيدَهُم مِّن فَضْلِهِۦ ۗ وَ اللَّهُ يَرْزُقُ مَن
يَشَآءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ (٣٨) وَ الَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوٓا۟ أَعْمَٰلُهُمْ كَسَرَابٍۭ بِقِيعَةٍ يَحْسَبُهُ
الظَّمْـَٔانُ مَآءً حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءَهُۥ لَمْ

God is the light of the heavens and the earth. The parable of His light is as if there is a niche, wherein is a lamp; the lamp is [enclosed] in glass, [and] the glass is [shining so bright] as if it is a glittering star; [a lamp] lit from a blessed tree, an olive that is neither of the east nor of the west, whose oil would well-nigh give light [of itself], even if no fire had touched it; light upon light; God does guide to His light whom He wills [according to one's free choice granted to him/her by God]; and God does set forth parables for people, since God [alone] has full knowledge of everything.

In houses [of worship] which God has allowed to be raised up, and His name to be remembered and devoutly pronounced therein, there [are such that] extol His glory in the mornings and evening, people whom neither [worldly] trade nor any profitable business would divert from remembering God and praising Him, and from keeping up the prayer and offering the purifying [welfare] dues, fearing a Day on which all hearts and eyes shall be turned about, [and hoping] that God may reward them in accordance with the best that they ever did, and give them more out of His bounty; and God provides whomsoever He will, without reckoning.

But as for those who stubbornly deny the truth, their deeds are like a mirage in a plain desert, which the thirsty supposes to be water,

till when he [/she] comes to it finds it to be nothing; and realizes that God has been [always present] with him [/her] and will pay him[/her] his[/her] account in full, as God is swift in reckoning. Or [else, the deeds of those people are] like the depths of darkness in a tumultuous sea overwhelmed with waves billowing one over another, above which there are clouds; depths of darkness, piled one layer upon another; if one puts forth his [/her] hand, he[/she] can hardly see it; and to whomever God gives not light, no light whatsoever has he [/she].
Have you not seen that it is God whose glory all that is in the heavens or on earth extol, and [even] the birds as they spread out their wings? Each [creature] knows [in a certain way] how to pray to Him and to glorify Him, and God has full knowledge of all that they do. To God belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and with God is all journeys' end. [24:35-42]

يَجِدْهُ شَيْـًٔا وَوَجَدَ ٱللَّهَ عِندَهُۥ فَوَفَّىٰهُ
حِسَابَهُۥ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ سَرِيعُ ٱلْحِسَابِ ﴿٣٩﴾
أَوْ كَظُلُمَٰتٍ فِى بَحْرٍ لُّجِّىٍّ يَغْشَىٰهُ مَوْجٌ
مِّن فَوْقِهِۦ مَوْجٌ مِّن فَوْقِهِۦ سَحَابٌ ۚ
ظُلُمَٰتٌۢ بَعْضُهَا فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ ۚ إِذَآ أَخْرَجَ
يَدَهُۥ لَمْ يَكَدْ يَرَىٰهَا ۗ وَمَن لَّمْ يَجْعَلِ ٱللَّهُ
لَهُۥ نُورًا فَمَا لَهُۥ مِن نُّورٍ ﴿٤٠﴾ أَلَمْ تَرَ
أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُۥ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱلطَّيْرُ صَٰٓفَّٰتٍ ۖ كُلٌّ قَدْ عَلِمَ
صَلَاتَهُۥ وَتَسْبِيحَهُۥ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌۢ بِمَا
يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٤١﴾ وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ وَإِلَى ٱللَّهِ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿٤٢﴾

Here the Quran gives metaphors for the message of God, and the believers in this message who realize that life in this world with all its pleasures is relatively very short, and realize that the eternal life to come outweighs it, and thus they make its permanent rewards their goal. On the other hand, metaphors are given for those who reject stubbornly the message and guidance of God, thus exhausting their energy for a deceptive illusion until they become overwhelmed by the depths of darkness.

The "niche" referred to in the above verses was, in the architecture of that time, a little shallow recess in the wall in which an oil lamp or a candle was usually placed, fairly high from the ground. In this verse the niche represents the place from which the message of God is chosen to rise, and this message is represented in the verse by the lamp, the source of light, which is divine *"neither of the east nor of the west."* The olive tree, as the source of oil used allegorically for the light of God, may have been chosen because it was used in the lands east of the Mediterranean where earlier messages emerged, and it symbolizes long life, common usefulness, and universality. The glass is the transparent medium through which the light passes, and it represents the conveyor of God's message who receives the message and spreads it among the people. The message of God is clear in itself for the human being who feels and thinks: *"Truth stands out clear from error"* [2:256]; and so this light *"would well-nigh give light even though fire had not touched it [the oil]."* The light of God's message increases and has a wider range and a stronger effect through the good medium of the lamp and its glass which is represented in the conveyor of God's message, and through the suitable situation of the niche which is represented in the place

and the people chosen by God for the message, and in this way God's light becomes "*light upon light.*" However, the only person who recognizes this magnificent light in its sources, essence and benefits from its utilities is the one who properly uses the human intellectual, psychological and spiritual faculties, "*and God does set forth parables for people.*"

People who live by the light of God are always remembering Him and the eternal life to come, are never distracted by any material attraction of the short life of this world, and are honest, righteous and kind with people. Others who shortsightedly reject the guidance of God and choose to limit their vision to their greed and to the material pleasures of this world are merely like a thirsty person running after a mirage in the desert, or like one who wanders in the depths of the darkness. What a sharp contrast this image makes with that of a person who has clear vision and moves in *"light upon light"*. Such a person can see the signs of God in all His creation pointing to Him in His all-mightiness, as there is no flaw or lack of co-ordination in the whole extensive universe and its vast variety. Through a sensible vision and contemplation, "homo-sapiens" should come to the conclusion that "*to God belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth [and He holds control over them all], and with God is all journeys' end.*" To Him we -human beings- and all other creation belong, and to Him we shall return.

As for those who [stubbornly] believe not in the life to come, We have made their doings appear pleasing in their eyes, and so they blindly stumble. Such are they for whom the worst of suffering awaits, and it is they who in the life to come shall be the greatest losers. [27:4-5]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱلْآخِرَةِ زَيَّنَّا لَهُمْ
أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ فَهُمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ﴿٤﴾ أُولَٰٓئِكَ
ٱلَّذِينَ لَهُمْ سُوٓءُ ٱلْعَذَابِ وَهُمْ فِى
ٱلْآخِرَةِ هُمُ ٱلْأَخْسَرُونَ ﴿٥﴾

Those who reject God's guidance and follow their egotistic inclinations think that they are on the right track, although they are in fact stumbling to and fro as they follow their personal whims which may be contradictory and confusing. Concentrating one's goal and energy on the material gains of this world will never secure individual and social stability in this life, or in the eternal life which follows, and such a shortsightedness will end in the greatest loss: *"They know but the outer surface of this world's life, but of the ultimate reality of the life to come, they are unaware"* [30:7].

And He is God; there is no god but He. Unto Him all praise is due, at the beginning and at the end; and with Him rests [truly] all judgement, and to Him shall you [all] be brought back. [28:70]

وَهُوَ ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ لَهُ
ٱلْحَمْدُ فِى ٱلْأُولَىٰ وَٱلْآخِرَةِ ۖ وَلَهُ
ٱلْحُكْمُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾

To God only is all praise due, for all His flawless creation and His limitless bounty and grace in this present life and in the life to come. He alone is the Lord of all dominion Who is in full control of all His creation at all times, and He alone is the Lord of the Day of Judgement Who has the final judgement for all that everyone did [1:4, 3:26].

وَ ٱبْتَغِ
فِيمَآ ءَاتَىٰكَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلدَّارَ ٱلْأَخِرَةَ ۖ وَ لَا
تَنسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَ أَحْسِن كَمَآ
أَحْسَنَ ٱللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ ۖ وَ لَا تَبْغِ ٱلْفَسَادَ
فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ
ٱلْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾ قَالَ إِنَّمَآ أُوتِيتُهُۥ
عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ عِندِىٓ ۚ أَوَ لَمْ يَعْلَمْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ قَدْ
أَهْلَكَ مِن قَبْلِهِۦ مِنَ ٱلْقُرُونِ مَنْ هُوَ أَشَدُّ
مِنْهُ قُوَّةً وَ أَكْثَرُ جَمْعًا ۚ وَ لَا يُسْـَٔلُ عَن
ذُنُوبِهِمُ ٱلْمُجْرِمُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾ فَخَرَجَ عَلَىٰ
قَوْمِهِۦ فِى زِينَتِهِۦ ۖ قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ يُرِيدُونَ
ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا يَٰلَيْتَ لَنَا مِثْلَ مَآ أُوتِىَ
قَٰرُونُ إِنَّهُۥ لَذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٧٩﴾ وَ قَالَ
ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْعِلْمَ وَيْلَكُمْ ثَوَابُ ٱللَّهِ
خَيْرٌ لِّمَنْ ءَامَنَ وَ عَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا ۚ وَ لَا
يُلَقَّىٰهَآ إِلَّا ٱلصَّٰبِرُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾ فَخَسَفْنَا بِهِۦ
وَ بِدَارِهِ ٱلْأَرْضَ فَمَا كَانَ لَهُۥ مِن فِئَةٍ
يَنصُرُونَهُۥ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَ مَا كَانَ مِنَ
ٱلْمُنتَصِرِينَ ﴿٨١﴾ وَ أَصْبَحَ ٱلَّذِينَ تَمَنَّوْا۟
مَكَانَهُۥ بِٱلْأَمْسِ يَقُولُونَ وَيْكَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ
يَبْسُطُ ٱلرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِۦ
وَيَقْدِرُ ۖ لَوْلَآ أَن مَّنَّ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا لَخَسَفَ
بِنَا ۖ وَيْكَأَنَّهُۥ لَا يُفْلِحُ ٱلْكَٰفِرُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾
تِلْكَ ٱلدَّارُ ٱلْأَخِرَةُ نَجْعَلُهَا لِلَّذِينَ لَا
يُرِيدُونَ عُلُوًّا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَ لَا فَسَادًا ۚ
وَ ٱلْعَٰقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾ مَن جَآءَ
بِٱلْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُۥ خَيْرٌ مِّنْهَا ۖ وَ مَن جَآءَ

But seek, through what God has granted you, [the good of] the life to come, without forgetting, withal, your own [rightful] share in this world, and do good as God has done to you, and seek not to commit mischief on earth, for God loves not those who commit mischief. He [Qarun] said, "What I have is only by virtue of the knowledge that I have." Did he not know that God had brought to an end, before him, many who were superior to him in strength and richer in what they had collected? But the evident and persistent evildoers might not need an enquiry for their evil-doing [to find out as proof].

So he went forth among his people in all his [worldly] glitter, [and] those who cared only for the life of this world said, "Oh, if we but had the like of what Qarun has been given! Surely, he is endowed with mighty fortune." But those to whom true knowledge had been granted said, "Woe upon you! The reward of God [in the life to come] is best for those who attain to faith and do what is righteous, and none shall achieve it, save those who steadfastly persevere [in doing the good].

And thereupon We caused the earth to swallow him and his dwellings; and he had none to support him against God, and [thus] he could never win. And in the morning those who had longed to be in his place the day before were saying, "Ah! It is indeed God who grants sustenance in abundance or in a certain measure, to whomsoever He wills of His servants [as a test]. Had God not been gracious to us, He would have caused us to be swallowed, too. Ah! Those who [arrogantly and stubbornly] deny the truth can assuredly never attain to success."

That abode in the life to come, We shall grant only to those who do not seek neither haughtiness nor any mischief on earth; and the future belongs to the God-conscious. Whosoever comes forth [before God] with a good deed

will have better than it, and [as for] whosoever comes forth with an evil deed the doers of evil will not be requited except for whatever they have done. [28:77- 84]

بِٱلسَّيِّئَةِ فَلَا يُجْزَى ٱلَّذِينَ عَمِلُوا۟
ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ إِلَّا مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾

This is an expressive picture of someone - one of the community of Prophet Musa (Moses)- who considered as his ultimate goal the material gains of this world's life, and was absorbed in his selfishness, greed and arrogance. The above verses show how man's excessive wealth tempted many others, while some were wise and tried to remind him to consider the life to come without forgetting his legitimate and rightful share in this world's life. The information given in the Quran may be compared with what the Bible mentions about Korah in Numbers XVI:1-35, with certain differences. In the Bible, it is mentioned that Korah and a group of his followers rebelled against Moses and Aaron. They believed that their position in the congregation should give them the right to burn incense at the sacred Altar reserved for Aaron and the other priests, and that they should be equal to them. Jewish Midrashim, the Jewish compilations based on the oral teachings of the top rabbis of the Synagogues, also described the man's huge wealth. The argument of that excessively wealthy man for caring only about himself and his fortune is that his wealth has been collected and grown by his own knowledge and efforts, an argument which has been repeatedly heard from such selfish and greedy people, who ignore God's gift in nature and to their persons, just as they ignore the contributions of others who help or deal with them as sellers, buyers or providers of various services. They consider themselves to be the only factor in producing their wealth, and consequently they should enjoy absolute rights to their wealth and should not allow any other person to share with them the fruits of their own efforts.

The Quran reminds such persons who are indulged only in enjoying and accumulating the rewards of this world's life, that their existence in this world will certainly come to an end, as it has for all human beings before. However, such evident and persistent evil-doers, will not need an enquiry to prove their evil-doing, since this is firstly self-evident especially for God's knowledge, and secondly on the day of judgement confessions and testimonies will be initially offered [see for example 4:42; 5:61; 6:130; 7:37; 36:65; 41:20-22].

Wise people advised Qarun to strike a balance between this present world's life and the eternal life to come, and between the rights of the individual and those of the society which helped directly and indirectly in the growth of his wealth; *"and do good as God has been good to you."* However, there were also people who were impressed by Qarun's huge fortune and longed to have similar wealth, until they saw his disastrous end and thanked God for being different. The message indicated in the concluding verses emphasizes how the belief in God and the eternal life to come protects the individual and the society against selfishness and greed, and against haughtiness and corruption, as it guards a person from the vices of both domineering superiority and submissive inferiority. In the depth of the heart and the mind, it prevents the development of the evils of exploitation and oppression on the side of the powerful, and of helplessness or bitter hatred on the side of the weak.

They know but the outer surface of this world's life, but of the ultimate reality of the life to come, they are unaware. [30:7]

يَعْلَمُونَ ظَٰهِرًا مِّنَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ
عَنِ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ هُمْ غَٰفِلُونَ ﴿٧﴾

This is the essential difference of "knowledge" between those who restrict it to sensory information and empircisim, and those who allow room for higher intellectual practices which may be represented in logic and art, as well as in philosophy and religion. Intuition is known to inspire super-sensory art in various fields, and "creativity" is an essential requirement for a genuine artist. Even in science, relativity and potentiality have turned material existence into more than a thick and dry concretism. Human imagination, vision and abstract conceptualization have always inspired scientific progress.

Spirituality is an unmistaken character of the human nature and history, which has proved to be unignorable, indispensable and unsuppressible. Materialism failed to satisfy the human needs and aspirations of the individual and the society, and its productivity has been obviously hindered by the psychological and social limitations and defects. The belief in the One God and the eternal life to come secures balance and stability within the individual's own self and in the society as a whole, while selfishness and worldliness tear and swing him/her between the extremes of haughty success and desperate failure. Thus the belief is beneficial as well as logical.

[For Him] the creation of you all, and the resurrection of you all is but as [the creation and resurrection of] a single soul; surely, God is All-hearing and All-seeing. [31:28]

مَّا
خَلْقُكُمْ وَلَا بَعْثُكُمْ إِلَّا كَنَفْسٍ وَٰحِدَةٍ ۚ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَمِيعٌۢ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٢٨﴾

The verse emphasizes the all-mightiness of God in His creation of the whole humanity in its successive generations and extensive places. For Him, it is not more difficult than creating one single human being, since He provides the human being, as any living creature, with the ability of reproduction. Resurrection of dead bodies cannot be more difficult than creation from nothing, and both can happen for the whole humanity as they happen to a single human being. However, God deals with every person in the whole humanity, in its succession and extension, individually, not as a lump sum: *"Every human being draws the load of its acts on none but itself; and no bearer of burdens can bear the burden of another"* [6:164], *"And everyone of them will come to Him on the Day of Resurrection as an individual"* [19:95].

O human beings, certainly the promise of God [about the resurrection and the eternal life to come] is true; so let not then the present life of this world delude you, nor let "the deluded" delude you about God. Surely Satan is a foe to

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ إِنَّ
وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقٌّ ۖ فَلَا تَغُرَّنَّكُمُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ
ٱلدُّنْيَا وَلَا يَغُرَّنَّكُم بِٱللَّهِ ٱلْغَرُورُ ﴿٥﴾
إِنَّ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ فَٱتَّخِذُوهُ عَدُوًّا

you; so take him for a foe. He but calls on his followers just to let them find themselves among those who are destined for the blazing flame. [35:5- 6]

إِنَّمَا يَدْعُواْ حِزْبَهُۥ لِيَكُونُواْ مِنْ
أَصْحَٰبِ ٱلسَّعِيرِ ۝٦

The above verses underline the fact that there are obvious and hidden motives that make the human being indulge in the short term pleasures of this life, and distract him/her from thinking about God and the eternal life to come. Such deluding factors are there in the material riches and finery of this world, as well as in the human aspirations for possession and luxury and superiority. Satan, or the devil, uses these factors to infiltrate the human feeling and thinking. The Quran sometimes combines together *"... satans from among the humans as well as from among the invisible beings (jinn), whispering unto one another what may seem sparkling but is merely delusion"* [6:112, see also 2:14; 17:27]. The Arabic word "*gharur*" which comes at the end of the first of the above verses means an immense factor of delusion that is deluded and deluding at the same time, and according to al-Tabari in his commentary on a similar sentence in the verse 31:33, it can be generalized to mean Satan, or another human being, or one's own self with its desires and whims.

With regard to the relation between Satan and the human being, the Quran presents an impressive picture of Satan's defense on the Day of Judgement *"... I had no power at all over you [human beings], but that I called you and you responded positively to me. Hence, blame not me, but blame your own selves..."* [14:22]. In his voluminous and valuable commentary on the Quran, Al- Razi intelligently and correctly pointed out in relation to this verse [14:22] that it is the human inclinations that enable Satan to reach the human heart and mind through Satanic insinuations (*waswasa*), which cannot work except by addressing such human weaknesses as those of selfishness, greed, lust, anger, superiority, fear, superstition and fanciful ideas. The "Satanic band" with all its human and satanic members will exchange futile blame for their destiny in fire [e.g. 14:22], and it is wise for the human being to feel responsibility now and to distance and protect himself/herself from the delusion and deluding factors altogether.

Surely, it is We who shall bring the dead back to life, and We record whatever [deeds] they have forwarded, and whatever [good or evil] they have left behind; and of all things do We take [an exact] account, in a clear record. [36:12]

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نُحْىِ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ وَنَكْتُبُ
مَا قَدَّمُواْ وَءَاثَٰرَهُمْ ۚ وَكُلَّ شَىْءٍ
أَحْصَيْنَٰهُ فِىٓ إِمَامٍ مُّبِينٍ ۝١٢

The image of the "clear record" for whatever deed every human being forwarded or whatever good or evil he/she left behind, portrays how accurate and evident the accountability of each individual on the Day of Judgement will be. God's knowledge does not need a record, and the exposition of the ultimate truth and reality on that Day [e.g. 50:22] may make any argument or evidence useless and meaningless. However, an illustrative picture is more penetrating than a statement of abstracts for human perceptual

considerations. This is significant in the Quranic presentation of the life to come in its various aspects: the resurrection, the judgement, the requital whether reward or punishment etc. [see in Arabic: Sayyid Qutb, *Mashahid al-Qiyama fi al-Quran/ Scenes of the Afterlife in the Quran,* as well as *al-Taswir al-Fanni fi al-Quran/ Portrayal Stylistics in the Quran,* Cairo, Egypt]. Such a way of representing the life to come may sometimes be encountered in the parables of the Gospels.

And further, they [who stubbornly deny the truth] say, "When will this promise [of resurrection] be fulfilled, if you are saying the truth?" They will not be waiting for aught but a single blast that will seize them while they are still disputing, then they will not be able to make a testament, nor to return to their people. And the trumpet [of resurrection] shall be blown, then; they shall swiftly slide down from their graves to their Lord. They will say, "Alas for us! Who has roused us up out of our sleeping place?" This is what the All-merciful has promised, and the conveyors of His messages spoke only the truth. It will be no more than a single blast, then, they will all be arraigned before Us. Today, then, not a human being shall be wronged in the least, nor shall you be requited but for what you have been doing [on earth in the previous world's life].

See, those who are the inhabitants of paradise today are overwhelmed by joy in whatever they do; they and their spouses will enjoy the pleasant shade [of happiness] reclining on couches; there will be for them fruits [and delight] and they shall have whatever they ask for. "Peace," such is the greeting, from a Lord who is the Most Gracious.

"And stand aside today, O you who were lost in evil-doing! Did I not enjoin on you, O you children of Adam, that you should not worship Satan, since, verily, he is to you an evident foe? And that you should worship Me [alone]; this is the straight way? It is he [Satan] who has already lead astray a great many of you, could you not really use your minds? This, then, is the hell of which you were -repeatedly-

وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَىٰ
هَٰذَا ٱلْوَعْدُ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٤٨﴾ مَا
يَنظُرُونَ إِلَّا صَيْحَةً وَٰحِدَةً تَأْخُذُهُمْ وَهُمْ
يَخِصِّمُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾ فَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ تَوْصِيَةً
وَلَآ إِلَىٰٓ أَهْلِهِمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾ وَنُفِخَ
فِى ٱلصُّورِ فَإِذَا هُم مِّنَ ٱلْأَجْدَاثِ إِلَىٰ
رَبِّهِمْ يَنسِلُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ قَالُوا۟ يَٰوَيْلَنَا مَنۢ
بَعَثَنَا مِن مَّرْقَدِنَا ۜ هَٰذَا مَا وَعَدَ
ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ وَصَدَقَ ٱلْمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾ إِن
كَانَتْ إِلَّا صَيْحَةً وَٰحِدَةً فَإِذَا هُمْ جَمِيعٌ
لَّدَيْنَا مُحْضَرُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾ فَٱلْيَوْمَ لَا تُظْلَمُ
نَفْسٌ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا تُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا مَا كُنتُمْ
تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾ إِنَّ أَصْحَٰبَ ٱلْجَنَّةِ ٱلْيَوْمَ
فِى شُغُلٍ فَٰكِهُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾ هُمْ وَأَزْوَٰجُهُمْ
فِى ظِلَٰلٍ عَلَى ٱلْأَرَآئِكِ مُتَّكِـُٔونَ ﴿٥٦﴾
لَهُمْ فِيهَا فَٰكِهَةٌ وَلَهُم مَّا يَدَّعُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾
سَلَٰمٌ قَوْلًا مِّن رَّبٍّ رَّحِيمٍ ﴿٥٨﴾
وَٱمْتَٰزُوا۟ ٱلْيَوْمَ أَيُّهَا ٱلْمُجْرِمُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾
۞ أَلَمْ أَعْهَدْ إِلَيْكُمْ يَٰبَنِىٓ ءَادَمَ أَن لَّا
تَعْبُدُوا۟ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ
﴿٦٠﴾ وَأَنِ ٱعْبُدُونِى ۚ هَٰذَا صِرَٰطٌ
مُّسْتَقِيمٌ ﴿٦١﴾ وَلَقَدْ أَضَلَّ مِنكُمْ جِبِلًّا
كَثِيرًا ۖ أَفَلَمْ تَكُونُوا۟ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾
هَٰذِهِۦ جَهَنَّمُ ٱلَّتِى كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾
ٱصْلَوْهَا ٱلْيَوْمَ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾

warned. Suffer it today as you persistently and stubbornly denied the truth earlier."
On that Day, We set a seal on their mouths, and their hands will speak to Us, and their feet will bear witness as to whatever they have earned [in the life before].
And had it been Our will [to advance our judgement and requital for everyone's doing in this world's life], We could surely have obliterated their eyes, and thus whatever way they would rush to go through, how could they then see? And if it had been Our will We could surely have changed their form to the worse where they are [as a punishment for their evil doing], then they could not go forward, nor could they come back. And to whomsoever We give long life We cause him[/her] to decline in power and fall back to weakness [of childhood]; will they not then use their minds? [36:48-68]

ٱلْيَوْمَ نَخْتِمُ عَلَىٰٓ أَفْوَٰهِهِمْ وَتُكَلِّمُنَآ
أَيْدِيهِمْ وَتَشْهَدُ أَرْجُلُهُم بِمَا كَانُوا۟
يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾ وَلَوْ نَشَآءُ لَطَمَسْنَا
عَلَىٰٓ أَعْيُنِهِمْ فَٱسْتَبَقُوا۟ ٱلصِّرَٰطَ فَأَنَّىٰ
يُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾ وَلَوْ نَشَآءُ لَمَسَخْنَٰهُمْ
عَلَىٰ مَكَانَتِهِمْ فَمَا ٱسْتَطَٰعُوا۟ مُضِيًّا وَلَا
يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾ وَمَن نُّعَمِّرْهُ نُنَكِّسْهُ فِى
ٱلْخَلْقِ ۖ أَفَلَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾

In the same style of giving a vivid illustrative picture of the life to come instead of a dry abstract statement [see the above comment on 36:12], the Quran portrays the blowing of a trumpet to announce the Day of Judgement [mentioned also in 6:73; 18:99; 20:102; 23:101; 27:87; 39:68; 50:20; 69:13; 78:17-20]. As it is indicated in the verse 39:68, the trumpet will be blown once to end this world's life and another to start the eternal life that will follow. The above verses represent how the dead will swarm forth from their graves to meet their Lord as He repeatedly promised through His messages, a destiny which some will be reluctant to accept even after it becomes a concrete fact. On the Day of Judgement, those who previously denied that it will happen cannot repeat their arguments as the reality will make them unable to speak, while their hands, feet, skin and all their senses will bear witness about all that they did before. Those who believed in God and the life to come and acted righteously will be rewarded in paradise with those who followed the truth among their parents, spouses and children [also 13:23; 40:8; 52:21]. Throughout the whole Quran some representative illustrations are given of the pleasures of their life there, such as pleasant weather and shade, trees, comfortable couches and beds, delicious food and fruits and drink, beautiful clothes and enjoyable company, in addition to the spiritual pleasures of peace, happiness, fulfillment and perfection [see also 15:46-8; 37:43-44; 56:15-40; 76:12-22; 88:8-16]. In addition, they can obtain anything that they request [see the above verse 36:57; also 21:102; 41:31; 43:71] Their closeness to God and their constant enjoyment of His goodly acceptance can only be referred to since they are beyond what words words may express[e.g. 9:72; 54:54-55; 69:21-23; 89:28-29 etc.].

If this is the picture of the life to come as presented illustratively by the Quran, the

human being has to use his intellectual and spiritual abilities to understand and act in this life before it is over. God has given the human being these abilities to decide freely for his/her present and future, to develop knowledge and thinking, and accordingly to make his/her decisions and conduct his/her behavior properly and rightfully. God could have created the human being without free choice or the ability to develop and change whether to the better or to the worse. It was God's plan to give the human being all these faculties and advantages, which go hand in hand with the responsibilities, to develop himself/herself and the world around, and to establish justice and cooperation and spread kindness in human relations. One should use one's strength and maturity in thinking seriously about his/her present and future and making the most important decision in it before the transformation in the human energy and ability, that takes place according to age, occurs. In advanced old age, the human physical, intellectual and psychological faculties deteriorate, and one's power gradually decreases to sometimes reach the level that he/she had in childhood [e.g. 16:70; 21:44; 22:5; 35:37; 36:38]. It is thus wise to use the human power and energy to its best during the suitable time, in order to enjoy the fruits of this wisdom in this world's life for as long as possible and secure a balanced and stable life for the individual and the society in this world, and happiness in the eternal life which follows.

أَوَ لَمْ يَرَ ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ أَنَّا
خَلَقْنَٰهُ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ فَإِذَا هُوَ خَصِيمٌ مُّبِينٌ
(٧٧) وَ ضَرَبَ لَنَا مَثَلًا وَ نَسِىَ خَلْقَهُۥ
قَالَ مَن يُحْىِ ٱلْعِظَٰمَ وَ هِىَ رَمِيمٌ (٧٨)
قُلْ يُحْيِيهَا ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنشَأَهَآ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ
وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ خَلْقٍ عَلِيمٌ (٧٩) ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ لَكُم
مِّنَ ٱلشَّجَرِ ٱلْأَخْضَرِ نَارًا فَإِذَآ أَنتُم مِّنْهُ
تُوقِدُونَ (٨٠) أَوَ لَيْسَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضَ بِقَٰدِرٍ عَلَىٰٓ أَن
يَخْلُقَ مِثْلَهُم ۚ بَلَىٰ وَ هُوَ ٱلْخَلَّٰقُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ
(٨١) إِنَّمَآ أَمْرُهُۥٓ إِذَآ أَرَادَ شَيْـًٔا أَن
يَقُولَ لَهُۥ كُن فَيَكُونُ (٨٢) فَسُبْحَٰنَ
ٱلَّذِى بِيَدِهِۦ مَلَكُوتُ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ
وَ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ (٨٣)

Has not the human being regarded how We have created him [/her] out of a [mere] drop of sperm; then, he[/she] is remarkably argumentative. And he[/she] presents an example for [his/her argumentativeness], forgetting how he himself[/she herself] came into existence, and saying, "Who can give life to bones that have decayed?" Say, "He shall give them life who brought them into being in the first place; and He has full knowledge of every act of creation. He who produces for you fire out of the green tree, and, thus, from it you kindle." Is not He, who has created the heavens and the earth, able to create the like of them? Yes, indeed He is the All-creator, the All-knowing. Verily, His way [in bringing existence] is simply in such that whenever He wills a thing to be, He but says to it, "Be;" and it is. Limitless, then, in His glory is He, in whose hands [alone] is the mighty dominion of all things; and unto Him you all shall be brought back. [36:77-83]

This is another argument against those who deny that life can be brought again and forget how it started in the first place. The human being has been granted the power to think, speak and argue, and he/she has been given the freedom to use these powers as

he/she chooses, even in an argument against common sense and the belief in God or in the eternal life to come. How can one doubt the power of the Creator when the initial creation out of nothing seems far more unimaginable than a subsequent process for which there is already a basis [see also 17:51]. Besides, if we think that this universe has God the Creator, He should have power over all things He created, and His power cannot be compared with the power of any of His creation. The enormous variety of God's creation assures His limitless power in creating them and giving them the potentials for development and transformation. The "green" in a plant can provide it with energy from the sunshine, and through the chlorophyll assimilation, and the green trees, in their plain form or through their metamorphosis to coal and oil, can be a source of that great discovery in the history of human civilization, fire. Besides, this "green" and "fire," that refer to physical energy, call the attention to spiritual life and energy. After presenting illustrative pictures and allegorical parables, the Quran states the absolute fact which is repeatedly emphasized about God: *"His way [in bringing to existence] is simply that whenever He wills a thing to be, He but says to it, "Be," and it is"* [also 2:117; 3:47, 59; 6:73; 16:40; 19:35; 40:68]. The statement is followed by a sensible conclusion which condenses the faith in the One God with all His attributes and in the life to come: *"Limitless, then, in His glory is He, in whose hands [alone] is the mighty dominion of all things; and unto Him you all shall brought back."*

"O David! We did indeed make you a vicegerent on earth; so rule over people with [justice], and never follow a mere fleeting whim, lest it should lead you astray from the way of God; surely, for those who go astray from the way of God there is severe suffering that awaits them, as they have forgotten the Day of Reckoning." Not without meaning or purpose have We created the heavens and the earth and all between them; such is what those who stubbornly deny the truth guess, but woe to all who stubbornly deny the truth of the fire [of hell]. And how would the human life make sense and the human endeavor be brought to justice? Shall We let those who have attained to faith and do righteousness be the same as those who spread corruption on earth? Shall We let those who are God- conscious be the same as those who are evil-doers? [38:26-28]

يَٰدَاوُۥدُ إِنَّا
جَعَلْنَٰكَ خَلِيفَةً فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَٱحْكُم بَيْنَ
ٱلنَّاسِ بِٱلْحَقِّ وَلَا تَتَّبِعِ ٱلْهَوَىٰ فَيُضِلَّكَ
عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَضِلُّونَ عَن
سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌۢ بِمَا نَسُوا۟
يَوْمَ ٱلْحِسَابِ ﴿٢٦﴾ وَمَا خَلَقْنَا
ٱلسَّمَآءَ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا بَٰطِلًا ۚ
ذَٰلِكَ ظَنُّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ۚ فَوَيْلٌ لِّلَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا۟ مِنَ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿٢٧﴾ أَمْ نَجْعَلُ ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ كَٱلْمُفْسِدِينَ
فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ أَمْ نَجْعَلُ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ كَٱلْفُجَّارِ
﴿٢٨﴾

David, the Israelite Prophet and King, was guided to rule with justice and warned against personal inclinations of selfishness, abuse of power, favoritism etc. If such a God-guided prophet is given this advice, any other person in authority is in more need and

under more obligation to follow it. Such a person is reminded that he/she is God's vicegerent on earth and consequently should try to represent His justice. [See also 2:30; 7:129; 24:55; 57:7]. The belief in the Day of Reckoning provides a deep moral reminder against any misuse of power [28:83], as one is tested with what God has given him/her, and everyone is responsible and accountable for demanding the rights and fulfilling the obligations as indicated by God's guidance.

This belief, with all its benefits for the individual and the society, is based on common sense, since such a huge universe with its huge numbers of successive generations of human beings cannot be created without a meaning or a purpose [also 23:115]. Human life cannot end in mere death for all people, whether what they previously did was good or evil, whether they followed only their inclinations related to indulgence or adherence to others or they followed their minds and were conscious of God, and observed His guidance. If there were no other life to follow this one, then any fair person will feel broken-hearted about the overwhelming cases of injustice and unfulfillment that exist all over this world's life and that strike some people more harshly than others? In the eternal life to come, every "*atom's weight of good*" and "*every atom's weight of evil*" [99:7-8; also 4:40; 21:47], or what may be less or more [10:61] will be counted, and its doer will be requited. God's justice will be fully established forever, and the ultimate goal and purpose of this life are fulfilled in a way that conforms with God's wisdom, power and justice on the one side, and human common sense on the other.

Do they not know that it is God who grants abundant sustenance or gives it in a certain measure, to whomsoever He wills [as a test]? Surely, in that are signs and messages for people who [contemplate and thus] believe. Say: "O My people who have transgressed against your own selves! Despair not of God's mercy; surely, God forgives wrong-doing together, and He alone is All-forgiving, Most Gracious.

And turn towards your Lord and submit yourselves unto Him [alone] before the suffering comes upon you, and then you will not be succored.

And before that suffering comes upon you of a sudden, while you are unaware [of its approach], follow the most goodly [guidance] that has been sent down to you by your Lord, lest any human being should say [on the Day of Judgement]."Alas for me for having neglected what is due to God: and for having been indeed one of those who scoffed [at the truth]." Or lest he[/she] should say, "If only

أَوَلَمْ
يَعْلَمُوٓاْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَبْسُطُ ٱلرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ
وَيَقْدِرُ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ
يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾ ۞ قُلْ يَٰعِبَادِىَ ٱلَّذِينَ
أَسْرَفُواْ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُواْ مِن
رَّحْمَةِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ ٱلذُّنُوبَ
جَمِيعًا ۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلْغَفُورُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٥٣﴾
وَأَنِيبُوٓاْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ وَأَسْلِمُواْ لَهُۥ مِن
قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَكُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ ثُمَّ لَا تُنصَرُونَ
﴿٥٤﴾ وَٱتَّبِعُوٓاْ أَحْسَنَ مَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُم
مِّن رَّبِّكُم مِّن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَكُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ
بَغْتَةً وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾ أَن تَقُولَ
نَفْسٌ يَٰحَسْرَتَىٰ عَلَىٰ مَا فَرَّطتُ فِى
جَنۢبِ ٱللَّهِ وَإِن كُنتُ لَمِنَ ٱلسَّٰخِرِينَ
﴿٥٦﴾ أَوْ تَقُولَ لَوْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ هَدَىٰنِى لَكُنتُ

God had guided me, I should have been among those who are conscious of Him." Or lest he [/she] should say when he [/she] becomes aware of the suffering [that awaits him/her], "Would that I had a second chance to be among the doers of good."
Yea, indeed! My messages did come unto you, but you denounced them as lies, and you were haughty and among those who stubbornly denied the truth. And on the Day of Resurrection you will see those who lied against God: their faces darkened; is there not in hell an abode [proper] for the haughty? But God shall save those who were conscious of Him by virtue of what made them deserve their achievement; no evil shall ever touch them, nor shall they grieve." [39:52-61]

مِنَ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾ أَوْ تَقُولَ حِينَ تَرَى
ٱلْعَذَابَ لَوْ أَنَّ لِى كَرَّةً فَأَكُونَ مِنَ
ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾ بَلَىٰ قَدْ جَآءَتْكَ
ءَايَٰتِى فَكَذَّبْتَ بِهَا وَ ٱسْتَكْبَرْتَ وَ كُنتَ
مِنَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٥٩﴾ وَ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ تَرَى
ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا۟ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ وُجُوهُهُم
مُّسْوَدَّةٌ ۚ أَلَيْسَ فِى جَهَنَّمَ مَثْوًى
لِّلْمُتَكَبِّرِينَ ﴿٦٠﴾ وَ يُنَجِّى ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ
ٱتَّقَوْا۟ بِمَفَازَتِهِمْ لَا يَمَسُّهُمُ ٱلسُّوٓءُ وَ لَا
هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

This is another vivid picture of the feelings and words of the losers in the eternal life to come, which are portrayed in the Quran to urge those who have acted excessively and imprudently against their own selves and exhausted their various energies in vain to repent and correct their direction and amend their life before they forever miss the chance for such a reform and thus join these losers in the eternal life to come. There is always a place for repentance: *"Your Lord has willed upon Himself the law of grace and mercy; whosoever of you does evil out of ignorance, and thereafter repents and amends [his/her conduct and turns to righteousness], He is All-forgiving, Most Gracious"* [6:54]. A sincere repenter realizes, as soon as he/she thinks properly and feels God's enlightenment on his/her mind and heart, how shortsighted and vagarious he/she was before [also 4:17; 16:119]. However, such repentance is meaningless if it occurs when one realizes that one's life term in this world life is over [4:17-18], since there should be enough time in the individual's life to prove his/her genuine change to the better, with regard to the general attitudes and intentions, as well as the daily behavior and intentions, and concrete practice. A true repentance is connected with the true faith in God and the eternal life to come is manifested by doing what is righteous in the wake of repentance [e.g. 2:160; 3:89; 4:146; 5:39; 6:54; 16:119; 19:60; 20:82; 24:5; 25:70-71; 28:67]. One of God's names and attributes in the Quran is the "Acceptor of Repentance/ *Tawwab,*" which is in almost all verses combined with the attribute "Most Gracious/ *Rahim*" [e.g. 2:37, 54, 128, 160; 4:16, 64; 9:104, 118; 24:10, 49:12; 110:3].

The Quran presents how those who miss the chance for correcting their direction and amending their conduct during their whole life in this world will be so regretful, blaming themselves for their wrong direction and behavior or promising to behave differently if they would be given another chance, or even escaping the responsibility for what they did claiming that if God had only guided them they would have been on the right track. That is the self-torture that such people will suffer, in addition to the severe torment that

they will go through. Their faces will be dark from grief, remorse and disgrace, while those who have used their minds at the suitable time during this life and have fulfilled their moral responsibility, will be secure and happy by virtue of their previous perceptive and well-balanced behavior. They will have nothing to grieve about in their past life or to fear in their judgement and requital that is at hand.

وَ مَا قَدَرُوا
ٱللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِۦ وَ ٱلْأَرْضُ جَمِيعًا
قَبْضَتُهُۥ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ وَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ
مَطْوِيَّٰتٌۢ بِيَمِينِهِۦ ۚ سُبْحَٰنَهُۥ وَ تَعَٰلَىٰ
عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾ وَ نُفِخَ فِى ٱلصُّورِ
فَصَعِقَ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ مَن فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ إِلَّا مَن شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ ۖ ثُمَّ نُفِخَ فِيهِ
أُخْرَىٰ فَإِذَا هُمْ قِيَامٌ يَنظُرُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾
وَ أَشْرَقَتِ ٱلْأَرْضُ بِنُورِ رَبِّهَا وَ وُضِعَ
ٱلْكِتَٰبُ وَ جِا۟ىٓءَ بِٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ وَ ٱلشُّهَدَآءِ
وَ قُضِىَ بَيْنَهُم بِٱلْحَقِّ وَ هُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ
﴿٦٩﴾ وَ وُفِّيَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ وَ هُوَ
أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾ وَ سِيقَ ٱلَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ زُمَرًا ۖ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا
جَآءُوهَا فُتِحَتْ أَبْوَٰبُهَا وَ قَالَ لَهُمْ
خَزَنَتُهَآ أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِّنكُمْ يَتْلُونَ
عَلَيْكُمْ ءَايَٰتِ رَبِّكُمْ وَ يُنذِرُونَكُمْ لِقَآءَ
يَوْمِكُمْ هَٰذَا ۚ قَالُوا۟ بَلَىٰ وَ لَٰكِنْ حَقَّتْ
كَلِمَةُ ٱلْعَذَابِ عَلَى ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٧١﴾ قِيلَ
ٱدْخُلُوٓا۟ أَبْوَٰبَ جَهَنَّمَ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۖ
فَبِئْسَ مَثْوَى ٱلْمُتَكَبِّرِينَ ﴿٧٢﴾ وَ سِيقَ
ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوْا۟ رَبَّهُمْ إِلَى ٱلْجَنَّةِ زُمَرًا ۖ
حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءُوهَا وَ فُتِحَتْ أَبْوَٰبُهَا

And they have not seriously thought of God as it is due to Him; how on the Day of Resurrection the whole of the earth will be put as a [mere] handful to Him, and the heavens will be rolled up in His right hand: limitless is He in His Glory, and sublimely Exalted above all that they associate [with Him]. And as the trumpet shall be blown, all that are in the heavens and on earth shall swoon, save whom God wills [to let out of it]; then there will be another blowing, and all shall be standing and seeing! And the earth shall shine bright with the light of its Lord; and the record [of everyone's deeds] shall be set in place, and all the prophets and witnesses shall be brought forward; and judgement shall be passed on them all in full justice; and they shall not be wronged.

And every human being shall be requited in full for whatever [good or evil] one has done, and He is fully aware of all that they do. Then those who denied stubbornly the truth will be driven to hell in throngs till when they reach it, its gates will be opened, and its keepers will ask them, "Did not conveyors of God's messages come to you from among yourselves, extending to you the messages of your Lord, and warning you of facing this day of yours?" The answer shall be: "True, but the sentence of suffering has come due for the stubborn deniers of the truth [as they wasted the chance of accepting the truth during their whole life]. It shall be said, "Then, enter the gates of hell therein to abide." And how vile an abode it is for the haughty.

And those who were conscious of their Lord shall be guided to the paradise in throngs, till when they reach it, and its gates will be

opened, keepers will say, then, to them, "Peace be upon you! Good are you and your Lord; enter you then, this [paradise] herein to abide." And they shall say, "All praise is done to God, who has truly fulfilled His promise to us, and has let us have a portion in such a land, dwelling wherever we are pleased in paradise." How excellent a reward it is, then, for those who work [righteously]. And you shall see the angels surrounding the Throne, extolling their Lord's limitless glory and praising Him; and the [divine] judgement between all [human beings] shall be passed in full justice; and it shall be said: "All praise is due to God, the Lord of all-being." [39:67-75]

وَقَالَ لَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا سَلَٰمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ طِبْتُمْ
فَٱدْخُلُوهَا خَٰلِدِينَ ﴿٧٣﴾ وَقَالُوا۟
ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى صَدَقَنَا وَعْدَهُۥ
وَأَوْرَثَنَا ٱلْأَرْضَ نَتَبَوَّأُ مِنَ ٱلْجَنَّةِ حَيْثُ
نَشَآءُ ۖ فَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ ٱلْعَٰمِلِينَ ﴿٧٤﴾
وَتَرَى ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةَ حَآفِّينَ مِنْ حَوْلِ
ٱلْعَرْشِ يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ ۖ وَقُضِىَ
بَيْنَهُم بِٱلْحَقِّ وَقِيلَ ٱلْحَمْدُ
لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾

This is another Quranic picture of the Resurrection, Judgement and requital in the eternal life to come. Every human being will realize then God's almightiness which he/she might have neglected in the past life and not given the due thinking and consideration, and which in the life to come will be manifest for everybody. The trumpet will be blown twice: once to declare the end of this life, and again to declare the Resurrection and the life to come. The trumpet, the Lord's light, the record of everyone's deeds, the prophets and all other witnesses including one's own senses and skin are all elements that make the scene of the Day of Judgement full of life and movement, physically and psychologically, instead of merely stating the principle of accountability and requital. Although everyone will be judged individually [6:94; 19:80, 95], they will be led to get their requital in their eternal abode in groups where individuals will be set according to their previous doing of good or evil. While those who accept the truth and attain to faith will enjoy such company [15:47; 37:44; 56:16], each one of those who stubbornly denied the truth, including Satan, will try to distance himself/herself from the others and blame them, and thus psychological suffering will be added to the severe suffering of the torment [e.g. 2:166-167; 14:21-22; 34:31-33; 40:47-48]: "*and every human being will be repaid in full for whatever [good or evil] one has done.*"

The Quran repeatedly emphasizes how those who are stubbornly arrogant and oppressive in this world's life as they enjoy wealth or authority, will be humiliated and will suffer in the eternal life to come. Even as they are led in groups to receive their punishment, the keepers of Hell will continue to whip them with their words, asking them why they did not listen to the coveyors of God's messages who were sent to warn them about facing this Day of Judgement. While these people are going through such multiple sufferings, those who used their minds and attained to faith will be escorted honorably to paradise where they will abide eternally in any place they choose there, a reward that one who works righteously following God's guidance deserves. They are settled in a new world [14:48], where justice will prevail and every human being's aspirations will be fulfilled. The light of God will illuminate that eternal world of justice and fulfillment, and the

angels will be sent around the Throne extolling their Lord's glory and praise. In such a world of justice, perfection, fulfillment and eternity, it is natural for all who will enjoy it to express their overwhelming feelings towards their Lord: *"all praise is due to God, the Lord of all being."* Yes, He is the Lord of this life and of the life to come, of the previous and last words and all their components, and of all that can be perceived by any creature and all that is beyond our human perception.

And the man who had attained to faith said,"O My people! Follow me and I will guide you to the way of rectitude. O my people! Surely, this present world's life is but a passing enjoyment; it is the life to come that is surely the home for abiding. Whomever does an evil deed will not be requited but by the like of it, but whosoever - male or female - does righteous deeds and is a believer withal, all such shall enter paradise, wherein they shall be blessed with good beyond reckoning.

"And O my people! How is it that I call you to be saved, while you call me to the fire! You do call me to deny [the One] God, and to associate with Him others of whom I have no knowledge [for they have no reality], while I call you to the All-mighty, the All- forgiving.

"No doubt that what you do call me to [worship] has no way of being called upon, in this world's life or in the life to come; and in the end the return of all of us is to God, and those who have wasted their own selves will find themselves in the fire.

"And [at that time] you will remember what I am telling you [now], and I entrust God with the whole matter of mine; surely God [ever] sees all [that] His servants [do]." [40:38-44]

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِىٓ
ءَامَنَ يَٰقَوْمِ ٱتَّبِعُونِ أَهْدِكُمْ سَبِيلَ
ٱلرَّشَادِ ﴿٣٨﴾ يَٰقَوْمِ إِنَّمَا هَٰذِهِ ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ
ٱلدُّنْيَا مَتَٰعٌ وَإِنَّ ٱلْءَاخِرَةَ هِىَ دَارُ
ٱلْقَرَارِ ﴿٣٩﴾ مَنْ عَمِلَ سَيِّئَةً فَلَا يُجْزَىٰٓ
إِلَّا مِثْلَهَا ۖ وَمَنْ عَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ
أَوْ أُنثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ
ٱلْجَنَّةَ يُرْزَقُونَ فِيهَا بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿٤٠﴾
۞ وَيَٰقَوْمِ مَا لِىٓ أَدْعُوكُمْ إِلَى ٱلنَّجَوٰةِ
وَتَدْعُونَنِىٓ إِلَى ٱلنَّارِ ﴿٤١﴾ تَدْعُونَنِى
لِأَكْفُرَ بِٱللَّهِ وَأُشْرِكَ بِهِۦ مَا لَيْسَ لِى
بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ وَأَنَا۠ أَدْعُوكُمْ إِلَى ٱلْعَزِيزِ
ٱلْغَفَّٰرِ ﴿٤٢﴾ لَا جَرَمَ أَنَّمَا تَدْعُونَنِىٓ
إِلَيْهِ لَيْسَ لَهُۥ دَعْوَةٌ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا وَلَا فِى
ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ وَأَنَّ مَرَدَّنَآ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَأَنَّ
ٱلْمُسْرِفِينَ هُمْ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿٤٣﴾
فَسَتَذْكُرُونَ مَآ أَقُولُ لَكُمْ ۚ وَأُفَوِّضُ
أَمْرِىٓ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بَصِيرٌۢ بِٱلْعِبَادِ
﴿٤٤﴾

This Quranic story represents how any man can stand up courageously to an oppressive monarchy that was supported by all political, military and even religious powers, and warn against its tyranny. Parallel to Qarun *"who was one of the people of Moses, but he acted outrageously towards them"* [28:76], the believer who was related to Pharaoh in some way, either through his family or through a state relationship and who was hiding his faith, gave a warning to those who were taking oppressive measures against Moses and the believers in the One God, and who had begun to think of killing the Conveyor of God's message himself: *"Would you kill a man for merely saying: 'My Lord is the One*

God, while He has brought you the evidence of this truth from your Lord. And if he is a liar, then his lie falls upon himself, while if he is saying the truth some of what he warns you will afflict you" [40:28].

Seeing that he could attract the attention of his audience, the man went on to explain the "way of rectitude" to which he was guiding his people, and the life to come that they should care about, since it will be "their abiding home" - an impressive description for the Hereafter. A new world of justice and grace will be there, where no gender discrimination exists, and where any evil deed will be requited with no more than its like, while true faith and righteous deeds from a man or a woman will be rewarded with good beyond all reckoning. The believing man was calling the ruling circle to common sense and happiness in all its dimensions in this life and the life to come, and although he was just one single man, he emphasized that he would adhere to what he said, whatever the consequences might be.

Such commitment and persistence should guide any individual or group in expressing openly what they may believe in about any matter, however overwhelming the power of their opponents is. God supports those who support the truth in this life and in the life to come, while those who do their best to suppress the truth, sensibility and justice are always the losers in the long term both in this world's life and in the eternal life to come [40:45]. After a few verses from the above mentioned ones, the Quran assures: "*We support the conveyors of our messages and those who attain to faith, both during this world's life, and on the Day when witnesses will stand up*" [40:51].

And they say, "There is nothing but our present world's life; we die as we come to life, and nothing but time destroys us." Of that they have no knowledge whatsoever; they merely conjecture. And when Our messages are conveyed to them in all their clarity, their only argument is to say, "Bring us our forefathers, if you speak truly!" Say, "It is God who gives you life, and then causes you to die, and in the end He shall gather you together on the Day of Resurrection wherein is no doubt, but most human beings do not really know." To God belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth; and on the Day when the Last Hour comes the vain-doers shall be the lost.

And [on that Day] you will see each people kneeling down [in humility]; each people shall be called upon to [face] their record: "Today you shall be requited for all that you were doing! This is our record that speaks of you in

وَقَالُوا۟ مَا هِىَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا
ٱلدُّنْيَا نَمُوتُ وَنَحْيَا وَمَا يُهْلِكُنَآ إِلَّا
ٱلدَّهْرُ ۚ وَمَا لَهُم بِذَٰلِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ ۖ إِنْ هُمْ
إِلَّا يَظُنُّونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ
ءَايَٰتُنَا بَيِّنَٰتٍ مَّا كَانَ حُجَّتَهُمْ إِلَّآ أَن
قَالُوا۟ ٱئْتُوا۟ بِـَٔابَآئِنَآ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ
﴿٢٥﴾ قُلِ ٱللَّهُ يُحْيِيكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ
يَجْمَعُكُمْ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ
وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾
وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ وَيَوْمَ
تَقُومُ ٱلسَّاعَةُ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَخْسَرُ ٱلْمُبْطِلُونَ
﴿٢٧﴾ وَتَرَىٰ كُلَّ أُمَّةٍ جَاثِيَةً ۚ كُلُّ أُمَّةٍ
تُدْعَىٰٓ إِلَىٰ كِتَٰبِهَا ٱلْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ مَا
كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾ هَٰذَا كِتَٰبُنَا يَنطِقُ

all truth; We have caused to be recorded all that you ever did!" And, as for those who have attained to faith and done deeds of right-eousness, their Lord shall admit them to His grace; that is the distinguished achievement. But as for those who denied stubbornly the truth; [to them it shall be said]: "Were not My messages conveyed to you, then you were haughty, and were lost in evil-doing?

And when it was said that God's promise always comes true, and that there is no doubt about [the coming of] the Last Hour, you used to say, "We know not what that Last Hour may be, we only think it a mere guess, and we are by no means certain."

And the evil of what they have done shall become obvious to them, and they shall be overwhelmed by that which they used to ridicule. And it shall be said, "Today We do ignore you as you did ignore facing this Day of yours; and your lodging will be the fire, and you will have no supporters. This is for that you took the messages of God in mockery, allowing the previous world's life to delude you."

On that Day, therefore, they shall not be brought out of it [the fire], nor shall they be required to make excuses or amends. And thus all praise is due to God, the Lord of the heavens and the Lord of the earth, and the Lord of all beings, and to Him [alone] belongs all majesty in the heavens and on earth, and He is the All-mighty, the All-wise. [45:24-37]

عَلَيْكُم بِٱلْحَقِّ ۚ إِنَّا كُنَّا نَسْتَنسِخُ مَا كُنتُمْ
تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾ فَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟
وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ فَيُدْخِلُهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ فِى
رَحْمَتِهِۦ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْمُبِينُ ﴿٣٠﴾
وَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا۟ أَفَلَمْ تَكُنْ ءَايَٰتِى
تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ فَٱسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ وَكُنتُمْ قَوْمًا
مُّجْرِمِينَ ﴿٣١﴾ وَإِذَا قِيلَ إِنَّ وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ
حَقٌّ وَٱلسَّاعَةُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهَا قُلْتُم مَّا
نَدْرِى مَا ٱلسَّاعَةُ إِن نَّظُنُّ إِلَّا ظَنًّا وَمَا
نَحْنُ بِمُسْتَيْقِنِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾ وَبَدَا لَهُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتُ
مَا عَمِلُوا۟ وَحَاقَ بِهِم مَّا كَانُوا۟ بِهِۦ
يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَقِيلَ ٱلْيَوْمَ نَنسَىٰكُمْ
كَمَا نَسِيتُمْ لِقَآءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هَٰذَا وَمَأْوَىٰكُمُ
ٱلنَّارُ وَمَا لَكُم مِّن نَّٰصِرِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾ ذَٰلِكُم
بِأَنَّكُمُ ٱتَّخَذْتُمْ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ هُزُوًا
وَغَرَّتْكُمُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۚ فَٱلْيَوْمَ لَا
يُخْرَجُونَ مِنْهَا وَلَا هُمْ يُسْتَعْتَبُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾
فَلِلَّهِ ٱلْحَمْدُ رَبِّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَرَبِّ
ٱلْأَرْضِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَلَهُ
ٱلْكِبْرِيَآءُ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ
وَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٣٧﴾

The Quran reports the different arguments of those who deny the message of God and responds to them to teach Muslims to allow different opinions and secure the freedom of belief and expression. You can find in the Quran the main arguments against the faith in God and the eternal life to come, and the attacks against all Prophets in general and Muhammad in particular [e.g. 3:154, 181; 6:25; 8:31; 9:61; 15:6; 16:24, 103; 21:5; 23:25, 70; 25:5; 26:27; 34:8, 46; 36:47, 37:36; 38:4; 40:24; 43:22-3; 44:14; 51:39, 52; 52:29-30; 54:9, 25-26; 68:2, 51; 69:41-42; 81:22]. The atheists' arguments, which have always been repeated and which the materialists have been recently restructuring in a philosophical or scientific form, is that "matter" and "time" are eternal; and if an individual life comes to an end, the life of humanity may continue, or it may be destroyed by

time, in any way as an outcome of natural laws without a particular divine action, and there is no place for a judgement or requital. This is not based on reliable knowledge, but mere hypothetical conjecture. Concrete sensory observations may run short of evidence about the relatively far future, but they may refer or allude to it, and the mind with its high potentials can infer. Intuition, super-sensory abstraction, imagination and insight have their admitted results in art. Human spiritual potentials have been discovered more and more and their effects have become more and more obvious day after day. Spiritual and intellectual powers may be interacting in the human being and thus raising and sophisticating the human intellectuality far beyond the intelligence of any known living creature. In addition, God's messages have always offered the light of guidance.

The Quran presents here an expressive picture of the Day of Judgement with different touches from previous pictures. All people will be kneeling down in humility facing their records with all that each individual ever did. Once again the haughty will be humiliated by blame and lodging in the fire. All their calculations will be proven wrong, and they will be ignored in the eternal life to come as they previously ignored its existence, and they will be overwhelmed by the very thing that they used to take for a joke. How false and empty has been the haughtiness of the haughty in this world life, and how false and short has been their enjoyment of it that they bet on, when they face the real majesty and justice of God: "*He is the All-mighty, All-wise.*"

Therefore, turn you from the one who has turned away from all remembrance of Us and cares for no more than the present world's life. For them, that is what they consider as knowledge. Surely, your Lord is fully aware as to who has gone astray from His way, and is fully aware as to who follows the right way. To God belongs all that is in the heavens and whatever is on earth, [and His creation of the whole universe is purposed] to requite those who did evil for what they did, and He requites those who did good with ultimate good.

Those who avoid grave wrong doing and abominations, although they may sometimes stumble; verily, your Lord is abounding in forgiveness. He is fully aware of you when He brings you into being out of the earth, and when you are hidden in your mother's wombs. Therefore, do not praise yourselves; He knows best who is conscious of Him. [53:29-32]

فَأَعْرِضْ عَن مَّن تَوَلَّىٰ عَن ذِكْرِنَا وَ لَمْ
يُرِدْ إِلَّا ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا ﴿٢٩﴾ ذَٰلِكَ
مَبْلَغُهُم مِّنَ ٱلْعِلْمِ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن
ضَلَّ عَن سَبِيلِهِۦ وَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنِ ٱهْتَدَىٰ
﴿٣٠﴾ وَ لِلَّهِ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ مَا فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ لِيَجْزِىَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَسَٰٓـُٔوا۟ بِمَا
عَمِلُوا۟ وَ يَجْزِىَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا۟
بِٱلْحُسْنَى ﴿٣١﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يَجْتَنِبُونَ كَبَٰٓئِرَ
ٱلْإِثْمِ وَ ٱلْفَوَٰحِشَ إِلَّا ٱللَّمَمَ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ
وَٰسِعُ ٱلْمَغْفِرَةِ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِكُمْ إِذْ أَنشَأَكُم
مِّنَ ٱلْأَرْضِ وَ إِذْ أَنتُمْ أَجِنَّةٌ فِى بُطُونِ
أُمَّهَٰتِكُمْ ۖ فَلَا تُزَكُّوٓا۟ أَنفُسَكُمْ ۖ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ
بِمَنِ ٱتَّقَىٰ ﴿٣٢﴾

It is a waste of time to try to find a meeting point between one who believes in God

and in the life to come and another who persistently ignores anything related to God and cares for no more than the short term pleasures of the worldly life, since there is a sharp contrast in the perspective and prospects of the two which cannot be compromised. Restricting one's intellectual and spiritual aspirations to self-centeredness and worldly-mindedness, makes a person unable to conceive of what is beyond the concrete physical and material pleasures, and so this becomes his/her only range of knowledge and concern. On the contrary, the believer in God and the life to come is concerned about the moral and social dimensions of people's deeds, and thus he/she avoids that which is evil or shameful, in spite of any fleeting of physical or material pleasures. However, such people who are conscious of God and the life to come never become as infallible as angels, as they are still human beings who may commit some limited offenses; *"...and [they] seek forgiveness for their offenses when they commit some shameful deed or harm themselves"* [3:135]. God does not require from a human being anything beyond human abilities, and His guidance is realistic, since He has created the human being in his/her successive stages and knows the human needs and limitations. A believer in God and the life to come should never think that he/she is perfect or above humanity. God knows best every individual's intentions and consciousness of Him. It is meaningless for a human being to try to justify himself/herself through self-praise or self-excuses for his/her conduct. One who is conscious of God should not ignore the reality of human limitations in his/her self-evaluation.

When the "inevitable" that must come to pass, [in the end] comes to pass, none shall be able to deny its coming, that shall bring [some] lower, and [others] it will exalt. That is when the earth is shaken severely, and the mountains are crushed heavily, becoming as scattered dust.
And [on that Day] you shall be three groups: [There will be] the "people of the right;" how [happy] shall be the "people of the right!" And the "people of the left;" how [unhappy] will be the "people of the left!" And the "foremost," how [prominent] will be the "foremost"!
These are the ones drawn nearest to God, in the gardens of bliss; a good number of people from early times, and fewer people from later times. [They will be] on adorned couches, reclining on them, facing one another. Immortal youths will go around about them, with goblets and pitchers and cups [filled] from pure ever-flowing springs, that never hurts their bodies nor their minds, and with

إِذَا وَقَعَتِ ٱلْوَاقِعَةُ ﴿١﴾ لَيْسَ
لِوَقْعَتِهَا كَاذِبَةٌ ﴿٢﴾ خَافِضَةٌ رَّافِعَةٌ ﴿٣﴾
إِذَا رُجَّتِ ٱلْأَرْضُ رَجًّا ﴿٤﴾ وَبُسَّتِ
ٱلْجِبَالُ بَسًّا ﴿٥﴾ فَكَانَتْ هَبَآءً مُّنۢبَثًّا
﴿٦﴾ وَكُنتُمْ أَزْوَٰجًا ثَلَٰثَةً ﴿٧﴾ فَأَصْحَٰبُ
ٱلْمَيْمَنَةِ مَآ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْمَيْمَنَةِ ﴿٨﴾
وَأَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْمَشْـَٔمَةِ مَآ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْمَشْـَٔمَةِ
﴿٩﴾ وَٱلسَّٰبِقُونَ ٱلسَّٰبِقُونَ ﴿١٠﴾
أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلْمُقَرَّبُونَ ﴿١١﴾ فِى جَنَّٰتِ
ٱلنَّعِيمِ ﴿١٢﴾ ثُلَّةٌ مِّنَ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٣﴾
وَقَلِيلٌ مِّنَ ٱلْءَاخِرِينَ ﴿١٤﴾ عَلَىٰ سُرُرٍ
مَّوْضُونَةٍ ﴿١٥﴾ مُّتَّكِـِٔينَ عَلَيْهَا مُتَقَٰبِلِينَ
﴿١٦﴾ يَطُوفُ عَلَيْهِمْ وِلْدَٰنٌ مُّخَلَّدُونَ
﴿١٧﴾ بِأَكْوَابٍ وَأَبَارِيقَ وَكَأْسٍ مِّن
مَّعِينٍ ﴿١٨﴾ لَّا يُصَدَّعُونَ عَنْهَا وَلَا
يُنزِفُونَ ﴿١٩﴾ وَفَٰكِهَةٍ مِّمَّا يَتَخَيَّرُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

such fruits as they may choose, and such meat of any fowl as they may desire. And [there will be with them their] companions pure, most beautiful of eye, [chaste] like hidden pearls [in their shells well-treasured in any place] a reward for what they were doing [in the previous life]. No idle talk will they hear there nor any wrongfulness; only the saying, "Peace! Peace."

And the people of the "right," how [happy] will be the "people of the right!" [They will be] amidst thornless lote-trees and acacias with serried fruits one above another, and shade spread out, and water gushing, and fruits abounding, never failing and never out of reach; and on [comfortable] upraised couches. [With them will be their spouses] brought into a life renewed, [ever] virgins and loving and beloved, and well matched one with the other, for the " people of the right." A good number of people from early times, and a good number from those of later times as well.

The "people of the left," how [unhappy] will be the "people of the left!" [They will be] amidst burning winds and boiling waters and the shades of smoking blaze; neither cool, nor good-looking. They lived before in luxury, but they persisted stubbornly in awesome rejection [of the truth], ever saying, "After we die and become mere dust and bones, shall we then indeed be raised up from the dead? And also our earliest forefathers?" Say, "The earlier and the later ones all will certainly be gathered together at an appointed time on a certain Day. Then, O you who have gone astray and have called the truth a lie! You shall surely have to eat the fruits of the infernal tree "zaqum," and you shall have to fill therewith your bellies, and shall have to drink thereupon boiling water, gulping it down like thirsty camels." This will be life in their abode on the Day of Judgement. [56:1-56]

وَلَحْمِ طَيْرٍ مِّمَّا يَشْتَهُونَ ﴿٢١﴾
وَحُورٌ عِينٌ ﴿٢٢﴾ كَأَمْثَالِ اللُّؤْلُؤِ
الْمَكْنُونِ ﴿٢٣﴾ جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا
يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا
وَلَا تَأْثِيمًا ﴿٢٥﴾ إِلَّا قِيلًا سَلَامًا سَلَامًا
﴿٢٦﴾ وَأَصْحَابُ الْيَمِينِ مَا أَصْحَابُ
الْيَمِينِ ﴿٢٧﴾ فِي سِدْرٍ مَّخْضُودٍ ﴿٢٨﴾
وَطَلْحٍ مَّنضُودٍ ﴿٢٩﴾ وَظِلٍّ مَّمْدُودٍ ﴿٣٠﴾
وَمَاءٍ مَّسْكُوبٍ ﴿٣١﴾ وَفَاكِهَةٍ كَثِيرَةٍ ﴿٣٢﴾
لَّا مَقْطُوعَةٍ وَلَا مَمْنُوعَةٍ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَفُرُشٍ
مَّرْفُوعَةٍ ﴿٣٤﴾ إِنَّا أَنشَأْنَاهُنَّ إِنشَاءً
﴿٣٥﴾ فَجَعَلْنَاهُنَّ أَبْكَارًا ﴿٣٦﴾ عُرُبًا
أَتْرَابًا ﴿٣٧﴾ لِّأَصْحَابِ الْيَمِينِ ﴿٣٨﴾ ثُلَّةٌ
مِّنَ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾ وَثُلَّةٌ مِّنَ الْآخِرِينَ
﴿٤٠﴾ وَأَصْحَابُ الشِّمَالِ مَا أَصْحَابُ
الشِّمَالِ ﴿٤١﴾ فِي سَمُومٍ وَحَمِيمٍ ﴿٤٢﴾
وَظِلٍّ مِّن يَحْمُومٍ ﴿٤٣﴾ لَّا بَارِدٍ وَلَا
كَرِيمٍ ﴿٤٤﴾ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَبْلَ ذَٰلِكَ مُتْرَفِينَ
﴿٤٥﴾ وَكَانُوا يُصِرُّونَ عَلَى الْحِنثِ
الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٤٦﴾ وَكَانُوا يَقُولُونَ أَئِذَا
مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا وَعِظَامًا أَإِنَّا
لَمَبْعُوثُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾ أَوَآبَاؤُنَا الْأَوَّلُونَ
﴿٤٨﴾ قُلْ إِنَّ الْأَوَّلِينَ وَالْآخِرِينَ
﴿٤٩﴾ لَمَجْمُوعُونَ إِلَىٰ مِيقَاتِ يَوْمٍ
مَّعْلُومٍ ﴿٥٠﴾ ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ أَيُّهَا الضَّالُّونَ
الْمُكَذِّبُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ لَآكِلُونَ مِن شَجَرٍ مِّن
زَقُّومٍ ﴿٥٢﴾ فَمَالِئُونَ مِنْهَا الْبُطُونَ
﴿٥٣﴾ فَشَارِبُونَ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْحَمِيمِ ﴿٥٤﴾
فَشَارِبُونَ شُرْبَ الْهِيمِ ﴿٥٥﴾ هَٰذَا نُزُلُهُمْ
يَوْمَ الدِّينِ ﴿٥٦﴾

The above Quranic verses present a live picture of the life to come, which follows the "inevitable" end of this world's life. It is the moment of truth when all the promises of God are fulfilled; *"you have been unmindful of this, but now We have removed what covered your vision, and sharp is your sight today"* [50:22]. The picture shows how the coming of the *"inevitable"* will be connected with the shaking physical movements of the earth and the mountains. People will be judged and requited for every atom's weight, or less, of good or evil [10:61; 34:3; 99:7-8], and thus there will be some who wrong their own selves, some who keep half way [between right and wrong], while some are by God's leave "*foremost in good deeds*" [35:32]. The details of the happiness and the disasters of the life to come should not be comprehended literally, for the life to come as a whole can never be grasped by the human mind in its present capacities, nor can it be compared with this world's life. The Quran presents the life to come in a language that we can understand through our experience in this world's life, since it is the only language that we can be addressed with. However, one should allow his/her thinking to go beyond what he/she is used to in the present-world life, since a qualitative change will happen to the world as well as to the human beings in the life to come [see for the difference e.g. 4:56; 14:48; 56:60-61].

The beautiful female companions to whom the Quran refers in several places including the above verses as a reward in the life to come, can be understood to mean the wives of this life, who will all become young, and physically and spiritually beautiful in the life to come as the verses 35-37 may indicate. Al-Hasan al-Basri, the outstanding scholar, understood those feminine companions in paradise to merely mean "the righteous among the women of the human race." Al-Tabari and Ibn Kathir in their commentaries on these verses quoted several authentic traditions of the Prophet which state that righteous women will be resurrected as young ones, however old they may have been when they died, and they - as well as resurrected righteous men - will remain young in the eternal life to come. However, the pleasure of sexual relations between sexes in the life to come may be an enjoyment of company and complementation, as no reproduction will occur. Thus even those who are not married in this life may enjoy such company with others of the same or the opposite sex, as there will be common relations among all who will be rewarded in paradise [15:47; 39:73-74], in addition to close relations between those who lived as families in this world's life [13:23; 36:56; 40:8; 52:21].

On the Day when you shall see those who have attained to faith, men and women, with their light swiftly spreading before them and on their right [welcomed by]: "Good tidings for you today! Gardens underneath which rivers flow, therein to abide; this is indeed the weighty achievement!" The Day on which the hypocrites - both men and women- will say to those who have attained to faith, "Regard us; let us have some of your light!" It shall be said, "Go

يَوْمَ تَرَى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ
وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ يَسْعَىٰ نُورُهُم بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ
وَبِأَيْمَٰنِهِم بُشْرَىٰكُمُ ٱلْيَوْمَ جَنَّٰتٌ تَجْرِى
مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ
هُوَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿١٢﴾ يَوْمَ يَقُولُ
ٱلْمُنَٰفِقُونَ وَٱلْمُنَٰفِقَٰتُ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟
ٱنظُرُونَا نَقْتَبِسْ مِن نُّورِكُمْ قِيلَ

back and behind and seek a light! And thereupon a wall will be raised between both, having a door in the inward whereof is grace and mercy, and against the outward thereof is the suffering. [Those who suffer] shall be calling on those [who enjoy God's grace and mercy], "Were we not with you?" [They] shall say, "Yes indeed, but you allowed yourselves to fall into the temptation [of your own evil selves and by one another], and you in bad faith hanged back [waiting for the failure of the message] and were in doubt [about its future], and your wishful thinking deluded you, until God's command came to pass; and thus you were deceived about God by your own selves and by others who were deluded [and deluding]. On this Day shall no ransom be accepted of you, nor of those who stubbornly denied the truth. Your abode is the fire; that is your end, and how awful a journey's end it is! [57:12-15]

ٱرْجِعُوا۟ وَرَآءَكُمْ فَٱلْتَمِسُوا۟ نُورًا
فَضُرِبَ بَيْنَهُم بِسُورٍ لَّهُۥ بَابٌۢ بَاطِنُهُۥ فِيهِ
ٱلرَّحْمَةُ وَظَٰهِرُهُۥ مِن قِبَلِهِ ٱلْعَذَابُ
﴿١٣﴾ يُنَادُونَهُمْ أَلَمْ نَكُن مَّعَكُمْ قَالُوا۟
بَلَىٰ وَلَٰكِنَّكُمْ فَتَنتُمْ أَنفُسَكُمْ وَتَرَبَّصْتُمْ
وَٱرْتَبْتُمْ وَغَرَّتْكُمُ ٱلْأَمَانِىُّ حَتَّىٰ جَآءَ
أَمْرُ ٱللَّهِ وَغَرَّكُم بِٱللَّهِ ٱلْغَرُورُ ﴿١٤﴾
فَٱلْيَوْمَ لَا يُؤْخَذُ مِنكُمْ فِدْيَةٌ وَلَا مِنَ
ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ۚ مَأْوَىٰكُمُ ٱلنَّارُ ۖ هِىَ
مَوْلَىٰكُمْ ۖ وَبِئْسَ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٥﴾

These Quranic verses present the contrast in the life to come between the happiness of those who, in this world's life, have believed in God and the accountability of the human being, and the misery of those who have stubbornly denied the truth. The suffering of the latter will be psychologically multiplied by seeing those who will enjoy God's rewards and grace in paradise, and realizing that these are the people whom they ridiculed and mocked before [e.g. 2:212; 6:10; 11:38; 21:41; 83:29-36].

It is significant that there will be visibility and direct communication, and even a "door" in the wall, between the believers and the hypocrites, while there will be a "barrier" and only indirect communication via a third party between the believers who do righteous deeds and those who stubbornly deny the truth [7:44-51]. The hypocrites know the truth and pretend they accept it, but they raise up the wall between themselves and the believers by their own hands, as they *"believe at the beginning of the day and deny the truth later"* [3:72]. The door through which they could pass to the other side exists, but as they have always wished to gain from both sides through their hypocrisy in this world's life, they will lose and add to their hardship a psychological suffering in the life to come. The hypocrites in the above verses may be synonymous to or include whom the Quran calls "*those who have disease in their hearts*" [e.g. 2:10; 5:52; 8:49; 9:125; 22:53; 24:50; 33:12, 32, 60; 47:20, 29; 74:31], and in the latter case possibly comprise also the self-deceptive, the shaky in their beliefs or the whimsical. The door in the wall may refer in a way to the chance for those who have built up the barrier between themselves and the believers to remove the barrier and become one at the suitable time in this world's life if reason may prevail over worldly temptations and inner and outer deceptions, especially by

the evils among the human beings and the invisible beings (jinn).

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا
تَتَوَلَّوْاْ قَوْمًا غَضِبَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ قَدْ
يَئِسُواْ مِنَ ٱلْأَخِرَةِ كَمَا يَئِسَ ٱلْكُفَّارُ
مِنْ أَصْحَـٰبِ ٱلْقُبُورِ ﴿١٣﴾

O you who have attained to faith! Take not for patrons people whom God has condemned. Of the life to come they have full despair, just as those who deny stubbornly the truth are in full despair about those who are [now] in graves. [60:13]

The Quran presents here a picture of those who stubbornly deny the truth and do not believe in God and the life to come. They can have no hope for help in the life to come, just as one can have no hope of receiving help in this world's life from a dead person buried in the grave. Death and burial are the end of life and hope for these people. The believers are warned against making such people their patrons and guardians, as their prospects are quite contradictory to those of the believers. The belief in God and the life to come inspires justice and care about others that contradict self-centeredness and materialistic values.

لَآ أُقْسِمُ بِيَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَـٰمَةِ ﴿١﴾ وَلَآ
أُقْسِمُ بِٱلنَّفْسِ ٱللَّوَّامَةِ ﴿٢﴾ أَيَحْسَبُ
ٱلْإِنسَـٰنُ أَلَّن نَّجْمَعَ عِظَامَهُۥ ﴿٣﴾ بَلَىٰ
قَـٰدِرِينَ عَلَىٰٓ أَن نُّسَوِّيَ بَنَانَهُۥ ﴿٤﴾ بَلْ
يُرِيدُ ٱلْإِنسَـٰنُ لِيَفْجُرَ أَمَامَهُۥ ﴿٥﴾ يَسْـَٔلُ
أَيَّانَ يَوْمُ ٱلْقِيَـٰمَةِ ﴿٦﴾ فَإِذَا بَرِقَ ٱلْبَصَرُ
﴿٧﴾ وَخَسَفَ ٱلْقَمَرُ ﴿٨﴾ وَجُمِعَ
ٱلشَّمْسُ وَٱلْقَمَرُ ﴿٩﴾ يَقُولُ ٱلْإِنسَـٰنُ
يَوْمَئِذٍ أَيْنَ ٱلْمَفَرُّ ﴿١٠﴾ كَلَّا لَا وَزَرَ
﴿١١﴾ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ يَوْمَئِذٍ ٱلْمُسْتَقَرُّ ﴿١٢﴾
يُنَبَّؤُاْ ٱلْإِنسَـٰنُ يَوْمَئِذٍۭ بِمَا قَدَّمَ وَأَخَّرَ
﴿١٣﴾ بَلِ ٱلْإِنسَـٰنُ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِۦ بَصِيرَةٌ
﴿١٤﴾ وَلَوْ أَلْقَىٰ مَعَاذِيرَهُۥ ﴿١٥﴾

I do swear by the Day of Resurrection; and I swear by the [intrinsic] self-reproach. Does the human being think that We shall bring back his [/her] bones together again? Yes indeed [the same as] We are able to make whole in a balanced order the very tip of one's finger.
But the human being wishes to act as an untrained libertine in the time that lies ahead of him [/her before death], asking, "When shall be the Day of Resurrection?" When one's sight is dazed, and the moon is eclipsed, and the sun and moon are brought together, on that day the human being shall say, "Whither to escape?" No indeed, not a refuge! With your Lord [alone] on that Day will be the journey's end.
On that day the human being shall be told [all] that one sent on ahead or else held back. Nay, the human being is well aware of his [/her] own self [now and in the life to come] even though he[/she] brings out his [/her numerous and various] excuses. [75:1-15]

The reproaching self referred to in the above verse 75:2, along with the tempting self that incites a person to evil [12:53], and the secure and peaceful one [89:27], remind

one of the other threefold division in psychoanalysis: to the "id" that represents the conscious instinctive motives, the "super ego" that represents the tradition of the family and society and their ideals, and the "ego" that tries to adapt one to the other and reach the balance, although the two systems of division may not by any means be identical. The reproaching-self is the inner voice of individual accountability that acts before the final judgement comes when "*the human being will hold evidence even against himself/herself, even though he[/she] may proffer excuses.*" God is able to bring the bones together again, as He is able to shape the finger and its tip in a way that characterizes the individual and develops the human civilization. The human being may ignore the spiritual and intellectual allusion to the life to come, and waste his/her time and energy in this life in short-sighted and ego-centered delights. This world and all its known features point to its end and to another world that will follow it, and then there will be no escape for anyone from the Day of Reckoning, and every individual will have to face God's judgement and requital.

Surely, the Day of determination [about the good and the evil] is an appointed time [for Judgement], the Day when the trumpet [of Resurrection] is blown, and you all come forward in huge waves, and when the skies are opened up and become [as] gates, and the mountains are set in speedy motion and become [as] a mirage! [On that Day], hell will lie in wait to seize all transgressors and become their resort. There, they shall remain for ages. Nothing cool shall they taste therein, nor any [other thirst-quenching] drink, save something boiling and dark, a fitting requital [for their evil doing]. They have never expected to be called to account, and they stubbornly denounced as lies Our signs and messages and every single thing they did We have put on record. [And so they will be addressed,] "Taste, then [the consequences of your evil doing], We shall but grant you more and more suffering!"
As for the God-conscious there; they shall enjoy security and fulfillment, [in magnificent] gardens, and vineyards, and with splendid companions well matched [one with the other], enjoying a cup [of delicious drink] overflowing. No idle talk shall they hear therein, nor any lying. [All this will be] a reward from your Lord, a gift in accordance

إِنَّ يَوْمَ ٱلْفَصْلِ كَانَ مِيقَٰتًا
(١٧) يَوْمَ يُنفَخُ فِى ٱلصُّورِ فَتَأْتُونَ
أَفْوَاجًا (١٨) وَ فُتِحَتِ ٱلسَّمَآءُ فَكَانَتْ
أَبْوَٰبًا (١٩) وَ سُيِّرَتِ ٱلْجِبَالُ فَكَانَتْ
سَرَابًا (٢٠) إِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ كَانَتْ مِرْصَادًا
(٢١) لِّلطَّٰغِينَ مَـَٔابًا (٢٢) لَّٰبِثِينَ فِيهَآ
أَحْقَابًا (٢٣) لَّا يَذُوقُونَ فِيهَا بَرْدًا
وَلَا شَرَابًا (٢٤) إِلَّا حَمِيمًا وَ غَسَّاقًا
(٢٥) جَزَآءً وِفَاقًا (٢٦) إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟ لَا
يَرْجُونَ حِسَابًا (٢٧) وَ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا
كِذَّابًا (٢٨) وَ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ أَحْصَيْنَٰهُ كِتَٰبًا
(٢٩) فَذُوقُوا۟ فَلَن نَّزِيدَكُمْ إِلَّا عَذَابًا
(٣٠) إِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ مَفَازًا (٣١) حَدَآئِقَ
وَ أَعْنَٰبًا (٣٢) وَ كَوَاعِبَ أَتْرَابًا (٣٣)
وَ كَأْسًا دِهَاقًا (٣٤) لَّا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا
لَغْوًا وَ لَا كِذَّٰبًا (٣٥) جَزَآءً مِّن رَّبِّكَ
عَطَآءً حِسَابًا (٣٦) رَّبِّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ

with [His] reckoning; [He is] the Lord of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, the All- merciful, to Him none shall have power to speak. Upon the day when the spirit and the angels shall stand in ranks; none shall speak save one to whom the All- merciful shall have given leave and who speaks aright. That will be the Day of Ultimate Truth; whosoever wills, then, let him[/her from this moment] go through the [right] way that leads to His Lord! Verily, We have warned you of a nigh suffering, on the Day when the human being shall [clearly] see what his hands have sent ahead, and the one who has denied stubbornly the truth shall say, "Oh, would that I were dust!" [78:17-40]

وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ۖ لَا
يَمْلِكُونَ مِنْهُ خِطَابًا ﴿٣٧﴾ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ
ٱلرُّوحُ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ صَفًّا ۖ لَّا يَتَكَلَّمُونَ
إِلَّا مَنْ أَذِنَ لَهُ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ وَقَالَ صَوَابًا
﴿٣٨﴾ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلْيَوْمُ ٱلْحَقُّ ۖ فَمَن شَآءَ
ٱتَّخَذَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِۦ مَـَٔابًا ﴿٣٩﴾ إِنَّآ
أَنذَرْنَٰكُمْ عَذَابًا قَرِيبًا يَوْمَ يَنظُرُ ٱلْمَرْءُ
مَا قَدَّمَتْ يَدَاهُ وَيَقُولُ ٱلْكَافِرُ
يَٰلَيْتَنِى كُنتُ تُرَٰبًا ﴿٤٠﴾

The Quranic verses which were revealed in Mecca (Makka) present various details about the Day of Judgement and the life to come. It was especially essential at that time to solidify the faith in the life to come and strengthen the spirit of the believers so that they might stand firmly and persistently for what they believed in against all pressures and oppression. The Quran informed them that the Day when the differences with those who have stubbornly denied the truth will be sorted out is near at hand, since life in this world, whatever its length may be, is short if compared to the eternal life to come.

Another detail that makes the picture of the Day of Judgement clearer and more overwhelming is that on it the Spirit and the angels will stand up in ranks; no one can speak without God's permission and no one will speak nonsense [see also 21:27-28]. Moreover, the signs of the end of this world's life and the emergence of another one include in the above verses that "*the sky will be opened up and become [as] gates:*" a reference which may implicitly mean the uncovering of mysteries before human eyes.

Hell, the embodiment of evil and the destination of evil-doers, will be lying in wait for those who deny stubbornly the truth. The drink offered to the inhabitants of fire which is recounted to be very hot, is also described by the Arabic word "*ghassaq*" which can simply mean "very dark as the black night." However, it can also mean "icy cold." The contrast in certain features of hell which are all disastrous [compare with those for paradise 76:13] may refer to a fitting requital for a sharp contrast in the human self and its consequent evil deeds, such as the combination of extreme softness with the favorites and extreme cruelty with others, which are both unfair. Those who commit such deeds will have more and more suffering, but this suffering will only be equal to all that they did in their previous life: no more and no less [6:160]. On the other hand, those who have believed in God and the life to come will gain supreme achievement and fulfillment of their highest potentials and of God's promises. They will enjoy delicious nourishment and lovely company that represents God's bliss, and will not hear any nonsense or untruth: something that can never be avoided in this world's life. Such people have always been aware

of their accountability, and all that they have done will be counted in full and rewarded generously [2:261; 6:160; 28:84; 42:23], as God's grace and bounty have no bounds [39:10; 40:40].

When the sky bursts apart; and when the planets are strewn around; and when the seas swarm over; and when the graves are overturned; [then] every human being shall know well what he [/she] has sent on ahead and what he [/she] held back [in the previous world life].
O human being! What has lured you away from your bountiful Lord, who has created you and shaped you [in due proportion and according to what you are meant to be], and made you integrated [in your appearance and abilities]? In whatever form He wills, He puts you together. Nay, [O human beings] but you do denounce as lies [God's] guidance and [warning about] His [coming] Judgement!
And yet, surely, there are ever-watching ones, over you, noble and truthful [in their] recording, aware of whatever you do. Surely, the righteous [in the life to come] shall be in bliss, whereas the evil-doers shall be in a blazing fire, in which they will suffer on the Day of Judgement, and which they shall never be able [in any moment] to stay away from. And what could make you realize what the Day of Judgement shall really be? And once again, what could make you realize what the Day of Judgement shall really be? [It is] a Day when no human being shall be able to offer anything to another; as on that Day all sovereignty and command are God's alone. [82:1-19]

إِذَا ٱلسَّمَآءُ ٱنفَطَرَتْ ﴿١﴾ وَ إِذَا
ٱلْكَوَاكِبُ ٱنتَثَرَتْ ﴿٢﴾ وَ إِذَا ٱلْبِحَارُ
فُجِّرَتْ ﴿٣﴾ وَ إِذَا ٱلْقُبُورُ بُعْثِرَتْ ﴿٤﴾
عَلِمَتْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ وَ أَخَّرَتْ ﴿٥﴾
يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْإِنسَـٰنُ مَا غَرَّكَ بِرَبِّكَ ٱلْكَرِيمِ
﴿٦﴾ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكَ فَسَوَّىٰكَ فَعَدَلَكَ ﴿٧﴾
فِىٓ أَىِّ صُورَةٍ مَّا شَآءَ رَكَّبَكَ ﴿٨﴾ كَلَّا بَلْ
تُكَذِّبُونَ بِٱلدِّينِ ﴿٩﴾ وَ إِنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ
لَحَـٰفِظِينَ ﴿١٠﴾ كِرَامًا كَـٰتِبِينَ ﴿١١﴾
يَعْلَمُونَ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ إِنَّ ٱلْأَبْرَارَ
لَفِى نَعِيمٍ ﴿١٣﴾ وَ إِنَّ ٱلْفُجَّارَ لَفِى
جَحِيمٍ ﴿١٤﴾ يَصْلَوْنَهَا يَوْمَ ٱلدِّينِ ﴿١٥﴾
وَ مَا هُمْ عَنْهَا بِغَآئِبِينَ ﴿١٦﴾ وَ مَآ
أَدْرَىٰكَ مَا يَوْمُ ٱلدِّينِ ﴿١٧﴾ ثُمَّ مَآ
أَدْرَىٰكَ مَا يَوْمُ ٱلدِّينِ ﴿١٨﴾ يَوْمَ لَا تَمْلِكُ
نَفْسٌ لِّنَفْسٍ شَيْـًٔا ۖ وَ ٱلْأَمْرُ
يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلَّهِ ﴿١٩﴾

This is a whole "sura" revealed in Mecca (Makka) that pictures how this world's life will come to an end and how the Day of Judgement and the life to come will follow. The order of the universe, represented in its galaxies and stars and planets and whatever water areas that exist will explode, the graves will be overturned, and the human being will realize all that he/she went through, and what was earned or missed. There is also in the above verses a reference to the balanced form in which the human being has been created, which combines together physical fitness, right proportionality and beauty in addition to the intellectual, psychological and spiritual faculties that enable the human being

to develop his/her own self and develop the world in which he/she has been placed as an overlord or a vicegerent. The Creator who has shaped and proportioned the human being to enjoy such abilities in this life and enabled him/her to develop civilization, can shape him/her in whatever form He wills. Although the details of the Day of Judgement may be beyond human perception, as the repetition of the questions which were raised at the time of revelation about its complete picture may indicate, the human intellectual and spiritual faculties can point to a "concept" of the life to come that represents a fulfillment of justice, peace, love and all human aspirations and divine completeness and perfection, as in paradise there will be no toil nor weariness [35:35].

When the sky is split asunder, obeying its Lord, as it ought to; and when the earth is flattened out, and throws up whatever it contains and becomes utterly empty, obeying its Lord, as it ought to.
O human being! Surely, you have ever been laboring [in passing through this life] toward your Lord, and surely you shall meet Him.
Then, as for one who shall be given his [/her] record in his[/her] right hand, he [/she] shall surely receive an easy reckoning, and he[/she] shall return to his[/her] people[of his/her own kind] joyfully! But as for one who is given his[/her] record behind his back, he[/she] shall admit his [/her] ruin, and shall suffer a blazing fire. He[/she] once [in the previous world's life] lived among his[/her] people joyfully; and he[/she] surely thought that he[/she] would never revert [to God]. Yes, indeed, his[/her] Lord did see all about him [/her]. [84:1-15]

إِذَا ٱلسَّمَآءُ ٱنشَقَّتْ ﴿١﴾ وَ أَذِنَتْ
لِرَبِّهَا وَ حُقَّتْ ﴿٢﴾ وَ إِذَا ٱلْأَرْضُ مُدَّتْ
﴿٣﴾ وَ أَلْقَتْ مَا فِيهَا وَ تَخَلَّتْ ﴿٤﴾
وَ أَذِنَتْ لِرَبِّهَا وَ حُقَّتْ ﴿٥﴾ يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا
ٱلْإِنسَـٰنُ إِنَّكَ كَادِحٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ كَدْحًا
فَمُلَـٰقِيهِ ﴿٦﴾ فَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِىَ كِتَـٰبَهُۥ
بِيَمِينِهِۦ ﴿٧﴾ فَسَوْفَ يُحَاسَبُ حِسَابًا
يَسِيرًا ﴿٨﴾ وَ يَنقَلِبُ إِلَىٰٓ أَهْلِهِۦ
مَسْرُورًا ﴿٩﴾ وَ أَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِىَ كِتَـٰبَهُۥ
وَرَآءَ ظَهْرِهِۦ ﴿١٠﴾ فَسَوْفَ يَدْعُوا۟
ثُبُورًا ﴿١١﴾ وَ يَصْلَىٰ سَعِيرًا ﴿١٢﴾ إِنَّهُۥ
كَانَ فِىٓ أَهْلِهِۦ مَسْرُورًا ﴿١٣﴾ إِنَّهُۥ ظَنَّ
أَن لَّن يَحُورَ ﴿١٤﴾ بَلَىٰٓ إِنَّ رَبَّهُۥ كَانَ
بِهِۦ بَصِيرًا ﴿١٥﴾

These verses also present some signs of the end of this world's life and the emergence of a new one. The sky will be split asunder and the earth will be levelled and will cast forth whatever is in it. This may indicate that secrets of this universe will be manifested as a result of the sky's split and the earth's casting of what it contains. The human being in this world's life is also presented from another angle. This creature who is shaped in a beautiful and balanced way and is given intellectual, psychological and spiritual capabilities, has to go through a painful toil until the journey of this world life ends and a new one that fulfills the human aspirations and God's mercy and grace emerges, and thus the righteous will not get up to toil or weariness [35:35]. In this world's life the human individuals and societies undergo, through a painful toil, continuous changes and successive ups and downs, both physically and morally since they are part of the whole world in which change never ceases. The human individual and society goes through stages of

development and changes in the multi-sided aspects of his/her/its being just as the whole universe goes through continuous changes.

In the eternal life to come, however, no pain, sorrow, worry or other moral or physical sufferings due to injustice or imperfection will be experienced by the righteous. Instead, they will be rewarded for their righteousness, since justice will be fully maintained. All evil doers shall suffer for their evil-doing in the present world's life, although they thought that they could enjoy its pleasures and that they would never be raised up from the dead and face God's judgement. If change dominates as a law of nature in this world's life, one can expect a "qualitative" change in the universe and in the human life in the eternal life to come. Such a "fulfillment" of human aspirations and promises of God about justice, mercy, peace and love seems more reasonable than the thought that death is the end for both those who have unfairly suffered or those who have unjustly enjoyed. The human being will be accountable to his/her Creator and Lord about everything that he/she did in this life, and justice will be ensured for all.

Surely, He [who has initially created the human being] is well able to bring him[/her] back [to life]. On the Day when the whole inner-selves with all their secrets shall be tested, and so one shall have no strength nor any supporter. [86:8-10]

إِنَّهُۥ عَلَىٰ رَجْعِهِۦ لَقَادِرٌ ﴿٨﴾ يَوْمَ
تُبْلَى ٱلسَّرَآئِرُ ﴿٩﴾ فَمَا لَهُۥ مِن قُوَّةٍ
وَلَا نَاصِرٍ ﴿١٠﴾

Another feature in God's Judgement is stressed in the above Quranic verses. Everything that the human being has tried to hide with all his/her intellectual and physical abilities during this life will be exposed and examined in order to ensure a fair judgement on the Day of Judgement [2:284; 4:149; 11:5; 40:16; 69:18]. According to the Prophet's tradition [reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi, al-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah] God's justice basically considers the intention and it is not limited to external proofs as human justice has to be, as God only knows the exact human intention and all that is hidden of one's circumstances at any moment. However, God's grace does not condemn a person who may just intend to do something wrong but changes his/her mind; on the contrary such a person will him/herself be rewarded for changing his/her intention to the better [according to the tradition of the Prophet reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim]. But in certain cases, a person may do something wrong without knowing that it is wrong, or may do something that he/she thinks will be beneficial but which turns out to be harmful; God's justice considers everyone's intention and knowledge of what is right or wrong and of the consequences of the individual's action [notice the significant phrase in the verse referring to disobeying the Prophet "*after guidance has become clear to them*" in the verses 4:115; 47:25, 32]. On the other hand, one may do something that appears to be good, while he/she is hiding an evil intention. All hidden intentions and thoughts will be exposed and judged by the Judge who can know them all: *"He knows what they conceal and what they reveal, and He has full knowledge of the inmost [secrets] of the hearts"* [11:5], *"He is aware of any furtive glance in the eyes and whatever is concealed in the hearts"* [40:19]. Through such a test, the human being

will have no power to argue or cheat, nor any support from another.

Have you known about the overwhelming event? Some faces, on that Day, will be downcast, toiling and weary, suffering a scorching fire, and given to drink from a boiling spring. No food will there be for them but the bitterness of some dry thorns, which will neither nourish nor help to get over hunger. Some other faces will on that Day shine with bliss, well-pleased with their striving, in a lofty garden; no idle talk therein shall they hear. Therein will be a flowing spring; therein will be couches, raised high, and goblets set forth, and cushions lined up, and carpets spread around. [88:1-16]

هَلْ أَتَىٰكَ حَدِيثُ ٱلْغَٰشِيَةِ ﴿١﴾ وُجُوهٌ
يَوْمَئِذٍ خَٰشِعَةٌ ﴿٢﴾ عَامِلَةٌ نَّاصِبَةٌ ﴿٣﴾
تَصْلَىٰ نَارًا حَامِيَةً ﴿٤﴾ تُسْقَىٰ مِنْ عَيْنٍ
ءَانِيَةٍ ﴿٥﴾ لَّيْسَ لَهُمْ طَعَامٌ إِلَّا مِن ضَرِيعٍ
﴿٦﴾ لَّا يُسْمِنُ وَلَا يُغْنِى مِن جُوعٍ ﴿٧﴾
وُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَّاعِمَةٌ ﴿٨﴾ لِّسَعْيِهَا
رَاضِيَةٌ ﴿٩﴾ فِى جَنَّةٍ عَالِيَةٍ ﴿١٠﴾ لَّا
تَسْمَعُ فِيهَا لَٰغِيَةً ﴿١١﴾ فِيهَا عَيْنٌ
جَارِيَةٌ ﴿١٢﴾ فِيهَا سُرُرٌ مَّرْفُوعَةٌ ﴿١٣﴾
وَأَكْوَابٌ مَّوْضُوعَةٌ ﴿١٤﴾ وَنَمَارِقُ
مَصْفُوفَةٌ ﴿١٥﴾ وَزَرَابِىُّ مَبْثُوثَةٌ ﴿١٦﴾

In the above verses, the Resurrection and Judgement are called the "Overwhelming Event." Physical and psychological signs of humiliation and joy, and of suffering and reward, are presented. The vocabulary used to show the comforts and pleasures of the paradise, indicates that such comforts were known in Arabia before Islam in certain circles, as opposed to the dominant generalization about nomadic life in the whole Arabian peninsula at that time [for most details about life in Arabia before Islam in general, and in Mecca and Medina in particular, see Muhammad Izzat Darwaza: '*Asr al- Rasul qabla al-Bi'tha*; Jawad Ali: *al-Mufassal fi Tarikh al-Arab qabla al- Islam; Cambridge History of Islam* vol., I; Philip Hitti: *History of the Arabs*].

Nay! When the earth is crushed [on the Day of Resurrection] with crushing upon crushing, and your Lord comes, and the angels rank upon rank. And on that Day hell is brought [within sight]; on that Day will the human being remember [all his/her deeds and all warnings about that Day,] but how will that remembrance be [helpful by any means] for him[/her on that Day?] One shall say: "Oh! Would that I had forwarded for my life [to come]!" And then none can make [another] suffer, as He makes [the evil-doers] suffer on that Day; and none can bind with bonds like His.

"O you human self at peace! Return to your

كَلَّآ إِذَا دُكَّتِ ٱلْأَرْضُ دَكًّا دَكًّا ﴿٢١﴾
وَجَآءَ رَبُّكَ وَٱلْمَلَكُ صَفًّا صَفًّا ﴿٢٢﴾
وَجِاْىٓءَ يَوْمَئِذٍ بِجَهَنَّمَ يَوْمَئِذٍ
يَتَذَكَّرُ ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ وَأَنَّىٰ لَهُ ٱلذِّكْرَىٰ ﴿٢٣﴾
يَقُولُ يَٰلَيْتَنِى قَدَّمْتُ لِحَيَاتِى ﴿٢٤﴾
فَيَوْمَئِذٍ لَّا يُعَذِّبُ عَذَابَهُۥٓ أَحَدٌ ﴿٢٥﴾
وَلَا يُوثِقُ وَثَاقَهُۥٓ أَحَدٌ ﴿٢٦﴾
يَٰٓأَيَّتُهَا ٱلنَّفْسُ ٱلْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ ﴿٢٧﴾
ٱرْجِعِىٓ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً ﴿٢٨﴾

Lord, pleased [from within] and more pleased [by God's acceptance and rewards]. Enter you then, among My [true] servants, and enter you My paradise." [89:21-30]

فَٱدْخُلِى فِى عِبَٰدِى ﴿٢٩﴾
وَٱدْخُلِى جَنَّتِى ﴿٣٠﴾

The believer in God and the life to come enjoys in his/her inner self balance, stability and peace, as he/she is not limited in his/her perspective and prospects to shortsighted selfish and material gains. This is reflected in this life to a certain extent, but the utmost peacefulness, security, fulfillment and happiness will be when the journey of this world ends, and the ultimate goal is achieved in the eternal life to come. At this time the believer will return to God *"well-pleased [in one's own] self and well-pleasing [God]"* and enter His paradise with the true servants and devotees of God. This is the utmost achievement, reward and bliss.

On the other hand, those who have denied stubbornly the truth and have committed evil deeds, will have their suffering in the life to come. This suffering is represented in terms of fetters and fire which picture the suffering according to our experience of this life in the same way that the rewards of the future life are expressed. However, both may be in their reality beyond our thinking and imagination : *"And no human being can imagine what blissful delights, as yet hidden, await them [the believers in the life to come] as a reward for all that they did"* [32:17]. The Prophet describes these blissful pleasures as "never seen by a human eye, never heard by a human ear, never thought of by a human mind" [reported by al-Tabari in *al-Kabir*]. It is very obvious and reasonable that the rewards and sufferings of the eternal life to come are beyond the words that may describe them.

Al-Razi, who was inclined to go beyond the direct and concrete denotation of the words referring to supernatural matters, commented on the verses 73:12-13, interpreting the fetters in hell as denoting possibly the spiritual consequences of one's doing in the previous world's life, since such a suffering person was shackled to worldly and bodily pleasures that barred him/her from seeing the ultimate truth, and these shackles will be recognized and will become a self-torturing memory of the past that could not be repeated or changed. This may be one way of understanding that image, but it is certainly not the only way. "Bonds" also may imply confinement, want of something forbidden or impossible, and the closing of a door and loss of a chance. These spiritual "shackles" of earthy and bodily desires in the previous world's life that proved to be illusive will in the life to come generate spiritual "fires," and thus the sufferer will feel the bitterness of his/her experience in the past and the present, as if he/she is swallowing "*food which makes one choke*" [73:15]. The most grievous suffering of these people will be their loss of God's light, and the self-deprivation of community life with the blessed. However, it is for the human mind to understand what the Quran tells about that which is beyond our perception in a legitimate and possible way according to linguistic rules, without imposing one certain interpretation, unless it is supported by evidence with a definite indication from the Quran or the authentic traditions of the Prophet.

By the night enshrouding; by the day as it rises bright; by creating the male and the female, surely, your striving is to diverse ends.
As for one who gives [to others in need] and is conscious of God, and believes in the truth of the ultimate good, We shall surely make easy for him[/her] the path towards [ultimate] ease [and self-peace now and in the life to come].
But as for one who is miserly, and thinks himself [/herself] self-sufficient, and calls the ultimate good a lie, We shall make easy the path [that he/she has chosen] towards hardship, and his[/her] wealth shall by no means help him[/her] out as he[/she] stumbles along. Surely, it is for Us to bring you the guidance, and Ours is [the dominion and power over] the life to come, as well as [over] this earlier life. And so, I warned you of a flaming Fire, whereof none but the most wretched shall suffer; one who denounces as lies the truth and turns away. But from it one who is [truly] conscious of God shall be kept away; one who gives of his [/her] possessions [to others] and thus purifies himself [/herself], conferring no favor for anyone for recompense, but only seeking the countenance of his [/her] Lord the Most High; and such shall surely be well-pleased. [92:1-21]

وَ ٱلَّيۡلِ إِذَا يَغۡشَىٰ ﴿١﴾ وَ ٱلنَّهَارِ إِذَا
تَجَلَّىٰ ﴿٢﴾ وَ مَا خَلَقَ ٱلذَّكَرَ وَ ٱلۡأُنثَىٰٓ
﴿٣﴾ إِنَّ سَعۡيَكُمۡ لَشَتَّىٰ ﴿٤﴾ فَأَمَّا مَنۡ
أَعۡطَىٰ وَ ٱتَّقَىٰ ﴿٥﴾ وَ صَدَّقَ بِٱلۡحُسۡنَىٰ
﴿٦﴾ فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُۥ لِلۡيُسۡرَىٰ ﴿٧﴾ وَ أَمَّا مَنۢ
بَخِلَ وَ ٱسۡتَغۡنَىٰ ﴿٨﴾ وَ كَذَّبَ بِٱلۡحُسۡنَىٰ
﴿٩﴾ فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُۥ لِلۡعُسۡرَىٰ ﴿١٠﴾ وَ مَا
يُغۡنِي عَنۡهُ مَالُهُۥٓ إِذَا تَرَدَّىٰٓ ﴿١١﴾ إِنَّ
عَلَيۡنَا لَلۡهُدَىٰ ﴿١٢﴾ وَ إِنَّ لَنَا لَلۡأٓخِرَةَ
وَ ٱلۡأُولَىٰ ﴿١٣﴾ فَأَنذَرۡتُكُمۡ نَارٗا تَلَظَّىٰ
﴿١٤﴾ لَا يَصۡلَىٰهَآ إِلَّا ٱلۡأَشۡقَى ﴿١٥﴾
ٱلَّذِي كَذَّبَ وَ تَوَلَّىٰ ﴿١٦﴾ وَ سَيُجَنَّبُهَا
ٱلۡأَتۡقَى ﴿١٧﴾ ٱلَّذِي يُؤۡتِي مَالَهُۥ
يَتَزَكَّىٰ ﴿١٨﴾ وَ مَا لِأَحَدٍ عِندَهُۥ مِن نِّعۡمَةٖ
تُجۡزَىٰٓ ﴿١٩﴾ إِلَّا ٱبۡتِغَآءَ وَجۡهِ رَبِّهِ
ٱلۡأَعۡلَىٰ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَ لَسَوۡفَ يَرۡضَىٰ ﴿٢١﴾

The sequence of day and night, their differences in length according to latitude, their simultaneous existence in a certain distribution according to longitude, and the effects of both on life in general and on human life in particular, are among the wonders of this world [25:47; 78:9-11]. The difference between the male and female is another wonder that secures reproduction in many living creatures, and it is in parallel with other patterns of duality in matter; [notice especially *"And in everything We have created pairs ..."* [51:49], *"And it is He Who has created all pairs"* [43:12; also 13:3; 36:36; 75:39]. Ibn Abbas was quoted by al-Razi in his commentary on the verse 43:12 as saying that the "pairs" in the Quranic verses may refer to the general concept of "contrast" in nature which includes day and night, black and white. Al-Razi went on to include pairs in which one element complements the other as right and left, front and back, high and low, past and future. High and low in pressures and temperatures, and positive and negative in electricity have their interaction in given circumstances in physics. In the same way, the end

of life can recall the beginning, and both the earlier life in this world and the life to come can be complementary or two stages of one continuous life. Only God has no opposite or similar or complementary: *"And there is nothing that could be compared with Him"* [112:4].

The human behavior represents diversity with regard to the individual and the society. One is responsible for one's own initiatives in the path towards good and ease or towards evil and hardship. As one steps towards the truth and goodness, God will make his/her path easy, and smooth for him/her to continue and develop in this direction. Similarly, for one who steps in the wrong direction, the hard way will be allowed for him/her to go through without difficulty. The human being has been given freedom of choice, and God only presents guidance; He does not push or force a person to go in a certain direction. The highest consciousness of God is to act righteously and give to others generously, not for any reward but for "the countenance of one's Lord, the Most High." What may appear as a sacrifice to others, may be considered as the highest pleasure and satisfaction of such a person, who *"will soon be well-pleased."*

When the earth is shaken with its mighty [final] quaking, and [when] the earth throws out its heavy loads, and [when] every human being says, "What is happening to it?" On that Day, it will tell its news, that your Lord has inspired it [to act in this way]. On that Day, all the human beings will come out scattered to be shown their [past] deeds. And whoever has done an atom's weight of good shall see it; and whoever has done an atom's weight of evil shall see it. [99:1-8]

إِذَا زُلْزِلَتِ ٱلْأَرْضُ زِلْزَالَهَا ﴿١﴾
وَأَخْرَجَتِ ٱلْأَرْضُ أَثْقَالَهَا ﴿٢﴾ وَقَالَ
ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ مَا لَهَا ﴿٣﴾ يَوْمَئِذٍ تُحَدِّثُ
أَخْبَارَهَا ﴿٤﴾ بِأَنَّ رَبَّكَ أَوْحَىٰ لَهَا
﴿٥﴾ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَصْدُرُ ٱلنَّاسُ أَشْتَاتًا لِّيُرَوْا
أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ ﴿٦﴾ فَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ
خَيْرًا يَرَهُۥ ﴿٧﴾ وَمَن يَعْمَلْ
مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُۥ ﴿٨﴾

Another sign of this world's end is related to the earth, as other signs are related to the sky, the sun, the moon, the stars, the planets, the mountains and the seas [75:7-9; 81:1-6; 82:1-4; 84:1-5]. In other places, the Quran speaks about the flattening of the earth and the casting of what it contains [probably a volcano, 84:3-4] and the overturning of the graves [82:4], but in the above verses a violent sudden earthquake that will exceed anything we know is mentioned. The human beings will come out scattered to face God's judgement, which will never miss an *"atom's weight"* of good or evil [also e.g. 21:47; 4:40] with regard to any individual of any faith [3:75-76, 113-115; 22:17]. All will be shown the real value and weight of everything they did or even said in the previous life, however intelligently and persistently they tried in that previous life to hide or justify it.

Surely, the human being is to his [/her] Lord most ungrateful; and to this he himself [/she herself] indeed bears witness, and in the love of wealth he

إِنَّ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ لِرَبِّهِۦ لَكَنُودٌ ﴿٦﴾
وَإِنَّهُۥ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ لَشَهِيدٌ ﴿٧﴾ وَإِنَّهُۥ لِحُبِّ

[/she] is vigorous. Knows he[/she] not, then, when whatever is in the graves is turned over and brought out, and whatever is in the hearts is checked upon, [they shall make sure on that Day that] their Lord has been fully aware of them? [100:6-11]

ٱلْخَيْرِ لَشَدِيدٌ ﴿٨﴾ ۞ أَفَلَا يَعْلَمُ إِذَا
بُعْثِرَ مَا فِى ٱلْقُبُورِ ﴿٩﴾ وَحُصِّلَ مَا فِى
ٱلصُّدُورِ ﴿١٠﴾ إِنَّ رَبَّهُم بِهِمْ
يَوْمَئِذٍ لَّخَبِيرٌ ﴿١١﴾

The above verses stress -beside other things- how on the Day of Judgement all what was hidden in the human hearts and minds is known and "grasped" by God for account, which will be "exposed" bare on that Day, as other verses indicate [e.g. 2:284; 40;16; 69:18]. The human being is reminded of his/her accountability in this way, as one often falls into ingratitude towards his/her Creator, Lord, Sustainer and Cherisher. The human love of worldly pleasures and wealth leads to the vices of selfishness, greed, hoarding, arrogance, extravagance, and indulgence in luxuries, while ignoring others' needs and one's social responsibilities [see for instance 3:10, 14; 9:34-5; 11:116; 17:16; 18:34; 19:77, 23:33; 34:34-35; 43:23; 48:11; 56:45-46; 57:20; 68:10-14; 89:20; 102:1-2; 104:1-3]. Material and worldly pleasures have to be put into perspective according to God's guidance and human accountability and consideration of the eternal life to come. The belief in God and the life to come maintains balance and stability within the human individual and the society.

The stunning affliction! How awesome is the stunning affliction? And what could you realize what this stunning affliction will be? On the Day when the human beings shall be like scattered moths, and the mountains shall be dissipated wood-tufts. And then anyone whose scales are weighted down [of good deeds], shall have a pleasing life; while whoever's scales are light, shall plunge in a "pit" that mothers and embraces him [/her]. And what could make you realize what this [abyss] shall be like? [It is] a scorching fire! [101:1-11]

ٱلْقَارِعَةُ ﴿١﴾ مَا ٱلْقَارِعَةُ ﴿٢﴾ وَمَآ
أَدْرَىٰكَ مَا ٱلْقَارِعَةُ ﴿٣﴾ يَوْمَ يَكُونُ
ٱلنَّاسُ كَٱلْفَرَاشِ ٱلْمَبْثُوثِ ﴿٤﴾
وَتَكُونُ ٱلْجِبَالُ كَٱلْعِهْنِ ٱلْمَنفُوشِ ﴿٥﴾
فَأَمَّا مَن ثَقُلَتْ مَوَٰزِينُهُۥ ﴿٦﴾ فَهُوَ فِى
عِيشَةٍ رَّاضِيَةٍ ﴿٧﴾ وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَفَّتْ
مَوَٰزِينُهُۥ ﴿٨﴾ فَأُمُّهُۥ هَاوِيَةٌ ﴿٩﴾ وَمَآ
أَدْرَىٰكَ مَا هِيَهْ ﴿١٠﴾ نَارٌ حَامِيَةٌ ﴿١١﴾

The Day of Resurrection is given several characteristics in the Quran to indicate its significant features and tremendous impact on the human beings, and and they may be used as names for such unique events. It is the Day of Judgement, the hour, the life to come, the inevitable [56:1], the laying bare of the Truth or the enforcement of the right [69:1-3], the great overwhelming [event] [79:34], the piercing call or the uproar [80:33], in addition to the stunning [blow] which is given in the above sura. The picture of the accurate scale that will not miss an atom's weight of good or evil is repeatedly presented in the Quran [e.g. 4:40; 7:8-9; 23:102-103; 99:7-8], as is seen in the above sura. However, no one can know exactly how the scales or the weighing will be, as what will happen on that

Day will be beyond what we are used to experiencing in this life, but it has to be expressed in the vocabulary with which we are familiar so that we can understand it according to our present experience. The human being who is inclined to arrogance will rise from the dead like scattered moths, just as the mountains which are described in this world by the Quran as "headlands standing firm" [e.g. 13:3; 15:19; 16:15; 21:31; 27:61; 31:10; 41:10; 50:7; 77:27] will seem like tufts of yarn. The "pleasing living" for the blessed and the "*pit of fire that will mother and embrace the sufferer*" will represent the end and requital in the life to come for what one has done before in this world's life.

Woe to every backbiter and carper, who piles up wealth and becomes obsessed by its enormity and variety, thinking that his[/her] wealth will make him [/her] live forever! Nay, but [in the life to come] such a person will be left to crushing torment! And how can you imagine what that crushing torment will be? A fire kindled by God that roars over the [guilty] hearts. Verily, it will embrace them with outstretched columns. [104:1-9]

وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ هُمَزَةٍ لُّمَزَةٍ ﴿١﴾
ٱلَّذِى جَمَعَ مَالًا وَعَدَّدَهُۥ ﴿٢﴾
يَحْسَبُ أَنَّ مَالَهُۥٓ أَخْلَدَهُۥ ﴿٣﴾
كَلَّا ۖ لَيُنۢبَذَنَّ فِى ٱلْحُطَمَةِ ﴿٤﴾
وَمَآ أَدْرَىٰكَ مَا ٱلْحُطَمَةُ ﴿٥﴾
نَارُ ٱللَّهِ ٱلْمُوقَدَةُ ﴿٦﴾
ٱلَّتِى تَطَّلِعُ عَلَى ٱلْأَفْـِٔدَةِ ﴿٧﴾
إِنَّهَا عَلَيْهِم مُّؤْصَدَةٌ ﴿٨﴾
فِى عَمَدٍ مُّمَدَّدَةٍ ﴿٩﴾

Here the reader finds that slander, fault finding and backbiting are connected with hoarding wealth and thinking that one's life will become endless as one's wealth becomes countless. Wealth-centeredness develops arrogance, and arrogance leads one to derogate others of their merits and virtues, or in other words to commit slander, fault finding and backbiting [see also 68;10-14]. As countless material hoards and an endless life are the only concern of some people in this life, their end will be the "bone crusher" which will crush the material hoard [9:34-35], and whose flaming penetration will reach the symbol of life: the human heart itself. Thus such a seeker of countless wealth and an endless life will lose them both in the crushing torment.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE FAITH (III)

MESSAGES OF GOD

God's Messages in General

.... yet there shall come to you guidance from Me, and those who follow My guidance shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve. But those who reject the truth and denounce as lies Our messages - they shall be the inhabitants of the Fire, and therein they shall abide. [2:38-39; see also 7:35-36; 20: 123-126]

قُلْنَا ٱهْبِطُوا۟ مِنْهَا
جَمِيعًا ۖ فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُم مِّنِّى هُدًى فَمَن
تَبِعَ هُدَاىَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ
يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ وَكَذَّبُوا۟
بِـَٔايَـٰتِنَآ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَـٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ ۖ هُمْ
فِيهَا خَـٰلِدُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

Ever since God decided that Adam and his wife should leave "the garden" to start the human life on earth which would continue through successive generations, and which would have to struggle to develop the earth with all its natural potentials, the human individual, and the society, He promised to send His guidance to the human being to help him/her deal with new challenging circumstances and responsibilities. This is a clear reference to the successive messages of God that would come to the human beings, to guide and develop the righteousness with which the human self is imbued against the failings to which it is liable [91:8], and which are exploited by Satan. Whenever the human being follows God's message as it is conveyed by a prophet or revealed in a divine unit, he/she will not grieve about the past, nor fear the future [2:38]. He/she will not go astray nor suffer

material or spiritual-psychological-moral unhappiness [20:123]. Those who ignore God's guidance and just follow their human whims and satanic seductions that exploit their weaknesses, suffer material and spiritual wretchedness in this life, and they will be requited for their evil-doing in the eternal life to come.

God has fulfilled His promise, and He has sent successive conveyors of His message. To some of these He revealed divine writs that were eventually kept in a written form or 'book' so that His guidance would be maintained even after the conveyor's life came to an end. It is part of a Muslim's faith to believe in all the previous conveyors of God's messages and all His previous books to some of them. Muslims believe that Adam was the first human being who received God's guidance 'in the garden', and most likely on earth as well [see the previous section on "The Human Being."] The offerings of the Children of Adam, which previously caused a conflict between them for God's acceptance, should be made following the divine teaching in this respect [5: 27-31].

Say: "We believe in God, and in that which has been sent down to us, and that which has been sent down to Ibrahim (Abraham) and Isma 'il (Ishmael) and Is-haq (Isaac) and Ya'qub (Jacob) and their descendants (the tribes/ al-Asbat), and that which has been given to Musa (Moses) and `Isa (Jesus) and that which has been given to all the prophets by their Lord; we make no differentiation between them [with regard to our belief in their prophethood], and it is unto Him that we submit ourselves. [2:136; see also 3:84]

قُولُوٓاْ
ءَامَنَّا بِٱللَّهِ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيۡنَا وَمَآ أُنزِلَ
إِلَىٰٓ إِبۡرَٰهِـۧمَ وَإِسۡمَٰعِيلَ وَإِسۡحَٰقَ
وَيَعۡقُوبَ وَٱلۡأَسۡبَاطِ وَمَآ أُوتِيَ مُوسَىٰ
وَعِيسَىٰ وَمَآ أُوتِيَ ٱلنَّبِيُّونَ مِن رَّبِّهِمۡ
لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيۡنَ أَحَدٖ مِّنۡهُمۡ وَنَحۡنُ لَهُۥ
مُسۡلِمُونَ ١٣٦

The Conveyor of God's message, and the believers [in His message] believe in what has been sent down to him from his Lord; they all believe in God and His angels and His Books and the conveyors of His messages, not differentiating [in belief] between any of the conveyors, and they say: "We have heard, and we obey. Grant us Your forgiveness, O our Lord, and with you is all journeys' end." [2:285]

ءَامَنَ ٱلرَّسُولُ بِمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيۡهِ مِن رَّبِّهِۦ
وَٱلۡمُؤۡمِنُونَۚ كُلٌّ ءَامَنَ بِٱللَّهِ وَمَلَٰٓئِكَتِهِۦ
وَكُتُبِهِۦ وَرُسُلِهِۦ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيۡنَ أَحَدٖ مِّن
رُّسُلِهِۦۚ وَقَالُواْ سَمِعۡنَا وَأَطَعۡنَاۖ
غُفۡرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيۡكَ ٱلۡمَصِيرُ ٢٨٥

And if one goes in search of a faith other than self-submission unto God, it shall never be accepted from him [/her], and in the life to come he [/she] shall be among the lost. [3:85; see also 3:19]

وَمَن يَبۡتَغِ غَيۡرَ ٱلۡإِسۡلَٰمِ
دِينٗا فَلَن يُقۡبَلَ مِنۡهُ وَهُوَ فِي ٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ مِنَ
ٱلۡخَٰسِرِينَ ٨٥

According to the Quran and the Prophet's traditions, Sunna, it is fundamental in the Muslims' faith to believe in all the conveyors of God's messages before Muhammad, and to believe in all God's books before the Quran [e.g. 2:177, 285; 4:136, 149-151; the Prophet's tradition that defines Islam, *iman* and *ihsan* as "doing what is best", reported by Muslim, Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi and al-Nasa'i] . The message of Islam is just a continuation of the previous messages of God, and the Muslim has to encompass in his/her belief all the successive links of God's guidance to humanity, without any distinction in belief despite the different ranks of the conveyors of God's messages in relation to Him. However, the essence of all their messages is the same: submission of the whole human self to God and His guidance. In this sense, the word "Islam" that means in Arabic "submission" and in this context "submission to God" is not in its wider sense the label for Muhammad's message only, but represents the fundamental faith in all the messages of God throughout the whole history of His prophets and messages.

O you who have attained to faith! Hold fast unto your belief in God and the Conveyor of His message and in the Book He has sent down step by step to the Conveyor of His message and the Book which He sent down before. And one who stubbornly denies God and His angels and His books and the conveyors of His messages and the Last Day has surely gone far astray. [4:136]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟
ءَامِنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ وَٱلْكِتَٰبِ
ٱلَّذِى نَزَّلَ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِۦ وَٱلْكِتَٰبِ
ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنزَلَ مِن قَبْلُ ۚ وَمَن يَكْفُرْ بِٱللَّهِ
وَمَلَٰٓئِكَتِهِۦ وَكُتُبِهِۦ وَرُسُلِهِۦ وَٱلْيَوْمِ
ٱلْءَاخِرِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَٰلًۢا بَعِيدًا ﴿١٣٦﴾

Genuine faith cannot be acquired by a birth-certificate or through an inherited tradition. One who has attained to faith in this way has to review his/her beliefs to make sure that he/she understands and is convinced by them. The beliefs in God, His messages and books, and His judgement and the eternal life to come are basic tenets that can be supported by intellectual reasoning and spiritual aspirations. Such beliefs, which have always existed, represent a human need present in the earliest human being that we can trace.

As for the angels, some of them - and Jibril (Gabriel) in particular - represent the medium through which God's messages and scriptures were revealed to the conveyors of God's messages, and thus the belief in them cannot be separated from the belief in God's messages [16:12, 102; 26:193-5; 42:52; see also 2:98, 177, 285; 4:136, 149-151; 22:75; 35:1]. However, although the angels were sent only to the conveyors of God's messages while ordinary people had to receive God's messages through human beings like themselves [6:8-9, 50, 111; 11:12; 15:7-8, 17:95; 25:7, 21-22], certain angels may have special missions with the human beings in this life [e.g. 2:248; 3:42, 45, 124-125; 4: 97; 6: 93; 8:9, 50; 11: 69-70, 81; 16: 28, 32, 32:11; 41: 14; 97: 4]. In the life to come the angels will be seen by the human beings due to the changes that will be undergone in the universe, as well as in the human being himself/herself [2:210; 6:111, 158; 16:33; 43:77; 66:6; 67:8; 69:17; 74: 31; 78: 38; 89: 22].

Those who stubbornly deny God and the conveyors of His messages, and desire to make a distinction between the conveyors of His messages, saying: "We believe in one but deny the other," desiring to take a way in between; it is they who are truly [and arbitrarily] denying the truth; and We have readied for those who stubbornly deny the truth humiliating suffering. But as for those who believe in God and the conveyors of His message and make no distinction between any of them [with regard to their prophethood], We shall grant them their rewards [in full], and God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious. [4:150-152]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِٱللَّهِ
وَرُسُلِهِۦ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَن يُفَرِّقُوا۟ بَيْنَ ٱللَّهِ
وَرُسُلِهِۦ وَيَقُولُونَ نُؤْمِنُ بِبَعْضٍ وَنَكْفُرُ
بِبَعْضٍ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَن يَتَّخِذُوا۟ بَيْنَ ذَٰلِكَ
سَبِيلًا ﴿١٥٠﴾ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْكَٰفِرُونَ
حَقًّا ۚ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُّهِينًا
﴿١٥١﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِۦ
وَلَمْ يُفَرِّقُوا۟ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ سَوْفَ
يُؤْتِيهِمْ أُجُورَهُمْ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ غَفُورًا
رَّحِيمًا ﴿١٥٢﴾

For one who believes in God and considers his/her belief essential for the stability and balance of the human individual and society, it would be reasonable to believe in His messages which guide human beings in different times and places through the human conveyors of God's message chosen by Him. However, one has to judge the genuineness and authenticity of a message on its own merits, not through a prior bias that may restrict of the message to a particular group of people or class [e.g. 3:72-76; 5: 18-19; 6: 155-157; 7: 75-76, 88; 11: 27, 91-93; 43: 31-32, 51-54].

We have sent to you [O Muhammad] revelation, as We sent it to Nuh [Noah] and the prophets after him; and [also] We sent inspiration to Ibrahim (Abraham), and Isma'il [Ishmael], and Is-haq (Isaac) and Ya'qub (Jacob) and their descendants [the tribes, al-Asbat]; and to 'Isa (Jesus), and Ayyub (Job), and Yunus (Jonah), and Harun (Aaron), and Sulayman (Solomon), and to Dawud (David) We gave a book of divine wisdom. About some conveyors of [God's] messages We have told you; about others We have not; and to Moses God spoke directly. [These] conveyors of [God's] messages who bear good tidings and warning [were sent by God], so that people might have no excuse before God after [the coming] of the conveyors of [God's] messages, and God is indeed All-mighty, All-wise. [4:163-165]

إِنَّآ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ كَمَآ
أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰ نُوحٍ وَٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ ۚ
وَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَإِسْمَٰعِيلَ
وَإِسْحَٰقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَٱلْأَسْبَاطِ وَعِيسَىٰ
وَأَيُّوبَ وَيُونُسَ وَهَٰرُونَ وَسُلَيْمَٰنَ ۚ
وَءَاتَيْنَا دَاوُۥدَ زَبُورًا ﴿١٦٣﴾ وَرُسُلًا قَدْ
قَصَصْنَٰهُمْ عَلَيْكَ مِن قَبْلُ وَرُسُلًا لَّمْ
نَقْصُصْهُمْ عَلَيْكَ ۚ وَكَلَّمَ ٱللَّهُ مُوسَىٰ
تَكْلِيمًا ﴿١٦٤﴾ رُّسُلًا مُّبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ
لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ حُجَّةٌۢ بَعْدَ
ٱلرُّسُلِ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٦٥﴾

Surely, We have sent you [O Muhammad] with the truth as a bearer of good tidings and a warning; and there never was a people who had no warner. [35:24]

إِنَّآ أَرْسَلْنَٰكَ
بِٱلْحَقِّ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا ۚ وَإِن مِّنْ أُمَّةٍ
إِلَّا خَلَا فِيهَا نَذِيرٌ ﴿٢٤﴾

God chose Muhammad as a conveyor of His message and revealed to him the message that he had to convey, just as He had done before with other prophets and conveyors of His messages, in all of whom the follower of Muhammad has to believe without distinction. Muhammad should have his right place in history, no more and no less: "*Say: 'I am only a [mortal] human being like yourselves, but it has been revealed that your god is the One God alone'*" [18: 110]. Successive messages were sent to different communities, in different places, through different conveyors who were chosen from among these communities and who spoke their languages [14:4]; each conveyor of God's message is described as a brother to the people to whom he was sent [7:65, 73, 85; 11:50, 61, 84; 26 106, 124, 161; 27:49; 29:36 for Muhammad see 2:151; 9:128]. Thus Muhammad was just a brick in a huge building that represented God's message, as he himself indicated in one of his traditions [reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Hanbal and al-Tirmidhi].

God's revelations and messages were never restricted to a particular group of people or class; those who were mentioned in the Quran were distributed over different localities in the Arabian peninsula and the Fertile Crescent. Noah apparently came to an area around the Upper Euphrates in Northern Mesopotamia and the South East of Asia Minor. Hud was sent to `Ad in Southern Arabia, while Salih was sent to Thamud in Northern Arabia, where Midyan, to whose people Shu`ayb was sent, was also located. Ibrahim (Abraham) lived in Mesopotamia and Canaan, and he went with his son Isma'il (Ishmael) to Arabia where they built a house for worshipping the One God, and Ishmael resided permanently there. Descendants of Abraham through Is-haq (Isaac) were prophets or conveyors of God's message to a certain community, and some of them, such as David and Solomon, were also political rulers. Solomon asked God for great power that would not be attained by anyone after him and, as the Quran indicates, his prayer was answered [21:81-82; 27:16-44; 34:12-14; 38:35-40] while Job became an example of patience when suffering from disease. Moses, a gifted teacher and leader to whom God spoke directly, and Jesus, who was given many miracles including his birth, were both distinguished landmarks in the history of God's revelation and messages. Furthermore, the prophets and conveyors of God's messages may not be restricted to the peoples and areas mentioned in the Quran; there may be others who were not mentioned [4:164; also 40:78], although it should be borne in mind that God's prophets and messengers may not cover the whole world.

God's messages developed from being a local one addressing a certain people to being universal. A sign of this change is God's eventual termination of his direct punishment for the rejectors of the message in this world's life. For example, although Jesus was rejected, plotted against, and attempts to kill him were even made, the evil doers were not destroyed and were allowed to survive as a whole. Muhammad had to migrate from Mecca to Medina when the rejectors of his message plotted to kill him, even though the Quran

states clearly, " *and [know that] had God so willed, He could defeat them [Himself directly]; but He wills you to struggle and defend yourselves so as to test you [all] by means of one another"* [47:4]. The Quranic statement *"and we would never punish [any community for the evil-doing] until We have sent a conveyor of God's message to them [to give warning]"* [17:15; see also 6:131; 28:59], may be referring to God's direct punishment of the rejectors of His message in spite of the clear evidence and signs of the truth given to them. Thus this direct divine punishment in this world's life may not be understood as a general condition, for the punishment by God will be, in general, in the life to come. However, the hurtful consequences of evil-doing can occur to the individual and the society according to the laws of nature in this world's life, whereas the final judgement and requital will be in the life to come.

And We send the conveyors of [Our] messages only to bear good tidings and to warn; so those who believe and live righteously, upon them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve. [6:48]

وَمَا نُرْسِلُ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ إِلَّا
مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ ۖ فَمَنْ ءَامَنَ
وَأَصْلَحَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ
﴿٤٨﴾

The Prophets and the bearers of God's messages did not represent a supernatural force that annihilates the human intellect and will; on the contrary they and their messages help to maximize the human potential. The belief in the One God and the life to come secures the balance of the individual and the society through the ups and downs, and provides this word's life with the only means for stability, productivity, justice, morality, and peace. Those who respond positively to God's messages and develop all of their potentials will enjoy tranquility and happiness in this life as well as in the life to come, and never will they fear or grieve.

Such was the reasoning about Us which We bestowed upon Ibrahim (Abraham) confronting his people; We do raise in rank whom We will; surely your Lord is All-wise, All-knowing. And We gave to him Is-haq [Isaac] and Ya'qub (Jacob); each of them We guided; as We had guided Nuh (Noah) aforetime. And out of his offspring [We guided] Dawud (David) and Sulayman (Solomon). and Ayyub (Job), and Yusuf (Joseph), and Musa (Moses) and Harun (Aaron); thus do We reward the doers of good. And [the same We did with] Zakariyya (Zachariah) and Yahya [John] and 'Isa (Jesus) and Ilias (Elijah): each was of the righteous. And Isma'il (Ishmael) and al-Yasa' (Elisha)

وَتِلْكَ
حُجَّتُنَآ ءَاتَيْنَٰهَآ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ عَلَىٰ قَوْمِهِۦ ۚ
نَرْفَعُ دَرَجَٰتٍ مَّن نَّشَآءُ ۗ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ حَكِيمٌ
عَلِيمٌ ﴿٨٣﴾ وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُۥٓ إِسْحَٰقَ
وَيَعْقُوبَ ۖ كُلًّا هَدَيْنَا ۖ وَنُوحًا هَدَيْنَا
مِن قَبْلُ ۖ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِهِۦ دَاوُۥدَ وَسُلَيْمَٰنَ
وَأَيُّوبَ وَيُوسُفَ وَمُوسَىٰ وَهَٰرُونَ ۚ
وَكَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِى ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٨٤﴾
وَزَكَرِيَّا وَيَحْيَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ وَإِلْيَاسَ ۖ
كُلٌّ مِّنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾ وَإِسْمَٰعِيلَ
وَٱلْيَسَعَ وَيُونُسَ وَلُوطًا ۚ وَكُلًّا فَضَّلْنَا

and Yunus (Jonah) and Lut (Lot): and every-one of them did We favor above other people, and some of their forefathers and of their off-spring and of their brethren, We chose them [all] and guided them to a straight way. This is God's guidance; He guides therewith whomever He wills of His servants; and had they associated others with Him, all that they ever did would be in vain.
Those were they to whom We gave the [divine] book, the [sound] judgement and the prophethood; so if these unbelievers stubbornly deny [now] that [which God has granted], We have already entrusted it to people who will never refuse to acknowledge it. Those [are the ones] whom God has guided; follow then, that to which they were guided saying, "No reward for this [truth] do I ask of you; this is but a reminder for all human beings." [6:83-90]

عَلَى ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٨٦﴾ وَمِنْ ءَابَآئِهِمْ
وَذُرِّيَّٰتِهِمْ وَإِخْوَٰنِهِمْ ۖ وَٱجْتَبَيْنَٰهُمْ
وَهَدَيْنَٰهُمْ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٨٧﴾ ذَٰلِكَ
هُدَى ٱللَّهِ يَهْدِى بِهِۦ مَن يَشَآءُ مِنْ
عِبَادِهِۦ ۚ وَلَوْ أَشْرَكُوا۟ لَحَبِطَ عَنْهُم مَّا
كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَاتَيْنَٰهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْحُكْمَ وَٱلنُّبُوَّةَ ۚ
فَإِن يَكْفُرْ بِهَا هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ فَقَدْ وَكَّلْنَا بِهَا
قَوْمًا لَّيْسُوا۟ بِهَا بِكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٨٩﴾ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ
ٱلَّذِينَ هَدَى ٱللَّهُ ۖ فَبِهُدَىٰهُمُ ٱقْتَدِهْ ۗ قُل
لَّآ أَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا ۖ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا
ذِكْرَىٰ لِلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٩٠﴾

The above verses give the names of 18 prophets mentioned in three groups. However, they do not include the names of the three early prophets in Arabia; the earliest of them was Hud who was sent to the people of `Ad in the south of the peninsula, the next was Salih who was sent to the people of Thamud in the north, and the latest of the three was Shu`ayb who was sent to the people of Madyan (Midian), also in the north.

a) The first group includes ten prophets whom we may call "the leading figures." These were Nuh (Noah), Ibrahim (Abraham), his son Is-haq (Isaac), Ya'qub (Jacob) the son of Isaac, then some of the descendants of Jacob in successive generations, starting with Yusuf (Joseph), the son of Jacob, continuing onto Musa (Moses) and his brother Harun (Aaron), and ending with Dawud (David) and Sulayman (Solomon) who were considered by the Quran to be prophets, not merely kings as the Bible indicates.

All this group of ten prophets, probably with the exception of Ayyub (Job), represent persons who contributed to the establishment, spread and strengthening of the belief in the One God and the worship of Him alone. Due to their persistent and vigorous efforts for the cause, those who are included in this first group are described in the above verses as doers or spreaders of good in this world, *muhsinin* in Arabic.

As for Ayyub (Job), his name is mentioned in the above verses after David and Solomon. It is obvious that the names are not arranged in chronological order since David and Solomon are mentioned before Moses and Aaron. In two other places in the Quran, Job is mentioned after David and Solomon [21:78-83; 38:30-44]. The story of the early prosperity of Job, his later loss of his wealth, children, and health, and his unshaking patience in adversity, which was rewarded generously by God, is mentioned at length in the Book of Job in the Bible. However, this story may be viewed by some as having an

ancient Nabataen (North Arabian) origin, and thus Job would accordingly be an Arab, not a Jew, "as the form of his name 'Ayyob' and the scene of his book [of Job]: north Arabia, indicate" [Philip Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, London, 1937, pp. 42-43]. *Smith's Bible Dictionary* figures out that Job "belonged to a branch of the Aramean Race which had settled in the lower part of Mesopotamia (probably to the south or south east of Palestine, in Idumaean Arabia adjacent to the Sabaeans and Chaldaeans). In any case, in the Quran Job's name is mentioned among the descendants of Jacob [6:84].

b) The second group includes Zakariyya (Zachariah) who took care of Mary, the mother of Jesus, his son Yahya (John "the Baptist" as known among Christians since he baptized Jesus when he was young), and 'Isa (Jesus); all three lived close to one another in time and place. Ilyas (Elijah) was mentioned in the Bible as a prophet [I Kings 17ff, II Kings 1-2] who lived in the northern kingdom of Israel during the ninth century B.C.E. and was succeeded by Alyasa' (Elisha) who is included among those of the last group in the above verses. Although Elijah preceded the time of Jesus by centuries, it was always believed that he would come back in one way or another [Matthew 11: 14, 17:3].

Jesus has become a milestone in the history of God's messages and religions as a result of his penetrating teachings and his peaceful and loving behavior, regardless of some vigorous words or actions which might be apparent in the lives of some of his disciples and of Paul. Thus this second group which may have Jesus as a central figure despite the fact that he was the last of them, is described in the above verses as models of goodness and righteousness in themselves, *salihin* in Arabic.

c) The last group consists of four prophets of different origins who lived in different places. Isma'il (Ishmael) the son of Abraham lived in the Arabian desert and did not join his father in the first group. Through his persistent efforts the area where the House of God had been established by him and his father became populated, and the House became a religious landmark in Arabia until the time of Muhammad's message. Yunus (Jonah) was a prophet who was sent to the people of Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, according to details given by the Bible. As his message was rejected by his people initially, he left them angrily, a thing that he was not supposed to do, and subsequently he was swallowed by a great fish. He then realized the wrong he had done, repented, and was rescued by God's grace to resume his message with a better response [10: 98]. Lut (Lot) had a hard time with his people in Sodom and Gomorrah [Genesis 18:20-21, 19:24-28] whom he persistently warned about their unnatural sexual behavior that became known as sodomy, and the conflict escalated when he was visited by the warning angels who were sent with God's punishment [e.g. 11: 77-83]. Elisha seemingly witnessed pressing trouble within two divided Israelite groups and stood firm to resist. It seems that what was common among the prophets of the last group was their firm resistance of despair and their strong faith in God in facing immense pressures, and in this way they were able to overcome what seemed to be unbearable hardships. Such persons with unyielding faith in God and strong wills represent models of patience in adversity and steadfastness through reliance on God. Their persistence and perseverance in their formidable circumstances make this last group deserving of the description "favored by God above other people" that is given in the above Quranic verses.

These three groups do not encompass all the prophets and bearers of God's messages, as there were besides those mentioned by name in the above verses "some of their fathers and their offspring and their brethren" who were also chosen for God's messages, as well as other bearers of the message "that We have not mentioned" in any way [4:164; 40:78; see also 35:24].

And call to mind in this Book Musa (Moses); he was devoted and he was a conveyor of [God's] message, a prophet. And We called upon him from the right side of [Mount] Tur [Sinai] and drew him close [unto Us] in communion. And out of Our grace, We granted unto him his brother Harun (Aaron) to be a prophet [by his side]. And call to mind in this book Isma'il (Ishmael); he kept true to what he said and promised, a conveyor of [God's] message and a prophet. And he used to bid his family [and people] to pray and to give purifying dues (zakat), and found favor from his Lord. Also call to mind in this Book Idris: he was a man of truth, a prophet: and We raised him to a lofty place.

These were some of the prophets upon whom God bestowed His blessings, of the seed of Adam and of those whom We caused to be borne [in the ark] with Noah, and of the seed of Ibrahim (Abraham) and Israel, and those whom We guided and chose [for Our messages]; whenever the messages of the All-merciful were recited to them, they would fall [before Him] down prostrating themselves and weeping.

Yet, after them, there followed descendants who neglected prayers and followed [but] their own lusts, and soon then they will be utterly deluded; except those who repent and attain to faith and do righteous deeds: they shall enter paradise and shall not be wronged in anyway. [19:51-60]

وَ ٱذْكُرْ فِى ٱلْكِتَٰبِ مُوسَىٰٓ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ
كَانَ مُخْلَصًا وَ كَانَ رَسُولًا نَّبِيًّا ﴿٥١﴾
وَنَٰدَيْنَٰهُ مِن جَانِبِ ٱلطُّورِ ٱلْأَيْمَنِ
وَقَرَّبْنَٰهُ نَجِيًّا ﴿٥٢﴾ وَ وَهَبْنَا لَهُۥ مِن
رَّحْمَتِنَآ أَخَاهُ هَٰرُونَ نَبِيًّا ﴿٥٣﴾ وَ ٱذْكُرْ
فِى ٱلْكِتَٰبِ إِسْمَٰعِيلَ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ صَادِقَ
ٱلْوَعْدِ وَ كَانَ رَسُولًا نَّبِيًّا ﴿٥٤﴾ وَ كَانَ
يَأْمُرُ أَهْلَهُۥ بِٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةِ وَ كَانَ
عِندَ رَبِّهِۦ مَرْضِيًّا ﴿٥٥﴾ وَ ٱذْكُرْ فِى
ٱلْكِتَٰبِ إِدْرِيسَ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ صِدِّيقًا نَّبِيًّا
﴿٥٦﴾ وَ رَفَعْنَٰهُ مَكَانًا عَلِيًّا ﴿٥٧﴾
أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِم مِّنَ
ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ مِن ذُرِّيَّةِ ءَادَمَ وَ مِمَّنْ حَمَلْنَا مَعَ
نُوحٍ وَ مِن ذُرِّيَّةِ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ
وَمِمَّنْ هَدَيْنَا وَ ٱجْتَبَيْنَآ ۚ إِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ
ءَايَٰتُ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ خَرُّوا۟ سُجَّدًا وَ بُكِيًّا
﴿٥٨﴾ فَخَلَفَ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِمْ خَلْفٌ
أَضَاعُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَ ٱتَّبَعُوا۟ ٱلشَّهَوَٰتِ ۖ
فَسَوْفَ يَلْقَوْنَ غَيًّا ﴿٥٩﴾ إِلَّا مَن تَابَ
وَءَامَنَ وَ عَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ
ٱلْجَنَّةَ وَ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ شَيْـًٔا ﴿٦٠﴾

After mentioning Abraham and his message to worship the One God, the previous verses refer to certain succeeding conveyors of God's messages and prophets. Moses and his brother and supporter Aaron were mentioned. The verses also refer to the other branch

of Abraham's offspring, Ishmael who presented God's message in his personal behavior and spread it among others, enjoining to worship God and help the poor, and both he and Moses were described as conveyors of God's messages as well as prophets. The difference between these two terms is distinct. While God's guidance to a prophet might stress preceding elements of His message, or inspire the prophet and those who were close to him about the truth personally, the prophet is not charged with conveying the message widely or causing a basic social change like a conveyor of God's message. Thus, while every conveyor of God's message (*rasul* in Arabic) often started as and was always a prophet (*nabi* in Arabic) as he received God's revelation, not every prophet was necessarily a conveyor of God's message.

The verses also contain references to other prophets. It has been suggested that "Idris" who is mentioned in the Quran only once again [21:85] might be the same Biblical Elijah mentioned in the Quran as Ilyas [6: 85; 37: 123-132], but no grounds seem to support this hypothesis. The chain of the conveyors of God's messages from the offspring of Adam and of those who were saved in the ark of Noah in general, as well as the offspring of Abraham, through the branch of Isaac and Jacob on the one side and of Ishmael on the other in particular, are recalled in the above verses to underline the oneness of God's message in all its stages and its continuation through successive links. However, the human mind and free will can lead to any change in the following generations, regardless of how religiously prominent and devoted the forefathers [19:59] were. Therefore, the descendants of both Ishmael and Isaac in Arabia or elsewhere were not representing the virtues of their forefathers on the eve of the message of Muhammad.

Thus [on Judgement Day] We shall most certainly call to account those to whom Our messages were sent, and We shall most certainly call to account the conveyors of these messages [themselves]. And surely, We shall let them know the whole story with full knowledge [of all their doings], as we have never been absent [at any time or place]. The weighing on that Day will be true; those whose weight [of good] will be heavy in the balance will attain success; while those whose weight will be light in the balance, will find their own selves in loss, as they were unfairly offensive against Our messages. [7:6-9]

فَلَنَسْـَٔلَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ أُرْسِلَ
إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَنَسْـَٔلَنَّ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٦﴾ فَلَنَقُصَّنَّ
عَلَيْهِم بِعِلْمٍ ۖ وَمَا كُنَّا غَآئِبِينَ ﴿٧﴾
وَٱلْوَزْنُ يَوْمَئِذٍ ٱلْحَقُّ ۚ فَمَن ثَقُلَتْ
مَوَٰزِينُهُۥ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٨﴾
وَمَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَٰزِينُهُۥ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ
خَسِرُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُم بِمَا كَانُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا
يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿٩﴾

Human accountability is general, and not even the conveyors of God's messages are immune from it. Everyone's deeds will be weighed to see how many good deeds they did in this world's life. This picture of weighing on a scale, and finding out the weight of good deeds versus bad ones is repeatedly mentioned in the Quran [21:47, 23:102-103; 101: 6-9], thus demonstrating the accuracy of God's reckoning and justice on the Day of Judgement. In an age when we have instantly computerized weighing, we can fully

appreciate how swift and beyond worldly human perception God's reckoning can be.

And had your Lord willed, He would have made all humankind one single people; but [He willed it otherwise, and so] they continue to have their differences [to test them as to how they tackle them], except those upon whom your Lord has bestowed His grace [through benefiting from His guidance in resolving their differences]. And to that end [of testing them] has He created them [all]. But [as for those who refuse to resolve their differences rightfully and to benefit from the divine guidance,] your Lord's words shall be fulfilled: "I shall assuredly fill hell with [the evil-doers from] the invisible beings and the human beings as well." And all that We relate to you of the accounts of [earlier] conveyors of [God's] messages, [aim to] strengthen your heart; and in them there has come to you the truth, as well as an admonition and a reminder to those who believe. [11:118-120]

وَلَوْ شَآءَ
رَبُّكَ لَجَعَلَ ٱلنَّاسَ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً ۖ وَلَا
يَزَالُونَ مُخْتَلِفِينَ ﴿١١٨﴾ إِلَّا مَن رَّحِمَ
رَبُّكَ ۚ وَلِذَٰلِكَ خَلَقَهُمْ ۗ وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَةُ
رَبِّكَ لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنَ ٱلْجِنَّةِ وَٱلنَّاسِ
أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١١٩﴾ وَكُلًّا نَّقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ
أَنۢبَآءِ ٱلرُّسُلِ مَا نُثَبِّتُ بِهِۦ فُؤَادَكَ ۚ
وَجَآءَكَ فِى هَٰذِهِ ٱلْحَقُّ وَمَوْعِظَةٌ
وَذِكْرَىٰ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٢٠﴾

Had God willed to make all of humanity one single people with one certain attitude He certainly could have done so, but His will was to create them with differences and diversity. He wanted every individual to have his/her free choice, and thus a person can differ with others' choices as well as with his/her own previous ones.

Free choice leads to both righteousness and evil, rewards and punishments, paradise and hell, together without separation. In the same way, rejection of the truth as well as belief should be expected. This is why the experiences of previous conveyors of God's message are presented in the Quran to show how they were firm, persevering and patient in adversity as they faced the pressures of the stubborn rejectors of God's message. Knowing these experiences of the previous prophets, as well as their actions and reactions would make prophet Muhammad more aware of similar developments and their results during the course of his message. This would enlighten the hearts and minds of the prophet and the believers, providing them with the facts without any distortion or exaggeration, so that they learn from the past useful lessons for the present and the future.

And We have sent forth conveyors of Our messages before you, and We caused them to have wives and offspring, and it was never to a conveyor of God's message to bring out a [miraculous] sign save

وَلَقَدْ
أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلًا مِّن قَبْلِكَ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُمْ
أَزْوَٰجًا وَذُرِّيَّةً ۚ وَمَا كَانَ لِرَسُولٍ أَن

at God's behest. Every period has had its [divine] book. God does annul or confirm whatever He wills, and with Him is the source of all revelation [and the whole truth].
And whether we let you see [within your lifetime, O Prophet, the fulfillment of] some of what We have promised to show them, or We cause you to die [before such a fulfillment], it is yours only to deliver the message, and Ours is the reckoning. [13:38-40]

يَأْتِىَ بِـَٔايَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ لِكُلِّ أَجَلٍ
كِتَابٌ ﴿٣٨﴾ يَمْحُوا۟ ٱللَّهُ مَا يَشَآءُ
وَيُثْبِتُ ۖ وَعِندَهُۥٓ أُمُّ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ ﴿٣٩﴾ وَإِن
مَّا نُرِيَنَّكَ بَعْضَ ٱلَّذِى نَعِدُهُمْ أَوْ
نَتَوَفَّيَنَّكَ فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ ٱلْبَلَٰغُ وَعَلَيْنَا
ٱلْحِسَابُ ﴿٤٠﴾

The Quran reviews the history of early communities and prophets to crystallize its main facts and permanent lessons, and it is obvious from its whole that the previous conveyors of God's messages were, with the exception of Jesus, normal human beings with spouses and offspring, and of whom none was the angel that the stubborn deniers of Muhammad's message demanded [6: 8-9; 15: 7-8; 23: 24; 43: 53]. Also, the miraculous signs that these deniers demanded [2: 118; 6: 37; 10: 20; 13: 7, 27; 20: 133; 21: 5] were only sent according to God's will, and may not lead to belief since every human being has his/her own mind and free will [6:4, 25, 35, 124; 7: 146; 12: 105]. It is the permanent signs of God that can be observed through His creation and revelation by anyone who enjoys human intellect and insight [6: 37-38; 29: 50-51].

In His successive messages, God confirmed what represent permanent needs, while He changed whatever may have needed to be changed [see also 2:106] and which had become irrelevant [see also 2: 106]. He is the Source of the whole Truth and Wisdom, which is revealed, for every period of time, through a book of guidance, teachings and behavioral examples of the prophet's life that respond to the circumstances and the needs of the addressed people. The conveyor of the message had only to deliver the message, no more and no less. He could not, on his own, offer miracles. He did not necessarily actually witness a victory over the stubborn deniers of the truth; it is up to God as to whether such a victory may be seen in the lifetime of the conveyor of God's message or later, but God's reckoning and judgement will certainly be witnessed by all human beings in the life to come. There is a fine balance between this word's life and the life to come which should be thoroughly perceived by the believer so that he/she may avoid both extremes of materialistic concreteness and passive spirituality.

And never have We sent forth any conveyor of [God's] message otherwise than [with a message] in his own people's tongue, so that he might make [the truth] clear to them, then God lets go astray one that He wills, and lets be guided one that He wills [according to what each person chooses by his/her free will granted by God], and He alone is the All-mighty, All-wise.

وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَا مِن رَّسُولٍ
إِلَّا بِلِسَانِ قَوْمِهِۦ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَهُمْ ۖ فَيُضِلُّ
ٱللَّهُ مَن يَشَآءُ وَيَهْدِى مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَهُوَ
ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٤﴾ وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا

مُوسَىٰ بِـَٔايَـٰتِنَآ أَنْ أَخْرِجْ قَوْمَكَ مِنَ
ٱلظُّلُمَـٰتِ إِلَى ٱلنُّورِ وَ ذَكِّرْهُم بِأَيَّـٰمِ
ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَـَٔايَـٰتٍ لِّكُلِّ صَبَّارٍ
شَكُورٍ ﴿٥﴾

And We have sent forth Moses with Our signs and messages, [with the purpose presented in these words], "Lead your people out of the depths of darkness into the light, and remind them of the days of God"; in this there are messages for everyone who is steadfastly enduring [in his/her faith] and deeply grateful to God." [14:4-5]

وَ إِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكُمْ لَئِن شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ ۖ
وَ لَئِن كَفَرْتُمْ إِنَّ عَذَابِى لَشَدِيدٌ ﴿٧﴾
وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰٓ إِن تَكْفُرُوٓا۟ أَنتُمْ وَ مَن فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَغَنِىٌّ حَمِيدٌ
﴿٨﴾ أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ نَبَؤُا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ
قَوْمِ نُوحٍ وَ عَادٍ وَ ثَمُودَ ۛ وَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِنۢ
بَعْدِهِمْ ۛ لَا يَعْلَمُهُمْ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ ۖ جَآءَتْهُمْ
رُسُلُهُم بِٱلْبَيِّنَـٰتِ فَرَدُّوٓا۟ أَيْدِيَهُمْ فِىٓ
أَفْوَٰهِهِمْ وَ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّا كَفَرْنَا بِمَآ أُرْسِلْتُم
بِهِۦ وَ إِنَّا لَفِى شَكٍّ مِّمَّا تَدْعُونَنَآ إِلَيْهِ
مُرِيبٍ ﴿٩﴾ ۝ قَالَتْ رُسُلُهُمْ أَفِى ٱللَّهِ
شَكٌّ فَاطِرِ ٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ
يَدْعُوكُمْ لِيَغْفِرَ لَكُم مِّن ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَ يُؤَخِّرَكُمْ
إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۚ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنْ أَنتُمْ إِلَّا
بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُنَا تُرِيدُونَ أَن تَصُدُّونَا عَمَّا كَانَ
يَعْبُدُ ءَابَآؤُنَا فَأْتُونَا بِسُلْطَـٰنٍ مُّبِينٍ
﴿١٠﴾ قَالَتْ لَهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ إِن نَّحْنُ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ

(7) *And [remember] when your Lord proclaimed, "If you are grateful [for my favors], I shall most certainly give you more and more; and if you are ungrateful, my chastisement will be severe."*
(8) *And Moses said, "And if you ever stubbornly deny the truth, you and whoever else is on earth, all together, assuredly God is All-sufficient, Ever to be Praised."*
(9) *Have not the stories reached you, [O people], about those who [lived] before you? About the folk of Nuh (Noah) and the people of `Ad and Thamud, and about those who [came] after them of whom none knows but God?*
To them came the conveyors of [God's] messages with clear [evidence of truth]; but they covered their mouths with their hands [being unable to argue against them and] they [just] said, "We do deny [the message] with which you have been sent, and we are really in grave doubt about what you call us to follow."
(10) *The conveyors of God's messages said to them, " Can there be any doubt about God the Originator of the heavens and the earth, who calls you in order that He may forgive you of your wrong deeds and grant you respite for a term appointed [by Him]!"*
They said, "You are no more than human beings like ourselves; you desire to turn us away from what our forefathers were used to worship; bring us then, some manifest overpowering evidence [of your truthfulness]."
(11) *The conveyors [of God's messages] said to them, " True we are human beings like*

yourselves, but God does grant His grace to whomever He wills. It is not for us to bring you any overpowering evidence [of our mission] unless it be by God's leave; and in God let all believers place their trust.

(12) *And how could we not place our trust in God, while He has indeed guided us to the ways we are to follow, and we shall certainly bear with patience whatever hurt you may do us; and let those who may place trust place their trust in God."*

(13) *And the stubborn deniers of the truth said to the conveyors of [God's] messages: "Assuredly we shall drive you out of our land, unless you return to our belief." Whereupon their Lord revealed to the conveyors of His messages: "Surely, We shall cause the evildoers to be destroyed.* (14) *And surely We shall cause you to dwell on earth after them. This is [My promise] unto all who stand in awe of My presence and stand in awe of My warning."*

(15) *And they sought a decisive end [there and then], but a complete failure will be the end of every haughty stubborn tyrant,* (16) *with hell awaiting him [/her], and [he/she] shall be given to drink of disgusting fluid,* (17) *gulping it [unceasingly] but hardly able to swallow it. And death comes upon him [/her] from every side, yet he [/she] shall not die; and still ahead him [/her] lies a severe suffering.*

(18) *The parable of those who stubbornly reject their Lord is that their works are as ashes which the wind blows about fiercely on a stormy day; no power have they over any that they have earned; that is the extreme of going astray.*

(19) *Have you not seen that God created the heavens and the earth in accordance with the full truth [and what is the most appropriate for the purpose]? If He so wills He can put you away and bring forth a new creation;* (20) *and that is surely no great matter for God.*

(21) *And all human beings will sally forth to appear before God all together [on the Day of*

مِّثْلُكُمْ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَمُنُّ عَلَىٰ مَن يَشَآءُ
مِنْ عِبَادِهِۦ ۖ وَمَا كَانَ لَنَآ أَن نَّأْتِيَكُم
بِسُلْطَٰنٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَعَلَى ٱللَّهِ
فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١١﴾ وَمَا لَنَآ أَلَّا
نَتَوَكَّلَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ وَقَدْ هَدَىٰنَا سُبُلَنَا ۚ
وَلَنَصْبِرَنَّ عَلَىٰ مَآ ءَاذَيْتُمُونَا ۚ وَعَلَى
ٱللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ ٱلْمُتَوَكِّلُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ وَقَالَ
ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لِرُسُلِهِمْ لَنُخْرِجَنَّكُم مِّنْ
أَرْضِنَآ أَوْ لَتَعُودُنَّ فِى مِلَّتِنَا ۖ
فَأَوْحَىٰٓ إِلَيْهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ لَنُهْلِكَنَّ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ۚ
﴿١٣﴾ وَلَنُسْكِنَنَّكُمُ ٱلْأَرْضَ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِمْ
ذَٰلِكَ لِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامِى وَخَافَ وَعِيدِ
﴿١٤﴾ وَٱسْتَفْتَحُوا۟ وَخَابَ كُلُّ جَبَّارٍ
عَنِيدٍ ﴿١٥﴾ مِّن وَرَآئِهِۦ جَهَنَّمُ وَيُسْقَىٰ
مِن مَّآءٍ صَدِيدٍ ﴿١٦﴾ يَتَجَرَّعُهُۥ وَلَا يَكَادُ
يُسِيغُهُۥ وَيَأْتِيهِ ٱلْمَوْتُ مِن كُلِّ مَكَانٍ
وَمَا هُوَ بِمَيِّتٍ ۖ وَمِن وَرَآئِهِۦ عَذَابٌ
غَلِيظٌ ﴿١٧﴾ مَّثَلُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ بِرَبِّهِمْ
أَعْمَٰلُهُمْ كَرَمَادٍ ٱشْتَدَّتْ بِهِ ٱلرِّيحُ فِى
يَوْمٍ عَاصِفٍ ۖ لَّا يَقْدِرُونَ مِمَّا كَسَبُوا۟
عَلَىٰ شَىْءٍ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلضَّلَٰلُ ٱلْبَعِيدُ
﴿١٨﴾ أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَٱلْأَرْضَ بِٱلْحَقِّ ۚ إِن يَشَأْ يُذْهِبْكُمْ وَيَأْتِ
بِخَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ ﴿١٩﴾ وَمَا ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ
بِعَزِيزٍ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَبَرَزُوا۟ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا فَقَالَ

Judgement]; and then the weak will say to those who were haughty, "We were but your followers; can you, then, be of any benefit to us in averting something of God's chastisement?" They will reply "If God had guided us, we would indeed have guided you. As for us, whether we may be [now] stricken by fear, or we may be patient, there is no way of escape."

(22) *And once the matter has been settled, Satan says, "God surely promised you a true promise; and I promised you then I failed you. Yet, I had no power at all over you, but that I called you and you responded positively to me. Hence, blame not me, but blame your own selves. It is not for me [now] to offer you help in response to your cries, nor for you to offer me help in response to my cries. I have denied your belief of associating me with God aforetime." Surely, for evildoers awaits a grievous suffering."*

(23) *And those who have attained to faith and do righteous deeds will be admitted into gardens underneath which rivers flow, to abide therein with the leave of their Lord; their greeting therein will be, "Peace."*

(24) *Have you not seen how God sets forth a parable of a good word? [It is] like a good tree, firmly rooted, [reaching out] with its branches towards the sky,* (25) *yielding forth its fruit at all times, by the leave of its Lord. And so God sets forth parables for people, in order that they might bethink themselves [of the truth].*

(26) *And the parable of an evil word is that of an evil tree, uprooted from the face of the earth; wholly unable to stay.*

(27) *God grants firmness unto those who have attained to faith with the word that is unshakably true in this world and in the life to come, whereas the wrongdoers He lets go astray, and God does whatever He wills.* [14:7-27]

ٱلضُّعَفَٰٓؤُا۟ لِلَّذِينَ ٱسْتَكْبَرُوٓا۟ إِنَّا كُنَّا لَكُمْ
تَبَعًا فَهَلْ أَنتُم مُّغْنُونَ عَنَّا مِنْ عَذَابِ
ٱللَّهِ مِن شَىْءٍ ۚ قَالُوا۟ لَوْ هَدَىٰنَا ٱللَّهُ
لَهَدَيْنَٰكُمْ ۖ سَوَآءٌ عَلَيْنَآ أَجَزِعْنَآ أَمْ
صَبَرْنَا مَا لَنَا مِن مَّحِيصٍ ﴿٢١﴾ وَقَالَ
ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ لَمَّا قُضِىَ ٱلْأَمْرُ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
وَعَدَكُمْ وَعْدَ ٱلْحَقِّ وَوَعَدتُّكُمْ
فَأَخْلَفْتُكُمْ ۖ وَمَا كَانَ لِىَ عَلَيْكُم مِّن
سُلْطَٰنٍ إِلَّآ أَن دَعَوْتُكُمْ فَٱسْتَجَبْتُمْ لِى ۖ
فَلَا تَلُومُونِى وَلُومُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَكُم ۖ مَّآ
أَنَا۠ بِمُصْرِخِكُمْ وَمَآ أَنتُم بِمُصْرِخِىَّ ۖ
إِنِّى كَفَرْتُ بِمَآ أَشْرَكْتُمُونِ مِن قَبْلُ ۗ إِنَّ
ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٢﴾ وَأُدْخِلَ
ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ
جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ
فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ ۖ تَحِيَّتُهُمْ فِيهَا سَلَٰمٌ
﴿٢٣﴾ أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ ضَرَبَ ٱللَّهُ مَثَلًا كَلِمَةً
طَيِّبَةً كَشَجَرَةٍ طَيِّبَةٍ أَصْلُهَا ثَابِتٌ
وَفَرْعُهَا فِى ٱلسَّمَآءِ ﴿٢٤﴾ تُؤْتِىٓ أُكُلَهَا
كُلَّ حِينٍۭ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهَا ۗ وَيَضْرِبُ ٱللَّهُ
ٱلْأَمْثَالَ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾
وَمَثَلُ كَلِمَةٍ خَبِيثَةٍ كَشَجَرَةٍ خَبِيثَةٍ ٱجْتُثَّتْ
مِن فَوْقِ ٱلْأَرْضِ مَا لَهَا مِن قَرَارٍ ﴿٢٦﴾
يُثَبِّتُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِٱلْقَوْلِ
ٱلثَّابِتِ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَفِى
ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۖ وَيُضِلُّ ٱللَّهُ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ۚ
وَيَفْعَلُ ٱللَّهُ مَا يَشَآءُ ﴿٢٧﴾

Hence, do not reckon that God will let be unfulfilled His promise to the conveyors of His message; God is All-mighty, an avenger of evil. On the day when the earth shall be changed to other than the earth, as shall be the heavens; and they [all] sally forth unto God, the One, the Omnipotent. And on that Day you will see evildoers linked together in fetters, clothed in garments of black pitch, with fire veiling their faces. [And all shall be judged on that Day], so that God may requite every human being for all that he[/she] has earned; surely God is swift in reckoning. This is a message to all human beings, so let them be warned by it, and let them know that He is the One and Only God, and let those who have minds be mindful. [14:47-52]

فَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ ٱللَّهَ مُخْلِفَ وَعْدِهِۦ رُسُلَهُۥٓ ۚ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ ذُو ٱنتِقَامٍ ﴿٤٧﴾ يَوْمَ تُبَدَّلُ
ٱلْأَرْضُ غَيْرَ ٱلْأَرْضِ وَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ ۖ
وَبَرَزُوا۟ لِلَّهِ ٱلْوَٰحِدِ ٱلْقَهَّارِ ﴿٤٨﴾ وَ تَرَى
ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ يَوْمَئِذٍ مُّقَرَّنِينَ فِى ٱلْأَصْفَادِ
﴿٤٩﴾ سَرَابِيلُهُم مِّن قَطِرَانٍ وَ تَغْشَىٰ
وُجُوهَهُمُ ٱلنَّارُ ﴿٥٠﴾ لِيَجْزِىَ ٱللَّهُ كُلَّ
نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَرِيعُ
ٱلْحِسَابِ ﴿٥١﴾ هَٰذَا بَلَٰغٌ لِّلنَّاسِ
وَلِيُنذَرُوا۟ بِهِۦ وَ لِيَعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّمَا هُوَ إِلَٰهٌ
وَٰحِدٌ وَ لِيَذَّكَّرَ أُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ﴿٥٢﴾

The above verses point out that God's message has been always presented to suit the addressee's socio-cultural needs. The above verses also present the "essence" of God's message in general and present the argument of those who attained to faith and those who stubbornly denied the truth and the requital of both in this life and in the life to come. Therefore, God sent to each people a conveyor of His message from among themselves who would be aware of their circumstances and concerns and would know how to address them with God's message. Accordingly, God's message comes through the mouth of its conveyor in the same language that the people speak; otherwise the message and its conveyor would be alienated from the people who were addressed with God's guidance.

History provides the lessons of the past to guide the present and the future. For example, the message of Moses can be seen as one of a leader commanding his people from the darkness of their selfishness and shortsightedness to the light of God's guidance, and reminding them of *"the days of God"* when His blessings helped them to survive the cruel oppression, to escape to freedom, and to again survive the difficulties of the desert life which can teach a person many things. Gratitude to God, shown in following His guidance, leads those who are grateful from one success to another, and secures psychological and social balance and stability.

The stories of the earlier communities of the Arabian peninsula, `Ad in the south and Thamud in the north, also include many beneficial lessons. God lets go astray whom He wills and guides whom He wills, but His will is to allow the human mind and free will to work [2: 26-27; 75:14-15; 79: 37-41; 90:10; 91: 7-9; 92: 4-11]. The stubborn deniers of the truth choose to deliberately focus on this world's life and on their own material interests, ignoring the life to come and their moral-spiritual needs and the others' rights, and they try hard to turn others away from the path of God by any means, even through lies and crooked ways. The followers of God's messages, on the other hand, basically

believe in the One God and follow the light of His guidance in their behavior in this life; as well as believing in the accountability of the human being and the judgement and requital of every individual in the eternal life to come.

As was previously mentioned, the conveyors of God's messages have always been normal human beings; the significance ought to be considered in their messages, and in the morality of the behavior of the conveyors, and they have never claimed any supernatural power unless it has been given to them by God Himself at a certain time for a certain purpose. However, the stubborn deniers of the truth, instead of attempting to effectively use their reason and express themselves, try to strengthen their side with oppressive measures, but oppression cannot prevail forever, This is especially true in the life to come, where the weak will suffer for blindly supporting the arrogant oppression of this life, and where those arrogant oppressors will not be able to repay them for their blind support in this life. Satan will also be unable to reward any evil doer in the life to come, however close they may have been in this short term life.

It is the *"good word"* that survives and grows. It is beautiful, stable and fruitful at all times, both in this life and definitely in the life to come, while evil is rootless and thus has no foothold. It is important for the human being to realize that even in this world, God can cause change and bring the end of any society or civilization according to His laws. God's message is but the *"good word"* that is deep-rooted, stable, consistent, convincing, impressive and fruitful; the evil doers who go astray deprive themselves from all these benefits and thus are losers. In its bottom line, whatever the details may be, it is the One and Only God that should be worshiped, and His judgement and requital for every human being is inevitable: *"and let those who have minds be mindful"* [14:52].

God's promise to all the conveyors of His messages about the coming of the Day of Judgement and the requital of "every human being for whatever one has earned" in this world's life" will certainly be fulfilled. The characteristic features of the world will be changed in the life to come [see also 20:105-107; 39:67-69; 73:14; 81:1-6; 82:1-4; 84:1-4]. The evil doers will be joined together in their fetters, tar clothed, suffering and humiliated in the next life, as they have been joined together in their evil doing, enjoying luxuries and haughtiness in this life.

And We assuredly sent among every people a conveyor of God's message saying: "Worship God, and turn aside of the powers of evil and injustice." And then among these people were some whom God has guided, while others inevitably fell into serious erroneousness. Go, then, about the earth, and find out what was the end of those who denounced the truth as a lie. [16:36]

وَ لَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِى كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ
رَّسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَ اجْتَنِبُوا
الطَّٰغُوتَ ۖ فَمِنْهُم مَّنْ هَدَى اللَّهُ وَ مِنْهُم
مَّنْ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِ الضَّلَٰلَةُ ۚ فَسِيرُوا فِى
الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ
الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾

To each community that has received a message from God - and we cannot know exactly which these were as they are not all indicated in the Quran [4:164; 40:78] - the basic teaching has been the worship of God alone, and the avoidance and resistance of the

powers of evil and injustice that use their social dominance to spread and protect oppression and corruption. God's message aims to liberate people from exploiting one another by inviting all of them to submit to Him alone and follow His guidance which is not biased with or against any individual, class, ethnicity or even belief with regard to human rights and justice in this life. Those who have stubbornly rejected God's guidance "*deservingly fall into serious erroneousness*" as a consequence of their conscious and persistent arrogance and obstinacy [2:26-27, 92:4-10]. Al-Zamakhshari, the prominent commentator on the Quran, saw this expression as denoting God's leaving a person alone on his/her own as a consequence of his/her free choice to stubbornly reject God's guidance. Human history can enlighten us about the end of leading individuals, societies and civilizations who locked themselves in haughtiness and injustice; their decline and fall emerged as a result of imprisoning themselves in their self-indulgence and material gains.

And before your time We never sent [as conveyors of Our messages] any[one] but [mortal] men to whom We sent revelation of [the truth]; and if you [O people] have not realized this, ask those who have knowledge [of earlier revelations]. [We sent them] with clear evidence of truth and with books of divine wisdom. And upon you We have sent down this reminder, so that you might make clear to people what is sent to them, and so that they might reflect. [16:43-44]

وَمَآ أَرۡسَلۡنَا مِن قَبۡلِكَ
إِلَّا رِجَالٗا نُّوحِيٓ إِلَيۡهِمۡۚ فَسۡـَٔلُوٓاْ أَهۡلَ
ٱلذِّكۡرِ إِن كُنتُمۡ لَا تَعۡلَمُونَ ٤٣
بِٱلۡبَيِّنَٰتِ وَٱلزُّبُرِۗ وَأَنزَلۡنَآ إِلَيۡكَ
ٱلذِّكۡرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيۡهِمۡ
وَلَعَلَّهُمۡ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ٤٤

This is another Quranic emphasis on the human nature and moral mission of the conveyors of God's messages. Muhammad, a mortal being, was merely a human medium that can interact with the people to whom the message was sent. He received God's message to spread and clarify it, as it has been always essential that the message is conveyed and clarified through the conveyor's words and behavior. But God's message, also requires serious and sincere receptiveness, understanding and thoughtfulness on the other end of the communication from those who are addressed, since passivity and/ or closed-mindedness would make any effort of the conveyor of God's message fruitless. The verses also stress the continuation and oneness of the divine message in its basics, and thus the mutual relations that should be developed between the followers of the successive messages of God if they are really God-conscious and observant of their moral responsibility.

And before your time We never sent any conveyor of [Our] message except with our revelation [which he had to convey to people] that there is no deity save Me, [and that] therefore you worship Me [alone]. [21:25]

وَمَآ
أَرۡسَلۡنَا مِن قَبۡلِكَ مِن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِيٓ
إِلَيۡهِ أَنَّهُۥ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّآ أَنَا۠ فَٱعۡبُدُونِ
٢٥

This verse emphasizes the oneness of God's message through all the successive conveyors of it; it states that God is One and He should be worshiped alone. This liberates the human mind and human society from any domination of superstition, oppression or other false forces.

Verily, [O you who believe in Me], this community of yours is one wholeness [umma], and I am the Lord of you all; worship, then, Me [alone]. [21:92]

إِنَّ هَٰذِهِۦٓ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً
وَٰحِدَةً وَأَنَا۠ رَبُّكُمْ فَٱعْبُدُونِ ﴿٩٢﴾

The oneness of God ought to result in the unity of the believers in Him, as they all have a solid common ground and a strong unifying force represented in their worship and submission of the One Lord, Sustainer, and Cherisher. However, although unity negates disunity and splits, it should not annihilate diversity. In this way common grounds ought to secure mutual understanding and cooperation, but should not mean patterning. A genuine and dynamic unity cannot be reached except through strong determination and persistent efforts to bridge gaps, work out differences and solve problems.

And We laid it down in the book of divine wisdom as in the [earlier] reminding that My righteous worshippers shall inherit the earth; surely in this is a message for people who are true worshippers [of God]. And [O Prophet] We have but sent you, as a mercy unto all beings. Say: "It has but been revealed to me that your God is the One and Only God; will you then submit yourselves unto Him?" [21:105-108]

وَلَقَدْ كَتَبْنَا فِى ٱلزَّبُورِ مِنۢ بَعْدِ
ٱلذِّكْرِ أَنَّ ٱلْأَرْضَ يَرِثُهَا عِبَادِىَ
ٱلصَّٰلِحُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾ إِنَّ فِى هَٰذَا لَبَلَٰغًا
لِّقَوْمٍ عَٰبِدِينَ ﴿١٠٦﴾ وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَٰكَ إِلَّا
رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٠٧﴾ قُلْ إِنَّمَا يُوحَىٰٓ
إِلَىَّ أَنَّمَآ إِلَٰهُكُمْ إِلَٰهٌ وَٰحِدٌ ۖ فَهَلْ أَنتُم
مُّسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٠٨﴾

The Arabic word "*Zabur*" can mean a book or a book of wisdom in particular, and therefore sometimes it is mentioned in the Quran in plural [3:184;16:44; 23:53; 26:196; 35:25; 54:43]. Also it can be specifically used to refer to the book that was revealed to David [4:163; 17:55]. In the same way, the Arabic word *dhikr* can mean a reminder or remembrance, or simply something mentioned to others or present in the mind [e.g. 7:63, 69; 13:28; 16:43; 21:7; 38:8; 54:25] and it can also mean the Quran [e.g. 3:58; 15:9; 16:44; 21:50; 36:69]. It appears that the above verse used both words in their general meanings. Thus the verse is indicating that God has guided the human being to what is good and righteous, and He has promised in His books that such guided and righteous people shall inherit the earth and shall be entrusted with securing God's justice and grace in human relations. Muhammad's message presents this justice, grace, and concern about all creatures: human beings (especially those who are considered weak and thus oppressed or neglected, such as children, women, workers, defendants, prisoners of war, slaves etc.), invisible beings (jinn), other living creatures, as well as care for all nature. God's justice

and grace are for both genders, and all ages, ethnicities and faiths, for the rulers and the ruled, and for the rich and the poor. But this justice and grace cannot be secured all the time except through human beings who are fully conscious of the One and Only God, and who submit their whole selves: their minds, hearts, energy, and all their powers, to Him. In this way the individual and the society can resist selfishness, exploitation, aggression, greed and other different forms of injustice and unkindliness on one side, and passivity and hopelessness on the other.

Surely, as for those who have attained to faith [in this divine writ] and those who follow Judaism and those who turned away [from a previous faith in search for the truth] and the Christians, and the Magians, and [even] those who associate others with God: God will decide between them on Resurrection Day; and God is witness unto everything. [22:17]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَ ٱلَّذِينَ هَادُوا۟
وَ ٱلصَّٰبِـِٔينَ وَ ٱلنَّصَٰرَىٰ وَ ٱلْمَجُوسَ
وَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوٓا۟ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَفْصِلُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ
ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ شَهِيدٌ
١٧

The Quran emphasizes here what it repeatedly states in other places: that the final judgement of the different beliefs and their followers is for God only; He alone knows the intentions and all the circumstances of every human being [3:55; 5:48, 105; 6:60, 108, 164; 10:23, 93; 27:28; 29:8, 31:15; 39:7; 45:17]. Even the Magians (Zoroastrians), who are not apparently monotheistic due to their belief in dualism (good and evil, light and darkness), are referred with others to the One God who judges all with His full knowledge and justice. As for the Arabic word *Sabi'in*, I am more inclined to understand it in its general meaning as referring to those who turn from their initial faith to another in search for the truth, rather than believing the word as being a reference to the particular gnostic sect known in Harran, since these "*sabi'in*" mentioned in the above verse are included with the believers in the One God and the life to come [see 2:62; 5:69], while the Sabians cannot be included as such. The Arabic root of the word means simply to change one's faith, and was used to describe Muhammad himself when he started to convey his message about worshipping the One God. This group which might have split from Judaism before the advent of Jesus, and of whose teaching John the Baptist was probably a representative, might be identified with the Mandeans in Iraq. Even for those who ascribe divinity to others beside the one God, the verse refers them to God's judgement. He alone knows the reality of their intention, understanding, free choice and all circumstances as "God is witness unto everything." The fact that God will never forgive those who associate others with Him [4:48, 116], should be understood unisolated from the principle that guidance should be made clear as a pre-condition for responsibility [4:115; 47:25, 32], and from the general principle that human responsibility is within the bounds of human ability[2:233, 286; 6:152; 7:42; 23:62]. The Arabic word *kafir* originally means "hiding" and thus, as a religious term, it denotes one who contradicts his/her own conviction and even sometimes conceals it from his/her own self [e.g. 6:33; 7:51; 11:59; 27:14; 29:47, 49; 31:32; 40:63; 46:26].

And We sent forth the conveyors of Our messages successively; whenever there came to a people their conveyor of the message they denounced him as a liar, and so We caused them to follow one another [in their end] and let them become as but tales; so away with a people who stubbornly refuse to believe! [23:44]

ثُمَّ أَرْسَلْنَا
رُسُلَنَا تَتْرَا ۖ كُلَّ مَا جَاءَ أُمَّةً رَسُولُهَا
كَذَّبُوهُ ۚ فَأَتْبَعْنَا بَعْضَهُم بَعْضًا
وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ أَحَادِيثَ ۚ فَبُعْدًا لِّقَوْمٍ
لَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

The conveyors of God's messages were distributed in successive times as well as in different places. Although we cannot have a full list of these conveyors and their times and places [4:164, 40:78], we may assume that their experiences might have had something in common, since they all faced opposition and rejection from among their communities. The members of these communities, like many human beings, may have been ego-centric and materially oriented; they did not use their reason and they ignored their spiritual aspirations. However, such people are the losers, since they lack the psychological and social stability and balance that the faith in God and the life to come secures for the long term, and they have to face the inevitable end of this relatively short world life. They just become a faint tale of the past, and a repeated sign of human shortsightedness.

And We sent not as Our message-conveyors before you but that they ate food and went about in the market-places, for We cause you [human beings] to be a testing for one another. Will you, then, endure such a testing with patience? Your Lord is All-seeing. [25:20]

وَمَا
أَرْسَلْنَا قَبْلَكَ مِنَ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ إِلَّآ إِنَّهُمْ
لَيَأْكُلُونَ ٱلطَّعَامَ وَيَمْشُونَ فِى
ٱلْأَسْوَاقِ ۗ وَجَعَلْنَا بَعْضَكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ
فِتْنَةً أَتَصْبِرُونَ ۗ وَكَانَ رَبُّكَ بَصِيرًا
﴿٢٠﴾

The conveyors of God's message have all been human beings who have conveyed God's guidance for morality, justice, peace, cooperation and compassion. But since God has created the human being with free will, not all people follow their reason and respond positively to such conveyors. People are tested through their response to God's guidance and through their interactions with one another. This continuous test and challenge that every human being faces in dealing with others can be eased through following divine guidance, which comes from beyond human limitations and bias. This guidance presents the measures that one should observe to successfully pass the test of human relations, as it responds to the needs of all parties without bias, and it combines justice with mercy and kindness.

Yet, your Lord would never destroy towns until He sent to the principal one amidst them a conveyor of

وَمَا
كَانَ رَبُّكَ مُهْلِكَ ٱلْقُرَىٰ حَتَّىٰ يَبْعَثَ فِى

[God's] message, conveying our signs and messages; and never would We destroy towns except [as a result of the people's deeds] when their inhabitants are indulged in evil-doing. [28:59]

أُمِّهَا رَسُولًا يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَٰتِنَا ۚ
وَمَا كُنَّا مُهْلِكِى ٱلْقُرَىٰٓ إِلَّا وَ أَهْلُهَا
ظَٰلِمُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

God's punishment did not afflict suffering on any people for their persistent wrongdoing, unless they have had a warner whom they stubbornly rejected [also 6:92, 131;11:117; 17:15; 42:7]. This applies to Mecca and its inhabitants, as to any town. However, the Quran states that God did not afflict such immediate punishments on the rejectors of later messages, leaving their requital to His judgement in the eternal life to come [e.g. 16:61, 18:58; 29:53-54; 35:45; 42:14; 47:4].

And [call to mind that] We took from the Prophets their solemn pledge, and from you [O Muhammad] as well as from Nuh (Noah), Ibrahim (Abraham), Musa (Moses), and 'Isa ibn Maryam (Jesus the Son of Mary) - We took from [all of] them a weighty solemn pledge, so that God might ask the truthful about their truthfulness, and grievous suffering has He readied for all who stubbornly deny the truth. [33:7-8]

وَ إِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِنَ
ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ مِيثَٰقَهُمْ وَ مِنكَ وَ مِن نُّوحٍ
وَإِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَ مُوسَىٰ وَ عِيسَى ٱبْنِ مَرْيَمَ ۖ
وَ أَخَذْنَا مِنْهُم مِّيثَٰقًا غَلِيظًا ﴿٧﴾ لِّيَسْـَٔلَ
ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ عَن صِدْقِهِمْ ۚ وَ أَعَدَّ لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ
عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿٨﴾

When God granted a person prophethood, He received a solemn pledge or covenant from that person to fulfill the responsibility with which he was charged; *"Thus [on Judgement Day] We shall most certainly call to account all those unto whom a message was sent, and we shall most certainly call to account the conveyors of [these] messages [themselves]"* [7:6 also 2:83; 3:187; 5:12, 70, 169]. This is why Jonah [Yunus] was considered a violator of this covenant; he abandoned his people when they rejected his message [21:87-88; 37:139-148]. The persons who are addressed to be prophets have the responsibility to first make their decision to worship the One God alone and to observe His guidance before conveying the message to others once they believe in it.

And We did aforetime send forth conveyors of [God's] messages; of them there are some whom We have told you about, while some We have not told you about. It was not for any conveyor of [God's] message to bring forth a miraculous sign except by God's leave; yet when God's will becomes manifest, judgement is passed in all justice, and lost will be then and there the followers of falsehood. [40:78]

وَ لَقَدْ
أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلًا مِّن قَبْلِكَ مِنْهُم مَّن قَصَصْنَا
عَلَيْكَ وَ مِنْهُم مَّن لَّمْ نَقْصُصْ عَلَيْكَ ۚ وَ مَا
كَانَ لِرَسُولٍ أَن يَأْتِىَ بِـَٔايَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ
ٱللَّهِ ۚ فَإِذَا جَآءَ أَمْرُ ٱللَّهِ قُضِىَ بِٱلْحَقِّ
وَ خَسِرَ هُنَالِكَ ٱلْمُبْطِلُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾

God has sent the conveyors of His messages to different areas and peoples which are not all indicated in the Quran [see also 4: 164]. Since each of God's messages does not necessarily have a miraculous sign connected with it, and since such miraculous signs are brought forth only when God wills, a conveyor of God's message may exist in a certain area and among a certain people without there being any mention of miraculous signs in his life. What decides the truth of a conveyor of God's message is the message itself and what is called for, and on the Day of Judgement those who have bound themselves to falsehood will realize too late the truth and their eternal loss.

And it is not for a human being that God should speak to him [/her] except through inspiration, or from behind a barrier, or by sending a conveyor to reveal by His leave whatever He wills; surely He is Exalted, All-wise. And thus, too [O Muhammad], have We, by Our command, sent inspiration to you; you knew not before what the [divine] book is, nor what the faith [precisely] is [and what it comprehends], but We have caused this [message] to be a light, whereby We guide whom We will of Our servants; and you surely shall guide [people] to the straight way, the way of God, to whom belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on earth; surely, and unto God all matters end. [42:51-53]

وَمَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَن يُكَلِّمَهُ ٱللَّهُ
إِلَّا وَحْيًا أَوْ مِن وَرَآئِ حِجَابٍ أَوْ
يُرْسِلَ رَسُولًا فَيُوحِيَ بِإِذْنِهِۦ مَا يَشَآءُ ۚ
إِنَّهُۥ عَلِيٌّ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٥١﴾ وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَوْحَيْنَآ
إِلَيْكَ رُوحًا مِّنْ أَمْرِنَا ۚ مَا كُنتَ تَدْرِى
مَا ٱلْكِتَٰبُ وَلَا ٱلْإِيمَٰنُ وَلَٰكِن جَعَلْنَٰهُ
نُورًا نَّهْدِى بِهِۦ مَن نَّشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا ۚ
وَإِنَّكَ لَتَهْدِىٓ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٥٢﴾
صِرَٰطِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّذِى لَهُۥ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ أَلَآ إِلَى
ٱللَّهِ تَصِيرُ ٱلْأُمُورُ ﴿٥٣﴾

The above Quranic verses present some explanation about God's revelation to a prophet, who, after all, is a mere human being. This revelation may be felt as a sudden inner inspiration, as some traditions of Prophet Muhammad indicate, or as a voice coming from behind a barrier, as was experienced by Moses. In many cases, God sends an angel to reveal what He wills to whom He wills, as Gabriel did in the case of Prophet Muhammad. Before God's message, Muhammad was one of his tribe and people, in spite of his ambiguous consciousness of God and feelings towards Him. God's message gave Muhammad the chance to experience the divine revelation and to know how the true faith can be defined and what submission to God means and implies. God's message is the light and the straight way that may take the book form to be easily preserved, learned and observed. It secures justice, peace and stability for the individual and the society, as its source is beyond any bias based on ethnic, class, gender or any other grounds.

Just in the same way, whenever We sent a warner before you to any town, those among them who lost themselves entirely in the pursuit of pleasures and

وَكَذَٰلِكَ مَآ
أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ فِى قَرْيَةٍ مِّن نَّذِيرٍ إِلَّا

luxuries, always said: "We found our forefathers following a tradition in belief, and we are certainly following in their footsteps."
[Each warner] said, "What! Even if I bring you a better guidance than what you found your fore-fathers following?", they[Those who stubbornly denied the truth usually] responded, "We reject what you are sent with, denying that there is any truth in it."
And so We inflicted our retribution on them; see then what was the end of those who [stubbornly] rejected [the truth]. [43:23-25]

قَالَ مُتْرَفُوهَآ إِنَّا وَجَدْنَآ ءَابَآءَنَا عَلَىٰٓ
أُمَّةٍ وَ إِنَّا عَلَىٰٓ ءَاثَٰرِهِم مُّقْتَدُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾
۞ قَٰلَ أَوَ لَوْ جِئْتُكُم بِأَهْدَىٰ مِمَّا
وَجَدتُّمْ عَلَيْهِ ءَابَآءَكُمْ ۖ قَالُوٓاْ إِنَّا بِمَآ
أُرْسِلْتُم بِهِۦ كَٰفِرُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ فَٱنتَقَمْنَا
مِنْهُمْ ۚ فَٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلْمُكَذِّبِينَ
﴿٢٥﴾

These verses sum the opposition that God's message, through its different conveyors, met from those who were indulged in this world's luxuries and who were full of stubborn arrogance and blind adherence to the beliefs of their forefathers. They faced the consequences of their vices in this word's life, and they will face the eternal consequences in the life to come. As it has been explained before, God has decided to allow people to live in this world and face the natural consequences of any evil doing, while His judgement and requital will be delayed to the eternal life to come [e.g. 6:60; 14:10; 16:61; 20:129; 29:53; 35:45; 40:67; 42:14; 47:4].

Indeed, We sent aforetime the conveyors of Our messages with clear signs and messages, and We sent down along with them the book and the balance [to weigh right and wrong] so that people observe [in dealing with one another] justice; and We provided on the earth [for human use] iron and in it there is great might, as well as many benefits for human beings; and through all these [means] God marks out those who would stand up for [the principles of justice presented by] Him and the conveyors of His messages, even though He [Himself] is beyond the reach of human sensory perception. Surely, God is Almighty, Exalted in power/.
And We sent Nuh (Noah) and Ibrahim (Abraham) and established prophethood and the book [of God's guidance] among their descendants; and some of them were on the right way, but many others among them were iniquitous.

لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا
بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ وَ أَنزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ
وَٱلْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ ٱلنَّاسُ بِٱلْقِسْطِ ۖ
وَأَنزَلْنَا ٱلْحَدِيدَ فِيهِ بَأْسٌ شَدِيدٌ وَ مَنَٰفِعُ
لِلنَّاسِ وَ لِيَعْلَمَ ٱللَّهُ مَن يَنصُرُهُۥ
وَرُسُلَهُۥ بِٱلْغَيْبِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ قَوِىٌّ عَزِيزٌ
﴿٢٥﴾ وَ لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا وَ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ
وَجَعَلْنَا فِى ذُرِّيَّتِهِمَا ٱلنُّبُوَّةَ وَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ ۖ
فَمِنْهُم مُّهْتَدٍ ۖ وَ كَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَٰسِقُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

Then, in their footsteps We caused [other] conveyors of Our messages to follow; and We sent forth after them 'Isa ibn Maryam (Jesus the son of Mary) and gave unto him the Gospel; and We set in the hearts of those who followed him tenderness and mercy. But as for monastic asceticism, they initiated it themselves and We did not ordain it upon them; [We have commanded] only seeking the goodly acceptance of God. [However] they have not always] observed it as it should have been observed; and so We gave those among them who had truly attained to faith their [due] reward, whereas many of them became iniquitous. [57:25-27]

ثُمَّ قَفَّيْنَا عَلَىٰٓ ءَاثَٰرِهِم بِرُسُلِنَا
وَقَفَّيْنَا بِعِيسَى ٱبْنِ مَرْيَمَ وَءَاتَيْنَٰهُ
ٱلْإِنجِيلَ ۖ وَجَعَلْنَا فِى قُلُوبِ ٱلَّذِينَ
ٱتَّبَعُوهُ رَأْفَةً وَرَحْمَةً ۚ وَرَهْبَانِيَّةً
ٱبْتَدَعُوهَا ۖ مَا كَتَبْنَٰهَا عَلَيْهِمْ إِلَّا ٱبْتِغَآءَ
رِضْوَٰنِ ٱللَّهِ فَمَا رَعَوْهَا حَقَّ رِعَايَتِهَا ۖ
فَـَٔاتَيْنَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مِنْهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ ۖ
وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَٰسِقُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

God's messages have been sent with clear evidence of truth, and with consideration to the personal and social merits of the conveyor, and the content of the message and guidance, in addition to any supernatural and miraculous signs with which God might choose to support the conveyor of the message. The essence of the message is its content and teachings, and these sometimes have been presented through the "book" revealed to the conveyor of the message, which includes the values that ought to be observed and that represent the moral and social criteria for what is considered right and good, and what is seen to be wrong and evil. The Ten Commandments may be an early milestone in this respect.

However, God's guidance and moral values require a solid base to uphold and support them. Economic development, maintenance of order and justice, in addition to security within the country and from outside are essential for the stability and strength of this base that holds on God's guidance and moral values. Iron has been significant in the history of human civilization as a representation both of peaceful economic development such as that of hardware instruments, transportation, vehicles etc., as well as of weaponry which can be used to defend the society and its values, or abused to threaten it from within or from abroad. The Quran provides guidance as to how iron should be used in both areas with justice, and guards the society against abusing it through exploitation, violence, oppression or aggression. Force cannot be used except to defend legitimate human rights and to struggle against those who violate them and transgress the bounds of justice internally or externally [2:190, 193], and the use of force is restricted and controlled so that its harm may be reduced to the minimum and may not reach civilians or non-combatants.

After this condensation of the essence of God's message and how it can be supported, the above verses mention two permanent conveyors of God's message that establishes morality based on the worship of the One God. The first conveyor mentioned is Nuh (Noah), who might be considered as the second father of humanity after the flood; the second is Ibrahim (Abraham) who devoted all his life to calling for the worship of the One God wherever he went in Mesopotamia, Canaan or Arabia. These prominent leaders were followed by their offspring in receiving God's guidance and conveying it. But at the

turning point from the tribal social structure to the global one, which was pushed forward by such a great universal power as the Roman Empire, God caused Jesus to have no offspring at all, and Muhammad to have no male offspring. Thus the message of God could not be restricted to a family, a people or a place, and has had to be a universal one.

In the end of the above verses, the Quran does not agree with such a way [see for example 2:168; 5:87-88; 7:31-32; 16:114-6; 18:7] and says that monastic asceticism was not ordered by God, who only calls His worshippers to seek His goodly acceptance according to His guidance of balance and moderation, but was initiated by the Christians themselves, believing that it helps to develop piety. On the other hand, it points out that many Christians show compassion and mercy towards others which is worthy of comment: *"...as there are priests and monks among them and as they are not arrogant"* [5:82]. It also mentions that there are others who have not observed monastic asceticism or showed compassion and mercy as they ought to be observed or practiced [5:34], and both parties will be judged by God in full His justice in the eternal life to come, and no one will be wronged.

PROPHETS AND CONVEYORS OF GOD'S MESSAGES IN THE QURAN

ADAM [See in Chapter Two: " Human Beings"]

IDRIS

Also call to mind in this Book Idris: he was a man of truth, a prophet: and We raised him to a lofty place. [19:56-57; see also 21:85]

وَٱذْكُرْ فِى
ٱلْكِتَٰبِ إِدْرِيسَ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ صِدِّيقًا نَّبِيًّا
﴿٥٦﴾ وَرَفَعْنَٰهُ مَكَانًا عَلِيًّا ﴿٥٧﴾

This prophet may be identified with the Biblical Enoch (Genesis 5, 18-19 and 21-24), but this is mere conjecture. According to the Bible, Enoch was a descendant of Adam's son Seth, and the Bible informs us that he was so close to God that he did not die but that God took him away [Genesis 5:22; see also Hebrews 11:5]. On the other hand, some of the earliest authorities in the interpretation of the Quran such as 'Abd Allah ibn Mas'ud, Qatadah, 'Ikrimah and al-Dahhak, believed that "Idris" was just another name for Ilyas (Elijah). The Bible mentions that both Enoch and Elijah were elevated to heaven with their bodies. According to William Smith in his article on Enoch in *Smith's Bible Dictionary,* "Both the Latin and Greek fathers commonly coupled Enoch and Elijah as historic witnesses of the possibility of a resurrection of the body and of a true human existence in glory." As the above Quranic verse refers to "*raising Idris to a lofty place*" by God, the identification of him as the Biblical Enoch or Elijah by some Muslim sources in *tafsir* - exegesis of the Quran - may be explained. The raising of Idris could be immaterial, indicating his closeness to God, as was reported after the distinguished authority al-Hassan al-Basri, even though a tradition was reported mentioning that the body of Idris had been in heaven.

Nuh (Noah)

And We sent forth Nuh (Noah) to his people, and he said, "O my people! Worship God alone; you have no god other than Him; truly, I fear for you the

لَقَدْ
أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِۦ فَقَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ
ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرُهُۥٓ ۖ إِنِّىٓ

أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٥٩﴾
قَالَ ٱلْمَلَأُ مِن قَوْمِهِۦٓ إِنَّا لَنَرَىٰكَ فِى
ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٦٠﴾ قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ لَيْسَ بِى
ضَلَٰلَةٌ وَلَٰكِنِّى رَسُولٌ مِّن رَّبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ
﴿٦١﴾ أُبَلِّغُكُمْ رِسَٰلَٰتِ رَبِّى وَأَنصَحُ لَكُمْ
وَأَعْلَمُ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾ أَوَ
عَجِبْتُمْ أَن جَآءَكُمْ ذِكْرٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ عَلَىٰ
رَجُلٍ مِّنكُمْ لِيُنذِرَكُمْ وَلِتَتَّقُوا۟ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ
تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾ فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَنجَيْنَٰهُ
وَٱلَّذِينَ مَعَهُۥ فِى ٱلْفُلْكِ وَأَغْرَقْنَا ٱلَّذِينَ
كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَآ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟ قَوْمًا عَمِينَ
﴿٦٤﴾

suffering of a dreadful day."
Said the leading persons among his people, "We see you in evident error."
Said he [Noah], "My people, there is nothing wrong with me; but I am a conveyor of [God's] message from the Lord of all being. I deliver to you the messages of my Lord, and I advise you honestly [and sincerely], for I know from God what you know not. Do you wonder that a tiding from your Lord should have come to you through a man from among yourselves, so that he might warn you and that you might become conscious of God, and that you might be graced with His mercy?"
And yet they denounced him as a liar, and so We saved him and those who followed him in the ark, while we caused those who denounced Our messages as lies to be drowned; surely, they were a blind folk. [7:59-64]

وَٱتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ
نَبَأَ نُوحٍ إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِۦ يَٰقَوْمِ إِن كَانَ
كَبُرَ عَلَيْكُم مَّقَامِى وَتَذْكِيرِى بِـَٔايَٰتِ
ٱللَّهِ فَعَلَى ٱللَّهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ فَأَجْمِعُوٓا۟ أَمْرَكُمْ
وَشُرَكَآءَكُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَكُنْ أَمْرُكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ غُمَّةً ثُمَّ
ٱقْضُوٓا۟ إِلَىَّ وَلَا تُنظِرُونِ ﴿٧١﴾ فَإِن
تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَمَا سَأَلْتُكُم مِّنْ أَجْرٍ ۖ إِنْ
أَجْرِىَ إِلَّا عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَأُمِرْتُ أَنْ
أَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٧٢﴾ فَكَذَّبُوهُ
فَنَجَّيْنَٰهُ وَمَن مَّعَهُۥ فِى ٱلْفُلْكِ
وَجَعَلْنَٰهُمْ خَلَٰٓئِفَ وَأَغْرَقْنَا ٱلَّذِينَ
كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا ۖ فَٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ
ٱلْمُنذَرِينَ ﴿٧٣﴾ ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَا مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ رُسُلًا

And tell them the story of Noah, when he said to his people, "O my people! If you have hard feelings about my presence [among you] and my reminding you of God's messages, in God have I placed my trust. Reach, then, your decisions all together with those that you associate [with God], and let it be clear to you, and carry out against me [whatever you may have decided] and give me no respite. But if you turn away, [remember that] I have never asked you a recompense whatsoever; my recompense rests only with God, and I have been bidden to be among those who have submitted themselves to Him.
And yet they denounced him as a liar; and so We saved him and all who followed him in the ark, and We let their generations successively follow them [on earth], while We caused those who denounced Our messages as lies to be drowned; then, behold, how was the end of them that had been warned [but did not listen!].
Then, We sent forth after him conveyors of

إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِمْ فَجَآءُوهُم بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ فَمَا
كَانُوا۟ لِيُؤْمِنُوا۟ بِمَا كَذَّبُوا۟ بِهِۦ مِن قَبْلُ ۚ
كَذَٰلِكَ نَطْبَعُ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِ ٱلْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿٧٤﴾

[Our] messages, to their people, and they brought them clear evidence of the truth; but these [people] were not to believe in what they had been used to denouncing before as lies; and thus We seal the hearts of those who persistently and stubbornly transgress all bounds of reason and fairness [as an outcome of their own deeds]. [10:71-74]

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ
قَوْمِهِۦٓ إِنِّى لَكُمْ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٢٥﴾ أَلَّا
تَعْبُدُوٓا۟ إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ ۖ إِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ
عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٢٦﴾ فَقَالَ ٱلْمَلَؤُا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا۟ مِن قَوْمِهِۦ مَا نَرَىٰكَ إِلَّا بَشَرًا
مِّثْلَنَا وَمَا نَرَىٰكَ ٱتَّبَعَكَ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ
أَرَاذِلُنَا بَادِىَ ٱلرَّأْىِ ۖ وَمَا نَرَىٰ لَكُمْ
عَلَيْنَا مِن فَضْلٍ بَلْ نَظُنُّكُمْ كَٰذِبِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾
قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ أَرَءَيْتُمْ إِن كُنتُ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِّن
رَّبِّى وَءَاتَىٰنِى رَحْمَةً مِّنْ عِندِهِۦ فَعُمِّيَتْ
عَلَيْكُمْ أَنُلْزِمُكُمُوهَا وَأَنتُمْ لَهَا كَٰرِهُونَ
﴿٢٨﴾ وَيَٰقَوْمِ لَآ أَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مَالًا ۖ
إِنْ أَجْرِىَ إِلَّا عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَمَآ أَنَا۠
بِطَارِدِ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّهُم مُّلَٰقُوا۟ رَبِّهِمْ
وَلَٰكِنِّىٓ أَرَىٰكُمْ قَوْمًا تَجْهَلُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾
وَيَٰقَوْمِ مَن يَنصُرُنِى مِنَ ٱللَّهِ إِن طَرَدتُّهُمْ ۚ
أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ وَلَآ أَقُولُ لَكُمْ
عِندِى خَزَآئِنُ ٱللَّهِ وَلَآ أَعْلَمُ ٱلْغَيْبَ
وَلَآ أَقُولُ إِنِّى مَلَكٌ وَلَآ أَقُولُ لِلَّذِينَ
تَزْدَرِىٓ أَعْيُنُكُمْ لَن يُؤْتِيَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ خَيْرًا ۖ
ٱللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ ۖ إِنِّىٓ إِذًا

(25) *And We sent forth Noah to his people: "I am for you a warner with a clear message:* (26) *that you worship none but God; I fear for you the suffering of a grievous day!"*
(27) *But the leading persons among his people who stubbornly refused the truth, said "We see you as none other than a human being like ourselves, and we see not any following you but the most debased among us, giving the matter hasty and shallow thinking, and we do not see you in any way more favored than us, but rather we think you are liars.":*
(28) *He said, "O my people! What do you think if I stand on a clear evidence from my Lord, and He has graced me with mercy from Him, to which you have remained blind; shall we force it on you while it is hateful to you?*
(29) *"And O my people! I do not ask of you any material benefit for this [message]; my recompense rests only with God. And I shall not be driving away those who have attained to faith; they shall surely meet their Lord [and He only can judge them]; but I see in you people of ignorance [in making judgements].* (30) *And O my people! Who would support me against God if I drive them away? Will you not be mindful?*
(31) *"And I do not say to you, 'I have God's treasures, and I know not what is beyond the reach of human perception'; nor do I say, 'I am an angel' ; nor do I say of those whom your eyes despise, 'God will never grant them any good'; God knows best what is in their hearts. [If I spoke in such a way,] I would indeed be*

among the evildoers."
(32) *They said, "O Noah! You have argued with us, and have kept on arguing too much! Bring upon us, then, that you do threaten to bring, if you speak truly."*
(33) *He said, "Only God will bring it upon you if He so wills, and you shall never be invincible [for Him].* (34) *And my advice will not benefit you, however sincerely I desire to advise you, if it be God's will to let you remain lost in grievous error. He is your Lord, and to Him you must return."*
(35) *Or do they perchance say, "He has forged it!" Say: "If I have forged it, upon me falls my evil-doing and I am quit of the evil you do."*
(36) *And it was revealed to Noah: "None of your people shall believe but those who have already attained to faith; so be you not distressed by what they may be doing.* (37) *Build under Our eyes and by Our inspiration the ark, and do not appeal to Me about those who have been persistently doing evil; they shall be drowned."*
(38) *And [Noah] set himself to building the ark; and whenever some leading persons of his people passed by him, they scoffed at him. He said, "If you scoff at us, we shall surely [one day] scoff at you, as you are [now] scoffing at us.* (39) *And you shall know whom shall be visited by suffering that will be degrading for him[/her in this life], and upon whom long-lasting suffering shall alight [in the life to come]."*
(40) *[And so this went on] until, when Our command came to pass, and the oven-boiled waters gushed forth in torrents over the face of the earth, We said [unto Noah], "Embark on board of this [ark] one pair of each [kind of animal] of either sex, as well as your family - except those on whom [Our} sentence has already been passed, and all who have attained to faith;" and only a few [of Noah's people] attained with him to faith!*
(41) *He said [to his followers,] "Embark in it*

لَّمِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٣١﴾ قَالُوا۟ يَٰنُوحُ قَدْ
جَٰدَلْتَنَا فَأَكْثَرْتَ جِدَٰلَنَا فَأْتِنَا بِمَا
تَعِدُنَآ إِن كُنتَ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾ قَالَ
إِنَّمَا يَأْتِيكُم بِهِ ٱللَّهُ إِن شَآءَ وَمَآ أَنتُم
بِمُعْجِزِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَلَا يَنفَعُكُمْ نُصْحِىٓ
إِنْ أَرَدتُّ أَنْ أَنصَحَ لَكُمْ إِن كَانَ ٱللَّهُ
يُرِيدُ أَن يُغْوِيَكُمْ ۚ هُوَ رَبُّكُمْ وَإِلَيْهِ
تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾ أَمْ يَقُولُونَ ٱفْتَرَىٰهُ ۖ
قُلْ إِنِ ٱفْتَرَيْتُهُۥ فَعَلَىَّ إِجْرَامِى وَأَنَا۠
بَرِىٓءٌ مِّمَّا تُجْرِمُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾ وَأُوحِىَ
إِلَىٰ نُوحٍ أَنَّهُۥ لَن يُؤْمِنَ مِن قَوْمِكَ إِلَّا
مَن قَدْ ءَامَنَ فَلَا تَبْتَئِسْ بِمَا كَانُوا۟
يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَٱصْنَعِ ٱلْفُلْكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا
وَوَحْيِنَا وَلَا تُخَٰطِبْنِى فِى ٱلَّذِينَ
ظَلَمُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّهُم مُّغْرَقُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾ وَيَصْنَعُ
ٱلْفُلْكَ وَكُلَّمَا مَرَّ عَلَيْهِ مَلَأٌ مِّن قَوْمِهِۦ
سَخِرُوا۟ مِنْهُ ۚ قَالَ إِن تَسْخَرُوا۟ مِنَّا
فَإِنَّا نَسْخَرُ مِنكُمْ كَمَا تَسْخَرُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾
فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ مَن يَأْتِيهِ عَذَابٌ يُخْزِيهِ
وَيَحِلُّ عَلَيْهِ عَذَابٌ مُّقِيمٌ ﴿٣٩﴾ حَتَّىٰٓ
إِذَا جَآءَ أَمْرُنَا وَفَارَ ٱلتَّنُّورُ قُلْنَا
ٱحْمِلْ فِيهَا مِن كُلٍّ زَوْجَيْنِ ٱثْنَيْنِ
وَأَهْلَكَ إِلَّا مَن سَبَقَ عَلَيْهِ ٱلْقَوْلُ وَمَنْ
ءَامَنَ ۚ وَمَآ ءَامَنَ مَعَهُۥٓ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ ﴿٤٠﴾

[the ark]! In the name of God be its sailing and its anchoring! Surely my Lord is All-forgiving, Most Gracious."

(42) *And it sailed with them amid waves like mountains; and Noah called to his son, who was standing apart, "O my dear son! Embark with us, and do not be with those who stubbornly deny the truth!"*

(43) *He said, "I will betake myself to a mountain that will protect me from the waters."*
He [Noah] said, "Today there is no protection from God's command, but for one on whom He has mercy."
And the waves rose up between them, and he was among the drowned.

(44) *And it was spoken, "O earth, swallow your waters; and o sky, be clear!" And the waters subsided, and the command [of God] was accomplished, and the ark settled on the Mount-Judi; and it was said, "Away with these evil-doing folk!"*

(45) *And Noah called unto his Lord and said, "O my Lord! My son is of my family, and what you determine is surely the truth. You are the most just of all those that judge."*

(46) *Said He, " O Noah, he is not of your family; his work was unrighteous [and that has alienated him from you]. Do not ask of Me that whereof you have no knowledge; I admonish you not to be among the ignorant."*

(47) *He [Noah] said, "My Lord, I take refuge with you lest I should ask of you that whereof I have no knowledge; and unless You forgive me and have mercy on me, I shall be among the lost."*

(48) *It was said, "O Noah! Disembark in peace granted from Us, and with [Our] blessings upon you and upon the people [who will be righteous among the descendants] from those who are with you. But [as for the unrighteous] people [among those descendants], We shall allow them to enjoy life [for some time], and then there will befall them grievous suffering from Us."*

وَقَالَ ٱرْكَبُوا۟ فِيهَا بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ
مَجْرٖىٰهَا وَمُرْسَىٰهَآ ۚ إِنَّ رَبِّى لَغَفُورٌ
رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٤١﴾ وَهِىَ تَجْرِى بِهِمْ فِى مَوْجٍ
كَٱلْجِبَالِ وَنَادَىٰ نُوحٌ ٱبْنَهُۥ وَكَانَ فِى
مَعْزِلٍ يَٰبُنَىَّ ٱرْكَب مَّعَنَا وَلَا تَكُن مَّعَ
ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾ قَالَ سَـَٔاوِىٓ إِلَىٰ جَبَلٍ
يَعْصِمُنِى مِنَ ٱلْمَآءِ ۚ قَالَ لَا عَاصِمَ
ٱلْيَوْمَ مِنْ أَمْرِ ٱللَّهِ إِلَّا مَن رَّحِمَ ۚ
وَحَالَ بَيْنَهُمَا ٱلْمَوْجُ فَكَانَ مِنَ
ٱلْمُغْرَقِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾ وَقِيلَ يَٰٓأَرْضُ ٱبْلَعِى
مَآءَكِ وَيَٰسَمَآءُ أَقْلِعِى وَغِيضَ ٱلْمَآءُ
وَقُضِىَ ٱلْأَمْرُ وَٱسْتَوَتْ عَلَى
ٱلْجُودِىِّ ۖ وَقِيلَ بُعْدًا لِّلْقَوْمِ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ
﴿٤٤﴾ وَنَادَىٰ نُوحٌ رَّبَّهُۥ فَقَالَ رَبِّ إِنَّ
ٱبْنِى مِنْ أَهْلِى وَإِنَّ وَعْدَكَ ٱلْحَقُّ
وَأَنتَ أَحْكَمُ ٱلْحَٰكِمِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾ قَالَ يَٰنُوحُ
إِنَّهُۥ لَيْسَ مِنْ أَهْلِكَ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ عَمَلٌ غَيْرُ
صَٰلِحٍ ۖ فَلَا تَسْـَٔلْنِ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِۦ
عِلْمٌ ۖ إِنِّىٓ أَعِظُكَ أَن تَكُونَ مِنَ
ٱلْجَٰهِلِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّىٓ أَعُوذُ بِكَ
أَنْ أَسْـَٔلَكَ مَا لَيْسَ لِى بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ ۖ وَإِلَّا
تَغْفِرْ لِى وَتَرْحَمْنِىٓ أَكُن مِّنَ ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ
﴿٤٧﴾ قِيلَ يَٰنُوحُ ٱهْبِطْ بِسَلَٰمٍ مِّنَّا
وَبَرَكَٰتٍ عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَىٰٓ أُمَمٍ مِّمَّن مَّعَكَ ۚ
وَأُمَمٌ سَنُمَتِّعُهُمْ ثُمَّ يَمَسُّهُم مِّنَّا عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٤٨﴾

(49) *These accounts, of that which was behind the reach of your knowledge, We reveal to you; neither you nor people know them [in such details] before this [revelation]. Be, then, [like Noah] steadfastly patient; the future is for those who are God-conscious.* [11:25-49]

تِلْكَ مِنْ أَنۢبَآءِ ٱلْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهَآ
إِلَيْكَ ۖ مَا كُنتَ تَعْلَمُهَآ أَنتَ وَلَا قَوْمُكَ
مِن قَبْلِ هَٰذَا ۖ فَٱصْبِرْ ۖ إِنَّ ٱلْعَٰقِبَةَ
لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾

And as soon as you and those who are with you are settled in the ark say, "All praise and gratitude are due to God who has saved us from the evil-doing folk." And say, "O my Lord! Grant me a blessed landing and You are the best to cause one to [securely] land and be settled." Surely in that are signs and messages, as We have been always putting [human beings] to test. [23:28-30; see also the previous verses 23-27]

فَإِذَا
ٱسْتَوَيْتَ أَنتَ وَمَن مَّعَكَ عَلَى ٱلْفُلْكِ
فَقُلِ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى نَجَّىٰنَا مِنَ ٱلْقَوْمِ
ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٢٨﴾ وَقُل رَّبِّ أَنزِلْنِى مُنزَلًا
مُّبَارَكًا وَأَنتَ خَيْرُ ٱلْمُنزِلِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾ إِنَّ
فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ وَإِن كُنَّا لَمُبْتَلِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾

And the people of Noah: when they denounced as liars the conveyors of {Our] messages, We caused them to be drowned, and made them a sign for people; and grievous suffering have We readied for all evildoers. [25:37]

وَقَوْمَ نُوحٍ لَّمَّا كَذَّبُوا۟ ٱلرُّسُلَ
أَغْرَقْنَٰهُمْ وَجَعَلْنَٰهُمْ لِلنَّاسِ ءَايَةً ۖ
وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلظَّٰلِمِينَ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿٣٧﴾

And We sent forth Noah to his people, and he - [through his message] remained among them for a thousand years, all but fifty; and the flood seized them as they were evildoers. And We saved him, together with all who were in the ark, which We set up as a sign to all people. [29:14-15]

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ
قَوْمِهِۦ فَلَبِثَ فِيهِمْ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ إِلَّا خَمْسِينَ
عَامًا فَأَخَذَهُمُ ٱلطُّوفَانُ وَهُمْ ظَٰلِمُونَ
﴿١٤﴾ فَأَنجَيْنَٰهُ وَأَصْحَٰبَ ٱلسَّفِينَةِ
وَجَعَلْنَٰهَآ ءَايَةً لِّلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٥﴾

(105) *The people of Noah denounce as liars the conveyors of [Our] message,* (106) *when their brother Noah said to them, "Will you not be conscious of God?* (107) *I am a conveyor of [God's] message, sincere and trustworthy;* (108) *be, then, conscious of God, and follow me [in what I advise you to do].* (109) *And no reward whatsoever do I ask you for it; my reward is only with the Lord of all being.* (110) *Hence, remain conscious of God, and follow me [in*

كَذَّبَتْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ
ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٠٥﴾ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ
نُوحٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٠٦﴾ إِنِّى لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ
أَمِينٌ ﴿١٠٧﴾ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ
﴿١٠٨﴾ وَمَآ أَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ ۖ إِنْ
أَجْرِىَ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٠٩﴾

فَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَ أَطِيعُونِ ﴿١١٠﴾ ۞ قَالُوٓاْ
أَنُؤۡمِنُ لَكَ وَ ٱتَّبَعَكَ ٱلۡأَرۡذَلُونَ ﴿١١١﴾
قَالَ وَ مَا عِلۡمِي بِمَا كَانُواْ يَعۡمَلُونَ
﴿١١٢﴾ إِنۡ حِسَابُهُمۡ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ رَبِّي ۖ لَوۡ
تَشۡعُرُونَ ﴿١١٣﴾ وَ مَآ أَنَا۠ بِطَارِدِ
ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ ﴿١١٤﴾ إِنۡ أَنَا۠ إِلَّا نَذِيرٞ مُّبِينٞ
﴿١١٥﴾ قَالُواْ لَئِن لَّمۡ تَنتَهِ يَٰنُوحُ لَتَكُونَنَّ
مِنَ ٱلۡمَرۡجُومِينَ ﴿١١٦﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ إِنَّ
قَوۡمِي كَذَّبُونِ ﴿١١٧﴾ فَٱفۡتَحۡ بَيۡنِي وَ بَيۡنَهُمۡ
فَتۡحٗا وَ نَجِّنِي وَ مَن مَّعِيَ مِنَ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ
﴿١١٨﴾ فَأَنجَيۡنَٰهُ وَ مَن مَّعَهُۥ فِي ٱلۡفُلۡكِ
ٱلۡمَشۡحُونِ ﴿١١٩﴾ ثُمَّ أَغۡرَقۡنَا بَعۡدُ
ٱلۡبَاقِينَ ﴿١٢٠﴾ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَأٓيَةٗ ۖ وَ مَا
كَانَ أَكۡثَرُهُم مُّؤۡمِنُونَ ﴿١٢١﴾ وَ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ
لَهُوَ ٱلۡعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٢٢﴾

what I advise you to do].”
(111) *They said, :”Shall we believe you, while the most debased have followed you?”*
(112) *He said, “And what knowledge could I have about what they have been doing before [their attainment to faith]?”*
(113) *“The account [of all their deeds] is only with my Lord, if you could feel [the right thing that should be done].* (114) *I shall not, then, drive away those who have attained to faith;* (115) *I am not naught but a clear warner.”*
(116) *They said, “If you desist not, O Noah, you will assuredly be stoned to death.”*
(117) *He said, “O my Lord! My people have denounced me as a liar;* (118) *hence make the truth clear by what you decide between me and them, and save me and the believers who are with me!”*
(119) *And so We saved him and those [who were] with him in the fully-laden ark,* (120) *and then We caused the others who stayed behind to be drowned.*
(121) *Surely in that is a sign and message [to people], even though most do not [pay attention and] believe;* (122) and *your Lord - alone - is the All-mighty, the Most Gracious.* [26:105-122]

ضَرَبَ ٱللَّهُ مَثَلٗا لِّلَّذِينَ
كَفَرُواْ ٱمۡرَأَتَ نُوحٖ وَ ٱمۡرَأَتَ لُوطٖ ۖ
كَانَتَا تَحۡتَ عَبۡدَيۡنِ مِنۡ عِبَادِنَا صَٰلِحَيۡنِ
فَخَانَتَاهُمَا فَلَمۡ يُغۡنِيَا عَنۡهُمَا مِنَ ٱللَّهِ
شَيۡـٔٗا وَ قِيلَ ٱدۡخُلَا ٱلنَّارَ مَعَ ٱلدَّٰخِلِينَ ﴿١٠﴾

For those who stubbornly deny the truth, God has given the example of the wife of [the prophet] Noah and the wife of [the prophet] Lot, [who] were wedded to two of Our righteous worshippers, but they betrayed them, so they availed them nothing whatsoever against God; and it was said [to them], “Enter, you two, the fire with those who enter.” [66:10]

إِنَّآ أَرۡسَلۡنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوۡمِهِۦٓ أَنۡ أَنذِرۡ
قَوۡمَكَ مِن قَبۡلِ أَن يَأۡتِيَهُمۡ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٞ
﴿١﴾ قَالَ يَٰقَوۡمِ إِنِّي لَكُمۡ نَذِيرٞ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٢﴾

(1) *We sent Noah to his people, [saying:] “Warn your people before a grievous suffering befalls them.”*
(2) *He said, “O my people! I am but a clear warner to you,* (3) *[to tell you] ‘Worship God*

أَنِ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱتَّقُوهُ وَأَطِيعُونِ ۝٣
يَغْفِرْ لَكُم مِّن ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَيُؤَخِّرْكُمْ
إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۚ إِنَّ أَجَلَ ٱللَّهِ إِذَا
جَآءَ لَا يُؤَخَّرُ ۖ لَوْ كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ۝٤
قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّى دَعَوْتُ قَوْمِى لَيْلًا وَنَهَارًا
۝٥ فَلَمْ يَزِدْهُمْ دُعَآءِىٓ إِلَّا فِرَارًا ۝٦
وَإِنِّى كُلَّمَا دَعَوْتُهُمْ لِتَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ جَعَلُوٓا۟
أَصَٰبِعَهُمْ فِىٓ ءَاذَانِهِمْ وَٱسْتَغْشَوْا۟
ثِيَابَهُمْ وَأَصَرُّوا۟ وَٱسْتَكْبَرُوا۟
ٱسْتِكْبَارًا ۝٧ ثُمَّ إِنِّى دَعَوْتُهُمْ جِهَارًا
۝٨ ثُمَّ إِنِّىٓ أَعْلَنتُ لَهُمْ وَأَسْرَرْتُ لَهُمْ
إِسْرَارًا ۝٩ فَقُلْتُ ٱسْتَغْفِرُوا۟ رَبَّكُمْ
إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ غَفَّارًا ۝١٠ يُرْسِلِ ٱلسَّمَآءَ
عَلَيْكُم مِّدْرَارًا ۝١١ وَيُمْدِدْكُم بِأَمْوَٰلٍ
وَبَنِينَ وَيَجْعَل لَّكُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ وَيَجْعَل لَّكُمْ
أَنْهَٰرًا ۝١٢ مَّا لَكُمْ لَا تَرْجُونَ لِلَّهِ
وَقَارًا ۝١٣ وَقَدْ خَلَقَكُمْ أَطْوَارًا ۝١٤
أَلَمْ تَرَوْا۟ كَيْفَ خَلَقَ ٱللَّهُ سَبْعَ سَمَٰوَٰتٍ
طِبَاقًا ۝١٥ وَجَعَلَ ٱلْقَمَرَ فِيهِنَّ نُورًا
وَجَعَلَ ٱلشَّمْسَ سِرَاجًا ۝١٦ وَٱللَّهُ
أَنۢبَتَكُم مِّنَ ٱلْأَرْضِ نَبَاتًا ۝١٧ ثُمَّ
يُعِيدُكُمْ فِيهَا وَيُخْرِجُكُمْ إِخْرَاجًا ۝١٨
وَٱللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلْأَرْضَ بِسَاطًا ۝١٩
لِّتَسْلُكُوا۟ مِنْهَا سُبُلًا فِجَاجًا ۝٢٠ قَالَ

[alone] and be conscious of Him, and follow me [in what I advise you to do], (4) *and so He forgives you some of your wrong doing, and grants you a respite for an appointed term [by Him]; and when the term appointed by God comes it can never be delayed; did you but know!"*

(5) *He said, "My Lord! I have been calling my people by night and by day,* (6) *but my calling has caused them only to go away further!* (7) *And whenever I called unto them for gaining your forgiveness, they put their fingers in their ears [to avoid hearing my call], and they wrapped themselves in their garments [to keep themselves untouched by my words], and went on [with] their stubbornness and became more and more haughty.*

(8) *"And I called unto them openly;* (9) *I spoke to them in public and I spoke to them privately as well;* (10) *and I said [to my people,] "Ask your Lord to forgive you your evil-doing; and surely He is All-forgiving!* (11) *He will shower upon you heavenly blessings abundant,* (12) *and will provide you with worldly goods and children, and will grant you gardens and grant you running waters.* (13) *How can you not look forward to God's majesty,* (14) *seeing that your creation by Him has passed through successive stages [one after another and thus a resurrection in the life to come can be expected].*

(15) *Do you not see how God has created seven heavens in full order and harmony,* (16) *and has set up within them the moon as a light [reflected] and set up the sun as a [radiant] illuminator?*

(17) *"And God has caused you to grow out of the earth in a certain way of growth,* (18) *and thereafter He shall return you to it [in death], and [then] He shall bring you [from it] in resurrection.*

(19) *"And God has the earth a wide expanse for you,* (20) *so that you might walk on it through various possible paths."*

Noah said, "O my Lord! They have disobeyed

me [in my call upon them to follow your message], while they have been following those whose wealth and children only increase their loss. (22) *They and who have devised their most formidable plot,* (23) *saying [to one another;] 'Never forsake your gods; do not abandon neither Wadd nor Suwa' and neither Yaghuth nor Ya'uq nor Nasr'.* (24) *Those have led so many astray; just let the wrong doers go even further astray [leaving them to their own free will's which have been leading them astray].*

(25) *And so, because of their evil-doing, they were drowned, and they shall suffer the fire, and they found no supporter apart from God.* (26) *And Noah prayed, "O my Lord! Leave not on the earth any of those who stubbornly deny the truth.* (27) *Surely, if You do leave them, they will [always try to] lead astray those who worship You, and give birth only to one who is wicked and stubbornly denies the truth.*

(28) *"O my Lord! Forgive me and my parents and whosoever enters my house as a believer, and all the believing men and women, and do increase the evildoers only in ruin."* [71:1-28]

نُوحٌ رَّبِّ إِنَّهُمْ عَصَوْنِي وَ ٱتَّبَعُوا۟ مَن لَّمْ
يَزِدْهُ مَالُهُۥ وَ وَلَدُهُۥٓ إِلَّا خَسَارًا ﴿٢١﴾
وَ مَكَرُوا۟ مَكْرًا كُبَّارًا ﴿٢٢﴾ وَ قَالُوا۟ لَا
تَذَرُنَّ ءَالِهَتَكُمْ وَ لَا تَذَرُنَّ وَدًّا وَ لَا
سُوَاعًا وَ لَا يَغُوثَ وَ يَعُوقَ وَ نَسْرًا
﴿٢٣﴾ وَ قَدْ أَضَلُّوا۟ كَثِيرًا ۖ وَ لَا تَزِدِ
ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ إِلَّا ضَلَٰلًا ﴿٢٤﴾ مِّمَّا
خَطِيٓـَٰٔتِهِمْ أُغْرِقُوا۟ فَأُدْخِلُوا۟ نَارًا فَلَمْ
يَجِدُوا۟ لَهُم مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ أَنصَارًا ﴿٢٥﴾
وَ قَالَ نُوحٌ رَّبِّ لَا تَذَرْ عَلَى ٱلْأَرْضِ مِنَ
ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ دَيَّارًا ﴿٢٦﴾ إِنَّكَ إِن تَذَرْهُمْ
يُضِلُّوا۟ عِبَادَكَ وَ لَا يَلِدُوٓا۟ إِلَّا فَاجِرًا
كَفَّارًا ﴿٢٧﴾ رَّبِّ ٱغْفِرْ لِي وَ لِوَٰلِدَيَّ
وَلِمَن دَخَلَ بَيْتِيَ مُؤْمِنًا وَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ
وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ وَ لَا تَزِدِ
ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ إِلَّا تَبَارًا ﴿٢٨﴾

The Quranic details about Adam which includes information about God's guidance to him, educates the human being about his/her nature, spiritual-intellectual-linguistic faculties which help/her understand what is right or wrong, and his/her free will to do whatever he/she chooses. It guides us about Satan and his evident enmity towards the human being which is obvious in his intelligent and persistent trapping of him/her since the earliest human onwards. Through God's guidance to Adam we know how to resist Satanic seduction, and how human curiosity and desire for life, power, superiority and sexual pleasure are always exploited by Satan in order to turn the person away from what is right.

The next link in the chain of God's guidance to the human being, as told in the Quran, is the message of Nuh (Noah), which is usually presented briefly, although details are sometimes given, with a different emphasis on certain points each time. But in any case, the essence of Noah's message is the same of all God's messages: "*O my people! Worship God alone; you have no God other than Him*" [7: 59; also 11: 26; see for other messages 7: 65, 73, 85; 11: 50, 61, 84]. Once again, the main objection of the people to Noah's message was by no means related to the message itself, but to the person of its conveyor, as he was just "*a man from among yourselves*" [7: 63], "*a human being like ourselves*" [11: 27],

and his followers in the enemies' view were but *"the most debased among us who gave the matter a hasty and shallow thinking"* [11: 27; see also 26: 111]. However, even if the objections of the people of Noah against his message lacked reason and common sense, he still stressed the principle of all of God's messages: that every human being has to freely think, judge and decide for himself/herself about any matter; *"...shall we force it [God's guidance and grace] on you while it is hateful to you?"* [11: 28]. Noah also emphasized individual responsibility, *"...upon me falls my evil-doing, and I am quit of the evil you do"* [11: 35].

However bitterly the enemies of the truth acted in their opposition and mockery of Noah and the believers, and in their defiance of God, Noah made it clear to them that he himself could not cause them any benefit or harm, even when the stubborn rejectors of his message escalated their challenge to stoning him to death [26:116]. He stressed that all belongs to God: *"And I do not say to you, 'God's treasures are with me, or I know what is beyond the human perception..."* [11: 31], *"...God will bring it [His command of suffering for the evildoers] upon you if He wills, and you shall never be invincible [for Him]"* [11:33].

The Quran states how persistently Noah called his people in all possible ways: day and night, secretly and openly [71: 5-9]. He called them to worship God alone and to seek His forgiveness for their evil-doing. He persuaded them that when their own selves became balanced and stable through the faith in God, and when they behaved righteously in their relations with others, then they would be rewarded in this life and they would receive the mighty reward in the eternal life to come: *"and He will send to you heavenly blessings and rain in abundance and will provide you with wealth and children and will cause you to have gardens and to have [secure sources] of running waters"* [71: 11-12]. He called their attention to God's power manifested in the miraculous creation and order of the universe: the successive stages of the creation of the human being, the development of the human life in all its dimensions, the multiplicity of the cosmos, the reflected light of the moon and the radiant sun that is a source of heat and light, and the earth's form that allows the human to move on its surface although it is round in its totality [71: 13-20]. Such observations during that early time of human life underline how God's guidance has always emphasized the physical message of His creation that is revealed in the whole universe, in addition to His intellectual-moral-spiritual message that was revealed to the prophets.

However, in spite of all these efforts in presenting the message, most of the people of Noah so persistently and stubbornly denied the truth that they blocked their ears with their fingers so that they might not hear the message, and they wrapped themselves up in their garments to keep themselves untouched by its logic and impressive guidance. Instead, they were tempted to follow those who enjoyed enormous wealth and numerous children, even though indulgence in such pleasures of this world's life would constantly cause them a great loss in this world's life and in the life to come [71:21]. These people ignored all the persuasive efforts of the conveyor of God's message, and insisted instead on worshipping their five false gods, and only a few believed in Noah's message [11: 40].

Noah seemed to be so outraged by his people's stubbornness and arrogance that he prayed, *"O my Lord! Leave not on the earth any of those who stubbornly denied the truth"* [71: 26]. He had lost the slightest hope of persuading them to follow the truth; on

the contrary, he believed that not only would they always insist on their evil-doing, but that they would also do their best to make righteous people go astray, and that they would raise their children to be as evil as themselves [71: 27]. Thus, he was convinced that eliminating such a source of evil might be good for the others and fair for all. Prophet Muhammad later did not accept to curse those who had stubbornly denied the truth, even if they suppressed the believers and waged war against them. He said, "I have not been sent to curse; I have been sent as a mercy. God may bring out of their loins who would worship Him. O God! Guide my people; they do not know" [reported by Muslim, Abu Dawud and Ibn Hanbal]. Despite these attitudes, Noah seemed kind and caring about his parents, as he was with regard to his son. He prayed for their forgiveness together with all the believers, while he asked God to *"increase the evildoers only in ruin"* [71: 28].

The people of Noah were hit by the flood, but the prophet and the believers were saved by embarking on the ark that Noah had been inspired by God to build. The Quran clearly indicates that the flood struck only *"those who denounced Our messages as lies"* [7: 64], and that this was because of their evil-doing [71: 25]. Accordingly it was not a world deluge; it affected only the land of Noah's people, which has not been identified in the Quran, although Mount Judi, at which the ark came to rest, has been thought to be probably in eastern Asia Minor or northern Mesopotamia. God's guidance to Noah taught human beings how to deal with natural disasters, and how to survive them. The believers moved to a dry and secure place, taking *"one pair of each [kind of animal] of either sex"* [11:40], and thus the new settlement could continue to develop social life: *"and We let their generations successively follow them"* [10: 73]. Throughout the journey, the believers were taught to remember God on board the ark: *"In the name of God be its sailing and its anchoring"* [11: 41]; *"All praise and gratitude are due to God who has saved us from the evil-doing folk"* [23: 28], and when they landed as well, *"O my Lord! Grant me a blessed landing, and you are the best to cause one to [securely] land and be settled"* [23: 29].

The verses related to Noah's appeal to his son, followed by his later prayer to God about his son, are very touching. The conveyor of God's message was a father who could not ignore his paternal emotions: *"And it [the ark] sailed with them amid waves like mountains, and Noah called to his son who was standing apart, 'O my dear son! Embark with us, and do not be with those who stubbornly deny the truth.' He said, 'I will betake myself to a mountain that will protect me from the waters.' [Noah] said, 'Today there is no protection from God's command but for one on whom He has mercy.' And the waves rose up between them, and he was among the drowned"* [11:42-43]. Furthermore, Noah, with his kind fatherly heart, tried to save his son in the eternal life to come, even when he had failed to save him in this life: *"And Noah called unto His Lord and said, 'O my Lord! My son is of my family, and Your promise surely comes true, and You are the most just and determined of all judges." Said He, "Noah! He is not of your family; it is a deed that is not righteous. Do not ask of Me that whereof you have no knowledge..' Said he [Noah], 'My Lord! I seek protection from asking of you that whereof I have no knowledge, and if you forgive me not and bestow not Your grace on me, I shall be among the lost!"* [11:45-47]. These verses demonstrate that there is no favoritism in God's judgement even for a conveyor of His message, but it was human that Noah tried!

Noah had another problem in his family: his wife sided with the stubborn rejectors of his message. Just as Noah could be of no avail to his son, he was faced with the same situation with regard to his wife. Even a prophet cannot cause any change in the absolute justice of God against a wrongdoer who is closely related to him, "*and it is said, 'Enter [the two of you - Noah's wife and Lot's wife] the fire with the [evildoers] who have to enter it!'*" [66: 10].

The Quran indicates that Noah stayed among his people for 950 years. Did this long period represent the duration of the 'message' or the 'mission' or the conveyor's life? In other words, did Noah live all that long time, or was it that his message survived throughout those long centuries, even if the believers who initially accepted the message were few [11: 40]? The Quranic statement may allow both understandings, while in the statement of the Bible [Genesis IX: 29] it is clear that the figure represents Noah's life.

CONVEYORS OF GOD'S MESSAGE IN ANCIENT ARABIA: HUD, SALIH, SHU'AYB

HUD AND THE PEOPLE OF 'AD, SALIH AND THE PEOPLE OF THAMUD

(65) *And to [the people of] 'Ad [We sent] their brother Hud; he said, "O my people! Worship God alone; you have no god other than He. Will you not be conscious of Him?"*
(66) *The leading persons among his people who stubbornly denied the truth said, "We see you in folly, and we think you are a liar!"*
(67) *He said, "O my people! There is no folly in me, but I am a conveyor of the message from the Lord of all being.* (68) *I deliver to you the message of my Lord, and I am to you a sincere and trustworthy advisor.*
(69) *"Do you wonder that there has come to you a tiding from your Lord through a man from among yourselves to warn you? And remember that He made you successors to the people of Noah [in power on earth] and endowed you with power abundantly; remember then God's bounties, so that You may attain to happiness and success!"*
(70) *They said, "Have you come to us [telling] that we may worship God alone and give up all that our forefathers worshipped? Bring us, then, what you threaten us with, if you are*

وَإِلَىٰ عَادٍ أَخَاهُمْ هُودًا ۚ قَالَ
يَٰقَوْمِ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَٰهٍ
غَيْرُهُۥٓ ۚ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾ قَالَ ٱلْمَلَأُ
ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِن قَوْمِهِۦٓ إِنَّا لَنَرَىٰكَ فِى
سَفَاهَةٍ وَإِنَّا لَنَظُنُّكَ مِنَ ٱلْكَٰذِبِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾
قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ لَيْسَ بِى سَفَاهَةٌ وَلَٰكِنِّى
رَسُولٌ مِّن رَّبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾ أُبَلِّغُكُمْ
رِسَٰلَٰتِ رَبِّى وَأَنَا۠ لَكُمْ نَاصِحٌ أَمِينٌ
﴿٦٨﴾ أَوَعَجِبْتُمْ أَن جَآءَكُمْ ذِكْرٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ
عَلَىٰ رَجُلٍ مِّنكُمْ لِيُنذِرَكُمْ ۚ وَٱذْكُرُوٓا۟ إِذْ
جَعَلَكُمْ خُلَفَآءَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ قَوْمِ نُوحٍ وَزَادَكُمْ
فِى ٱلْخَلْقِ بَصْۜطَةً ۖ فَٱذْكُرُوٓا۟ ءَالَآءَ ٱللَّهِ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾ قَالُوٓا۟ أَجِئْتَنَا
لِنَعْبُدَ ٱللَّهَ وَحْدَهُۥ وَنَذَرَ مَا كَانَ يَعْبُدُ
ءَابَآؤُنَا ۖ فَأْتِنَا بِمَا تَعِدُنَآ إِن كُنتَ مِنَ

among those who only tell the truth!"

(71) *He [Hud] said, "Abomination and wrath from your Lord have already befallen you; do you argue with me over [empty] names which you have named, you and your forefathers, for which God has never sent any authority? Wait, then [for what shall happen]; I shall wait with you!"*

(72) *And so, by Our grace, We saved him and those who were with him and We cut off the remnants of those who denounced Our signs and messages as lies and stubbornly did not believe.*

(73) *And to [the people of] Thamud [We sent] their brother Salih; he said, "O my people! Worship God alone; you have no other God than He; there has now come unto you a clear sign from your Lord! This is the she-camel of God, a sign for you, so leave her alone to eat [from the pasture] on God's earth and do no harm, lest grievous suffering should overtake you.* (74) *And remember how He made you successors to the 'Ad people [in power on earth] and settled you firmly in the land, building for yourselves castles in plains and hewing out its mountains as dwellings; so remember, then, God's bounties and refrain from evil and corruption on earth."*

(75) *The leading persons among his people who felt haughty said to those who were suppressed among the believers, "Do you know indeed that Salih is sent by his Lord?" They said, "In the message he has been sent with we believe."* (76) *Those who felt haughty said, "As for us, what you believe in we reject."*

(77) *And then they hamstrung the she-camel and insolently defied their Lord's command saying, " O Salih! Bring about your threats if you are [truly] sent by God!"*

(78) *So the earthquakes suddenly seized them, and then they lay in the morning lifeless on the ground in their own homes.*

(79) So Salih turned his back on them saying, "O my people! I did indeed deliver to you the

ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ ﴿٧٠﴾ قَالَ قَدْ وَقَعَ عَلَيْكُم مِّن
رَّبِّكُمْ رِجْسٌ وَغَضَبٌ ۖ أَتُجَٰدِلُونَنِى فِىٓ
أَسْمَآءٍ سَمَّيْتُمُوهَآ أَنتُمْ وَءَابَآؤُكُم مَّا
نَزَّلَ ٱللَّهُ بِهَا مِن سُلْطَٰنٍ ۚ فَٱنتَظِرُوٓا۟
إِنِّى مَعَكُم مِّنَ ٱلْمُنتَظِرِينَ ﴿٧١﴾
فَأَنجَيْنَٰهُ وَٱلَّذِينَ مَعَهُۥ بِرَحْمَةٍ مِّنَّا
وَقَطَعْنَا دَابِرَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا ۖ
وَمَا كَانُوا۟ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٧٢﴾ وَإِلَىٰ ثَمُودَ
أَخَاهُمْ صَٰلِحًا ۚ قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ
مَا لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرُهُۥ ۖ قَدْ جَآءَتْكُم
بَيِّنَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ ۖ هَٰذِهِۦ نَاقَةُ ٱللَّهِ لَكُمْ
ءَايَةً ۖ فَذَرُوهَا تَأْكُلْ فِىٓ أَرْضِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ
وَلَا تَمَسُّوهَا بِسُوٓءٍ فَيَأْخُذَكُمْ عَذَابٌ
أَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٣﴾ وَٱذْكُرُوٓا۟ إِذْ جَعَلَكُمْ خُلَفَآءَ
مِنۢ بَعْدِ عَادٍ وَبَوَّأَكُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ
تَتَّخِذُونَ مِن سُهُولِهَا قُصُورًا وَتَنْحِتُونَ
ٱلْجِبَالَ بُيُوتًا ۖ فَٱذْكُرُوٓا۟ ءَالَآءَ ٱللَّهِ
وَلَا تَعْثَوْا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٧٤﴾
قَالَ ٱلْمَلَأُ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱسْتَكْبَرُوا۟ مِن قَوْمِهِۦ
لِلَّذِينَ ٱسْتُضْعِفُوا۟ لِمَنْ ءَامَنَ مِنْهُمْ
أَتَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ صَٰلِحًا مُّرْسَلٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦ ۚ
قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّا بِمَآ أُرْسِلَ بِهِۦ مُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾
قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱسْتَكْبَرُوٓا۟ إِنَّا بِٱلَّذِىٓ ءَامَنتُم
بِهِۦ كَٰفِرُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾ فَعَقَرُوا۟ ٱلنَّاقَةَ
وَعَتَوْا۟ عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهِمْ وَقَالُوا۟ يَٰصَٰلِحُ
ٱئْتِنَا بِمَا تَعِدُنَآ إِن كُنتَ مِنَ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ
﴿٧٧﴾ فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ ٱلرَّجْفَةُ فَأَصْبَحُوا۟ فِى
دَارِهِمْ جَٰثِمِينَ ﴿٧٨﴾ فَتَوَلَّىٰ عَنْهُمْ
وَقَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ لَقَدْ أَبْلَغْتُكُمْ رِسَالَةَ رَبِّى

message of my Lord, and I advised you sincerely, but you love not sincere advisors." [7:65-79; see also 11: 50-68; 41:13-18]

وَنَصَحْتُ لَكُمْ وَلَٰكِن لَّا تُحِبُّونَ ٱلنَّٰصِحِينَ ﴿٧٩﴾

And the people of al-Hijr denounced as liars the conveyors of [Our] messages.

We brought them Our signs and messages, but they obstinately turned their backs to them, [since] they were heaving out dwellings from mountains and lived in security. And so the blast [of Our punishment] seized them in the morning, and of no avail to them [was] all [the wealth and power] that they had earned. [15:80-84]

وَلَقَدْ كَذَّبَ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْحِجْرِ
ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾ وَءَاتَيْنَٰهُمْ ءَايَٰتِنَا
فَكَانُوا۟ عَنْهَا مُعْرِضِينَ ﴿٨١﴾ وَكَانُوا۟
يَنْحِتُونَ مِنَ ٱلْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا ءَامِنِينَ
﴿٨٢﴾ فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ ٱلصَّيْحَةُ مُصْبِحِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾
فَمَآ أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا۟ يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾

(123) *[And the people of] 'Ad denounced as liars the conveyors of God's messages,* (124) *when their brother Hud said to them, " Will you be conscious of God?* (125) *I am a conveyor [of His message sent by Him] to you, worthy of trust;* (126) *be, then, conscious of God, and follow me [in what I advise you to do].* (127) *And no recompense whatsoever do I ask of you for it; my recompense rests only with the Lord of all being.*

(128) *"Do you build monumental construction on every height?* (129) *And make for yourselves mighty castles, thinking that you live forever?* (130) *And whenever you use power you act as tyrants!*

(131) *"Be then conscious of God and follow me [in what I advise you to do].* (132) *Be conscious of Him who has amply provided you with all that you know:* (133) *amply provided you with livestock and children* (134) *and gardens and springs;* (135) *truly I fear that suffering befalls you on a dreadful day."*

(136)*They said, "It is the same to us, whether you preach or you are not among the preachers.*(137)It is *the tradition of the earliest ancestors simply being carried on [through generations].*(138) *No chastisement will befall us."*

كَذَّبَتْ عَادٌ
ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٢٣﴾ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ
هُودٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٢٤﴾ إِنِّى لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ
أَمِينٌ ﴿١٢٥﴾ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ
﴿١٢٦﴾ وَمَآ أَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ ۖ إِنْ
أَجْرِىَ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٢٧﴾
أَتَبْنُونَ بِكُلِّ رِيعٍ ءَايَةً تَعْبَثُونَ ﴿١٢٨﴾
وَتَتَّخِذُونَ مَصَانِعَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَخْلُدُونَ ﴿١٢٩﴾
وَإِذَا بَطَشْتُم بَطَشْتُمْ جَبَّارِينَ ﴿١٣٠﴾
فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿١٣١﴾ وَٱتَّقُوا۟
ٱلَّذِىٓ أَمَدَّكُم بِمَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٣٢﴾ أَمَدَّكُم
بِأَنْعَٰمٍ وَبَنِينَ ﴿١٣٣﴾ وَجَنَّٰتٍ وَعُيُونٍ
﴿١٣٤﴾ إِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ
عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٣٥﴾ قَالُوا۟ سَوَآءٌ عَلَيْنَآ أَوَعَظْتَ
أَمْ لَمْ تَكُن مِّنَ ٱلْوَٰعِظِينَ ﴿١٣٦﴾ إِنْ هَٰذَآ
إِلَّا خُلُقُ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٣٧﴾ وَمَا نَحْنُ
بِمُعَذَّبِينَ ﴿١٣٨﴾ فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَهْلَكْنَٰهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ

(139) *And so they denounced him as a liar, and thereupon We destroyed them.* (140) *Surely in that is a sign and message, and most of them did not believe, and surely your Lord is the All-mighty, the Most Gracious.*
(141) *[The people of] Thamud denounced as liars the conveyors of [God's] messages,* (142) *when their brother Salih said to them, "Will you be conscious of God?* (143) *I am a conveyor of His message [sent by Him] to you and worthy of trust,* (144) *so be conscious of God and follow me [in what I advise you to do].* (145) *And no recompense whatsoever do I ask of you for it; my recompense rests only with the Lord of all being.*
(146) *"Do you think that you will be left secure [forever] in the midst of what you have here now:* (147) *amidst gardens and springs* (148) *and fields and palm trees with slender spathes?* (149) *And that you [will be left forever to] skillfully hew elegant dwellings out of the mountains?*
(150) *So be conscious of God, and follow me [in what I advise you to do],* (151) *and do not follow those who are used to exceed [the limits],* (152) *those who commit corruption on earth, and set not things aright."*
(153) *They said, "You are merely one of those that are bewitched!* (154) *You are naught but a human being like us; come, then, forward with a sign, if you are one of the truthful."*
(155) *He said, "This is a she-camel; to her is a share of water and to you a share, on the days appointed [thereof],* (156) *and do her no harm lest suffering should befall you on a dreadful day."*
(157) *But they hamstrung her, and in the morning they felt remorseful, [but it was too late]* (158) *and then the suffering seized them. Surely in that is a sign and a message, and most of them did not believe,* (159) *and surely your Lord is the All-mighty, the Most Gracious.* [26:123-159]

فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً ۖ وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُم
مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٣٩﴾ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ
ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٤٠﴾ كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ
﴿١٤١﴾ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ صَٰلِحٌ أَلَا
تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٤٢﴾ إِنِّى لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ
﴿١٤٣﴾ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿١٤٤﴾
وَمَآ أَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ ۖ إِنْ أَجْرِىَ
إِلَّا عَلَىٰ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٤٥﴾ أَتُتْرَكُونَ
فِى مَا هَٰهُنَآ ءَامِنِينَ ﴿١٤٦﴾ فِى جَنَّٰتٍ
وَعُيُونٍ ﴿١٤٧﴾ وَزُرُوعٍ وَنَخْلٍ طَلْعُهَا
هَضِيمٌ ﴿١٤٨﴾ وَتَنْحِتُونَ مِنَ ٱلْجِبَالِ
بُيُوتًا فَٰرِهِينَ ﴿١٤٩﴾ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ
وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿١٥٠﴾ وَلَا تُطِيعُوٓا۟ أَمْرَ
ٱلْمُسْرِفِينَ ﴿١٥١﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يُفْسِدُونَ فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا يُصْلِحُونَ ﴿١٥٢﴾ قَالُوٓا۟
إِنَّمَآ أَنتَ مِنَ ٱلْمُسَحَّرِينَ ﴿١٥٣﴾ مَآ أَنتَ
إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُنَا فَأْتِ بِـَٔايَةٍ إِن كُنتَ مِنَ
ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ ﴿١٥٤﴾ قَالَ هَٰذِهِۦ نَاقَةٌ لَّهَا
شِرْبٌ وَلَكُمْ شِرْبُ يَوْمٍ مَّعْلُومٍ ﴿١٥٥﴾ وَلَا
تَمَسُّوهَا بِسُوٓءٍ فَيَأْخُذَكُمْ عَذَابُ يَوْمٍ
عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٥٦﴾ فَعَقَرُوهَا فَأَصْبَحُوا۟ نَٰدِمِينَ
﴿١٥٧﴾ فَأَخَذَهُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ ۗ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ
لَءَايَةً ۖ وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٥٨﴾
وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٥٩﴾

وَعَادًا وَثَمُودَا۟ وَقَد
تَّبَيَّنَ لَكُم مِّن مَّسَٰكِنِهِمْ ۖ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ
ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ فَصَدَّهُمْ عَنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ
وَكَانُوا۟ مُسْتَبْصِرِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾

And [the people of] 'Ad and Thamud, as it should have become obvious to you from [whatever remains were of] their dwellings, whom Satan had made their [evil] doings seem good to them, and thus he had turned them away from the [right] way, despite having sight [and sense] to know the truth. [29:38]

فَإِنْ أَعْرَضُوا۟ فَقُلْ أَنذَرْتُكُمْ
صَٰعِقَةً مِّثْلَ صَٰعِقَةِ عَادٍ وَثَمُودَ ﴿١٣﴾ إِذْ
جَآءَتْهُمُ ٱلرُّسُلُ مِنۢ بَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمِنْ
خَلْفِهِمْ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوٓا۟ إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ ۖ قَالُوا۟ لَوْ
شَآءَ رَبُّنَا لَأَنزَلَ مَلَٰٓئِكَةً فَإِنَّا بِمَآ
أُرْسِلْتُم بِهِۦ كَٰفِرُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ فَأَمَّا عَادٌ
فَٱسْتَكْبَرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ ٱلْحَقِّ
وَقَالُوا۟ مَنْ أَشَدُّ مِنَّا قُوَّةً ۖ أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟
أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَهُمْ هُوَ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُمْ
قُوَّةً ۖ وَكَانُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا يَجْحَدُونَ ﴿١٥﴾
فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِيحًا صَرْصَرًا فِىٓ أَيَّامٍ
نَّحِسَاتٍ لِّنُذِيقَهُمْ عَذَابَ ٱلْخِزْىِ فِى
ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَلَعَذَابُ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ
أَخْزَىٰ ۖ وَهُمْ لَا يُنصَرُونَ ﴿١٦﴾ وَأَمَّا
ثَمُودُ فَهَدَيْنَٰهُمْ فَٱسْتَحَبُّوا۟ ٱلْعَمَىٰ عَلَى
ٱلْهُدَىٰ فَأَخَذَتْهُمْ صَٰعِقَةُ ٱلْعَذَابِ ٱلْهُونِ
بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ وَنَجَّيْنَا
ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَكَانُوا۟ يَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

And if they turn away say, "I warn you of [the coming of] a sudden fatal strike like that of 'Ad and Thamud."
There came to them the conveyors of [God's] messages, addressing them from before and from behind [in all possible ways], saying, "Worship none but God!"
They said, "Had our Lord willed, surely He would have sent down angels; so we deny that there is any truth in what you [say that you] have been sent with." As for 'Ad, they acted haughtily on earth against all right, saying, "Who may have greater power than ours?" Were they not aware, then, that God who created them had greater power than them?"
But they stubbornly went on rejecting Our messages. Thereupon We let loose upon them a storm clamorous through days of disaster, so as to let them taste the humiliating suffering in this present life, and their suffering in the life to come will be far more humiliating, and they will have none to support them.
And as for Thamud, We offered them guidance but they preferred blindness to guidance. And so they were hit by a shameful suffering for that which they have been earning, and We saved those who had attained to faith and were conscious of Us. [41:13-18]

وَٱذْكُرْ أَخَا
عَادٍ إِذْ أَنذَرَ قَوْمَهُۥ بِٱلْأَحْقَافِ وَقَدْ
خَلَتِ ٱلنُّذُرُ مِنۢ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِۦٓ
أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوٓا۟ إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ إِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ

(21)*And remember the brother of [the people of] 'Ad, when he warned his people through the sand-dunes (ahqaf), and earlier warnings had come and gone around the area from before and from behind in different directions. [He said to his*

people], "Worship none but God! Truly I fear that suffering will befall you on a dreadful day."

(22) *They said, "Have you come to pervert us from our gods? Then bring us that with which you threaten us, if you indeed are a man of the truth."*

(23) *Said he, "Knowledge [of that] rests with God alone; I but convey to you the message with which I have been sent, but I see you people who act out of ignorance."*

(24) *And so, when they saw it as a sudden cloud coming to their valleys they said, "This is a cloud that will bring us [life-giving] rain." Not so, rather it is the very which you [in defiance of God's message] sought to hasten:* (25) *a wind bearing grievous suffering, bound to destroy everything at its Lord's command. And so in the morning there was naught to be seen [in their valleys] except their dwellings, [while human life was utterly wiped out]; thus do We requite people who are persistent evildoers.*

(26) *And yet, We had established them securely, as you have ever been wishing to be, and We had endowed them with hearing and sights and hearts, but neither their hearing nor their sight nor their hearts were of the least avail to them when they knowingly and stubbornly went on rejecting God's messages, and in the end they were encompassed with that at which they had ever mocked.*

(27) *Thus have We destroyed towns around you, and We had given various warning signs, so that they might come back to their senses.*

(28) *But then, those whom they had taken beside God wishing that they would bring them nearer [to Him], were they help to them [in the end]? Not so, they deserted them, and all that [they believed] was mere fake and false forging.* [46:21-28]

عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٢١﴾ قَالُوٓا۟ أَجِئْتَنَا
لِتَأْفِكَنَا عَنْ ءَالِهَتِنَا فَأْتِنَا بِمَا تَعِدُنَآ إِن
كُنتَ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾ قَالَ إِنَّمَا
ٱلْعِلْمُ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ وَأُبَلِّغُكُم مَّآ أُرْسِلْتُ بِهِۦ
وَلَٰكِنِّىٓ أَرَىٰكُمْ قَوْمًا تَجْهَلُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾
فَلَمَّا رَأَوْهُ عَارِضًا مُّسْتَقْبِلَ أَوْدِيَتِهِمْ
قَالُوا۟ هَٰذَا عَارِضٌ مُّمْطِرُنَا ۚ بَلْ هُوَ مَا
ٱسْتَعْجَلْتُم بِهِۦ ۖ رِيحٌ فِيهَا عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ
﴿٢٤﴾ تُدَمِّرُ كُلَّ شَىْءٍۭ بِأَمْرِ رَبِّهَا
فَأَصْبَحُوا۟ لَا يُرَىٰٓ إِلَّا مَسَٰكِنُهُمْ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ
نَجْزِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾ وَلَقَدْ
مَكَّنَّٰهُمْ فِيمَآ إِن مَّكَّنَّٰكُمْ فِيهِ وَجَعَلْنَا
لَهُمْ سَمْعًا وَأَبْصَٰرًا وَأَفْـِٔدَةً فَمَآ أَغْنَىٰ
عَنْهُمْ سَمْعُهُمْ وَلَآ أَبْصَٰرُهُمْ وَلَآ أَفْـِٔدَتُهُم
مِّن شَىْءٍ إِذْ كَانُوا۟ يَجْحَدُونَ بِـَٔايَٰتِ
ٱللَّهِ وَحَاقَ بِهِم مَّا كَانُوا۟ بِهِۦ
يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾ وَلَقَدْ أَهْلَكْنَا مَا
حَوْلَكُم مِّنَ ٱلْقُرَىٰ وَصَرَّفْنَا ٱلْـَٔايَٰتِ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾ فَلَوْلَا نَصَرَهُمُ
ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّخَذُوا۟ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ قُرْبَانًا
ءَالِهَةً ۖ بَلْ ضَلُّوا۟ عَنْهُمْ ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ إِفْكُهُمْ
وَمَا كَانُوا۟ يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

[The people of] Thamud and 'Ad denounced as a lie the coming of the sudden shocking end. As for

كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ
وَعَادٌۢ بِٱلْقَارِعَةِ ﴿٤﴾ فَأَمَّا ثَمُودُ فَأُهْلِكُوا۟

Thamud, they were destroyed by an overwhelming strike, and as for 'Ad, they were destroyed by a storm clamorous and severe, which He let loose against them for seven nights and eight days destroying without cease, and thus in the end you could see those people knocked down as [uprooted] trunks of hollow palm trees. Do you now see any remnant of them? [69:4-8]

بِٱلطَّاغِيَةِ ﴿٥﴾ وَ أَمَّا عَادٌ فَأُهْلِكُوا۟ بِرِيحٍ
صَرْصَرٍ عَاتِيَةٍ ﴿٦﴾ سَخَّرَهَا عَلَيْهِمْ سَبْعَ
لَيَالٍ وَ ثَمَٰنِيَةَ أَيَّامٍ حُسُومًا ۖ فَتَرَى
ٱلْقَوْمَ فِيهَا صَرْعَىٰ كَأَنَّهُمْ أَعْجَازُ نَخْلٍ
خَاوِيَةٍ ﴿٧﴾ فَهَلْ تَرَىٰ لَهُم مِّنۢ بَاقِيَةٍ ﴿٨﴾

Are you not aware of how your Lord has dealt with [the people of] 'Ad, the people of Iram [the strongly established, and] the multi-pillared whose like had never been created in the land?
And [how He has dealt] with Thamud, who carved rock out of the valley? And with Pharaoh who was strongly established [as represented in his mighty construction]. [It was they all] who haughtily committed [horrible] injustice all over their lands, and brought about enormous corruption therein? Your Lord then let loose upon them a scourge of suffering; surely your Lord is ever on the watch. [89:6-14]

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِعَادٍ ﴿٦﴾ إِرَمَ
ذَاتِ ٱلْعِمَادِ ﴿٧﴾ ٱلَّتِى لَمْ يُخْلَقْ مِثْلُهَا
فِى ٱلْبِلَٰدِ ﴿٨﴾ وَ ثَمُودَ ٱلَّذِينَ جَابُوا۟
ٱلصَّخْرَ بِٱلْوَادِ ﴿٩﴾ وَ فِرْعَوْنَ ذِى
ٱلْأَوْتَادِ ﴿١٠﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ طَغَوْا۟ فِى ٱلْبِلَٰدِ
﴿١١﴾ فَأَكْثَرُوا۟ فِيهَا ٱلْفَسَادَ ﴿١٢﴾ فَصَبَّ
عَلَيْهِمْ رَبُّكَ سَوْطَ عَذَابٍ ﴿١٣﴾ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ
لَبِٱلْمِرْصَادِ ﴿١٤﴾

[The people of] Thamud in their exceeding haughtiness denounced as [a] lie the truth, when the most wretched from among them rushed forward [to commit his evil deed]; as the conveyor of God's message told them, "It is a she-camel belonging to God, so let her drink [in the time appointed for her and do her no harm]."
But they denounced him a liar, and hamstrung her; so their Lord crushed them for their evildoing, and levelled it [their place], and He does fear nothing about [executing] His punishment. [91:11-15]

كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ بِطَغْوَىٰهَآ ﴿١١﴾ إِذِ ٱنۢبَعَثَ
أَشْقَىٰهَا ﴿١٢﴾ فَقَالَ لَهُمْ رَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ
نَاقَةَ ٱللَّهِ وَ سُقْيَٰهَا ﴿١٣﴾ فَكَذَّبُوهُ
فَعَقَرُوهَا فَدَمْدَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ رَبُّهُم بِذَنۢبِهِمْ
فَسَوَّىٰهَا ﴿١٤﴾ وَ لَا يَخَافُ عُقْبَٰهَا ﴿١٥﴾

Shu'ayb and the people of Madyan [Midian]

(85) *And to the [people of] Madyan [Midian] We sent their brother*

وَ إِلَىٰ
مَدْيَنَ أَخَاهُمْ شُعَيْبًا ۚ قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ ٱعْبُدُوا۟

Shu'ayb. He said, "O my people! Worship God alone, You have no God other than He; there has now come unto you a clear sign and message from your Lord! Give full measure and weight [in all dealings], and do not cut down what is due to people for what is rightfully theirs, and do not [spread] corruption on the earth after it has been set right; that [all] is for your own good if you but believe.

(86) *"And do not lie by every path threatening and trying to turn away from God's path those who believe in Him and trying to make it appear crooked, and remember [the time] when you were few and [how] He made you many, and remember what was the end of those who did corruption [on earth].*

(87) *"And if there be some among you who have believed in the message with which I have been sent, while others have not believed, then have patience until God shall judge between us, and He is the best of all judges."*

(88) *The leading persons among his people who felt haughty said, "O Shu'ayb! We shall certainly force you out of our town together with your belief-fellows, unless you return to our common beliefs!"*

He said, "Even though we do detest that? (89) *We would indeed be forging a lie against God if we return to your common belief after God has saved us therefrom, and it is by no means for us to return unless God our Lord so wills. Our Lord does embrace everything with His knowledge, and in God we place our trust.*

[He prayed], "Our Lord! Make the truth decisively distinct and clear [in this conflict] between us and our people, and you are the best to make this decisive distinction."

(90) *The leading persons among his people who stubbornly denied the truth said [to his followers], "If you follow Shu'ayb you will surely be the losers!"*

(91) *Thereupon an earthquake suddenly seized them, and they lay in the morning lifeless in their homes on the ground!*

ٱللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرُهُۥ ۖ قَدْ
جَآءَتْكُم بَيِّنَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ ۖ فَأَوْفُوا۟ ٱلْكَيْلَ
وَٱلْمِيزَانَ وَلَا تَبْخَسُوا۟ ٱلنَّاسَ
أَشْيَآءَهُمْ وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ
إِصْلَٰحِهَا ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُم
مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾ وَلَا تَقْعُدُوا۟ بِكُلِّ صِرَٰطٍ
تُوعِدُونَ وَتَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ مَنْ
ءَامَنَ بِهِۦ وَتَبْغُونَهَا عِوَجًا ۚ وَٱذْكُرُوٓا۟
إِذْ كُنتُمْ قَلِيلًا فَكَثَّرَكُمْ ۖ وَٱنظُرُوا۟ كَيْفَ
كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٨٦﴾ وَإِن كَانَ
طَآئِفَةٌ مِّنكُمْ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِٱلَّذِىٓ أُرْسِلْتُ بِهِۦ
وَطَآئِفَةٌ لَّمْ يُؤْمِنُوا۟ فَٱصْبِرُوا۟ حَتَّىٰ
يَحْكُمَ ٱللَّهُ بَيْنَنَا ۚ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ ٱلْحَٰكِمِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾
۞ قَالَ ٱلْمَلَأُ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱسْتَكْبَرُوا۟
مِن قَوْمِهِۦ لَنُخْرِجَنَّكَ يَٰشُعَيْبُ وَٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا۟ مَعَكَ مِن قَرْيَتِنَآ أَوْ لَتَعُودُنَّ فِى
مِلَّتِنَا ۚ قَالَ أَوَلَوْ كُنَّا كَٰرِهِينَ ﴿٨٨﴾ قَدِ
ٱفْتَرَيْنَا عَلَى ٱللَّهِ كَذِبًا إِنْ عُدْنَا فِى
مِلَّتِكُم بَعْدَ إِذْ نَجَّىٰنَا ٱللَّهُ مِنْهَا ۚ وَمَا
يَكُونُ لَنَآ أَن نَّعُودَ فِيهَآ إِلَّآ أَن يَشَآءَ
ٱللَّهُ رَبُّنَا ۚ وَسِعَ رَبُّنَا كُلَّ شَىْءٍ عِلْمًا ۚ
عَلَى ٱللَّهِ تَوَكَّلْنَا ۚ رَبَّنَا ٱفْتَحْ بَيْنَنَا
وَبَيْنَ قَوْمِنَا بِٱلْحَقِّ وَأَنتَ خَيْرُ ٱلْفَٰتِحِينَ
﴿٨٩﴾ وَقَالَ ٱلْمَلَأُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِن
قَوْمِهِۦ لَئِنِ ٱتَّبَعْتُمْ شُعَيْبًا إِنَّكُمْ إِذًا
لَّخَٰسِرُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾ فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ ٱلرَّجْفَةُ
فَأَصْبَحُوا۟ فِى دَارِهِمْ جَٰثِمِينَ ﴿٩١﴾

(92) *Those who denounced Shu'ayb as a liar became as if they had never lived happily there; those who denounced Shu 'ayb as a liar were the losers.*
(93) *So Shu'ayb turned away from them and said, "O my people! I did indeed deliver to you the message of my Lord, and sincerely advised you; how, then, should I grieve for people who stubbornly denied the truth?"*
(94) *And never yet have We sent a prophet to any town without trying its people with hardship and suffering, so that they may feel their humbleness and need [to God] and turn to Him;* (95) *then We replaced the affliction with ease of life, till they throve and said [to themselves], "Both hardship and prosperity befell our forefathers as well," and then We suddenly seized them while they were unaware.* (96) *Yet, had the people of those towns attained to faith and were conscious of God, We would indeed have opened upon them blessings from heaven and earth, but they denounced the truth as a lie, and so We seized them for what they earned.*
(97) *Had the people of the towns felt secure from Our might that could reach them by night while they had been asleep?* (98) *Had the people of the towns felt of Our might that could reach them in broad daylight while they might be engaged in [wordly] play?*
(99) *Had they ever felt secure from God's planning? None should feel secure from God's planning but the losers.*
(100) *Has it then become obvious to those who inherited the earth in succession of former generations, that if We so willed, We could strike them as a result of their evil-doing, sealing their hearts [in consequence of their constant evil-doing out of their free will], and thus they cannot hear [and get the message].*
(101) *Those [earlier] towns, We tell you some of their stories; here, their conveyors of God's messages came to them with clear signs and evidence of truth, but they did not believe in*

ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا۟ شُعَيْبًا كَأَن لَّمْ يَغْنَوْا۟ فِيهَا ۚ
ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا۟ شُعَيْبًا كَانُوا۟ هُمُ ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ
﴿٩٢﴾ فَتَوَلَّىٰ عَنْهُمْ وَقَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ لَقَدْ
أَبْلَغْتُكُمْ رِسَٰلَٰتِ رَبِّى وَنَصَحْتُ لَكُمْ ۖ
فَكَيْفَ ءَاسَىٰ عَلَىٰ قَوْمٍ كَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٩٣﴾
وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَا فِى قَرْيَةٍ مِّن نَّبِىٍّ إِلَّآ أَخَذْنَآ
أَهْلَهَا بِٱلْبَأْسَآءِ وَٱلضَّرَّآءِ لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَضَّرَّعُونَ ﴿٩٤﴾ ثُمَّ بَدَّلْنَا مَكَانَ ٱلسَّيِّئَةِ
ٱلْحَسَنَةَ حَتَّىٰ عَفَوا۟ وَّقَالُوا۟ قَدْ مَسَّ
ءَابَآءَنَا ٱلضَّرَّآءُ وَٱلسَّرَّآءُ فَأَخَذْنَٰهُم
بَغْتَةً وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٩٥﴾ وَلَوْ أَنَّ
أَهْلَ ٱلْقُرَىٰٓ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَٱتَّقَوْا۟ لَفَتَحْنَا
عَلَيْهِم بَرَكَٰتٍ مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ
وَلَٰكِن كَذَّبُوا۟ فَأَخَذْنَٰهُم بِمَا كَانُوا۟
يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾ أَفَأَمِنَ أَهْلُ ٱلْقُرَىٰٓ أَن
يَأْتِيَهُم بَأْسُنَا بَيَٰتًا وَهُمْ نَآئِمُونَ ﴿٩٧﴾
أَوَأَمِنَ أَهْلُ ٱلْقُرَىٰٓ أَن يَأْتِيَهُم بَأْسُنَا
ضُحًى وَهُمْ يَلْعَبُونَ ﴿٩٨﴾ أَفَأَمِنُوا۟ مَكْرَ
ٱللَّهِ ۚ فَلَا يَأْمَنُ مَكْرَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَّا ٱلْقَوْمُ
ٱلْخَٰسِرُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾ أَوَلَمْ يَهْدِ لِلَّذِينَ
يَرِثُونَ ٱلْأَرْضَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ أَهْلِهَآ أَن لَّوْ
نَشَآءُ أَصَبْنَٰهُم بِذُنُوبِهِمْ ۚ وَنَطْبَعُ عَلَىٰ
قُلُوبِهِمْ فَهُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾ تِلْكَ
ٱلْقُرَىٰ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ أَنۢبَآئِهَا ۚ وَلَقَدْ
جَآءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُم بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ فَمَا كَانُوا۟
لِيُؤْمِنُوا۟ بِمَا كَذَّبُوا۟ مِن قَبْلُ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ

يَطْبَعُ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿١٠١﴾
وَ مَا وَجَدْنَا لِأَكْثَرِهِم مِّنْ عَهْدٍ ۖ وَ إِن
وَجَدْنَآ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَفَٰسِقِينَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

what they [and their former generations] had stubbornly once denied before; thus God seals the hearts of those who stubbornly deny the truth [as a result of their actions out of their free wills]; (102) *and in most of them We found no commitment to their words [or to what is right], and most of them We found iniquitous.* [7:85-102; see also 11: 84-95]

وَ إِن كَانَ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْأَيْكَةِ لَظَٰلِمِينَ
﴿٧٨﴾ فَٱنتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ وَ إِنَّهُمَا لَبِإِمَامٍ
مُّبِينٍ ﴿٧٩﴾

And the dwellers of the wooded dales [of Madyan/ Midian, al-Aykah] were evildoers, and so We inflicted Our retribution on them. And both these [evil-doing communities, the people of Lut (Lot), in addition to those of Shu 'ayb] lived by a highway, plain to see [until the time of this message]. [15:78-79]

كَذَّبَ أَصْحَٰبُ لْـَٔيْكَةِ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٧٦﴾ إِذْ
قَالَ لَهُمْ شُعَيْبٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٧٧﴾ إِنِّى
لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ ﴿١٧٨﴾ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ
وَ أَطِيعُونِ ﴿١٧٩﴾ وَ مَآ أَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ
أَجْرٍ ۖ إِنْ أَجْرِىَ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ رَبِّ
ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٨٠﴾ ۞ أَوْفُوا۟ ٱلْكَيْلَ وَ لَا
تَكُونُوا۟ مِنَ ٱلْمُخْسِرِينَ ﴿١٨١﴾ وَ زِنُوا۟
بِٱلْقِسْطَاسِ ٱلْمُسْتَقِيمِ ﴿١٨٢﴾ وَ لَا
تَبْخَسُوا۟ ٱلنَّاسَ أَشْيَآءَهُمْ وَ لَا تَعْثَوْا۟
فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ ﴿١٨٣﴾ وَ ٱتَّقُوا۟
ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكُمْ وَ ٱلْجِبِلَّةَ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٨٤﴾
قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّمَآ أَنتَ مِنَ ٱلْمُسَحَّرِينَ ﴿١٨٥﴾
وَ مَآ أَنتَ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُنَا وَ إِن نَّظُنُّكَ
لَمِنَ ٱلْكَٰذِبِينَ ﴿١٨٦﴾ فَأَسْقِطْ عَلَيْنَا كِسَفًا
مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ إِن كُنتَ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ ﴿١٨٧﴾
قَالَ رَبِّىٓ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٨٨﴾

(176) *And the dwellers of the wooded dales [of Madyan/ Midian, al-Aykah] denounced as liars the conveyors of [God's] messages,* (177) *when their brother Shu 'ayb said to them, "Will you be conscious of God?* (178) *I am a conveyor [of His message sent by Him] to you and worthy of your trust,* (179) *so be conscious of God and listen to me.* (180) *And no recompense whatever I ask of you for it; my recompense rests only with the Lord of all being.* (181) *Give [always] full measure, and be not among those who [unjustly] cause [people] losses ;* (182) *and weigh with a true balance [in all your dealings],* (183) *and do not cut down what is due to people whatever is rightfully theirs, and do not commit corruption on earth;* (184) *but be conscious of Him who has created you and these generations of the earliest people."*
(185) *They said, "You are merely one of those that are bewitched,* (186) *and you are naught but a human being like us, and we think that you are one of the liars.* (187) *Drop down, then, fragments of the sky upon us if you are one of the truthful."* (188) *He said, "My Lord*

fully knows what you are doing." (189) *They denounced him as a liar; thereupon suffering seized them on the [dark] 'day of shadow;' assuredly it was the suffering of an awesome day.* (190) *Surely in that is a sign and a message, and most of them did not believe,* (191) *and surely your Lord is the All-mighty, the Most Gracious.* [26:176-191]

فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَخَذَهُمْ عَذَابُ يَوْمِ الظُّلَّةِ ۚ
إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٨٩﴾ إِنَّ فِى
ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً ۖ وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ
﴿١٩٠﴾ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ
﴿١٩١﴾

The Quran gives information about the conveyors of God's message in ancient Arabia. These were not mentioned in the Bible. Traditional Arab genealogies divide the Arabs into two groups. The first is the extinct group, *ba'ida*, which included the tribes of 'Ad and Thamud which have been repeatedly mentioned in the Quran, as well as others such as Tasm and Jadis which were not; the second is the surviving groups of Arabs *baqiya*. The tribe of 'Ad, to which Hud belonged and to whom he was sent by God to convey His message, lived in a vast desert region known in the Quran as "*al-Ahqaf*," the Sand-Dunes, that was between 'Uman and Hadramawt, and near the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea, and the Indian Ocean. The people there enjoyed significant power, as represented in their grand monumental constructions. In *The Message of the Quran* Muhammad Asad mentions that Hud "may be identical with the Biblical "Eber" the ancestor of the Hebrews "I'brim" [Genesis X: 24-25, XI: 14ff.]" He thinks that the ancient Arabian name Hud might be reflected in the name of Jacob's son Judah (Yahudah in Hebrew). He underlines the fact that the Hebrew Eber and its Arabic parallel Abir signify "one who crosses over," "and may be a Biblical echo (about) a tribe that 'crossed over' from Arabia to Mesopotamia in pre-Abrahamic times" [note 48 on the verse 7: 65]. It is significant to note that about two years ago, through the use of modern technology and far detecting rays, archeologists were able to trace an ancient civilization in Southern Arabia that was buried under the sand, and suggested that this civilization had been destroyed by a formidable sandstorm, a description that exactly fits the Quranic information about the tribe of 'Ad.

As for the tribe of Thamud, it was mentioned in the cuneiform annals of the Assyrian Sargon II (722-705 B.C.E.) and known to classical writers, such as Pliny, as Tamudaei, as Philip Hitti points out in *History of the Arabs* [10th ed. McMillan, London 1970, p. 30]. This Nabataeon tribe succeeded the tribe of 'Ad in power, and so it is sometimes referred to in old Arabic sources as the "second 'Ad". However, in contrast to 'Ad who lived in the south of the Arabian peninsula, Thamud lived in the north. An inscription of Sargon related to the year 715 B.C.E, mentioned Thamud among the peoples of eastern and central Arabia that were subjected to the Assyrians. Asad, quoting the *Encyclopedia of Islam,* wrote that "'Thamudasi, Thamuden [were] mentioned in Aristotle, Ptolemy and Pliny." During the time of Prophet Muhammad "Thamud were settled in the northernmost Hijaz near the confines of Syria. Rock-inscriptions attributed to them are still existent in the region of al-Hijr" [*The Message of the Quran*, note 56 on the verse 7: 73; see also *Musil, North Hijaz* in its Arabic translation by Abdul-Muhsin al-Husayni, Alexandria, no date; Dussaud, "*Arabs in Syria before Islam"* and its Arabic translation by Abdul-Hamid al-Dawakhli and Muhammad Mustafa Ziyada, Cairo].

Madyan (Midian), in which Shu'ayb conveyed God's message, was located in the north of the Arabian peninsula, near the borders of the Syrian desert, geographically considered as an extension of the Arabian desert, and near the Gulf of Aqaba and the Red Sea. It is clear in the Bible that its people were of Arabian origin. The Midianites were sometimes called Ishmaelites (descendants of Ishmael/ Isma 'il) in the Bible (e.g. Judges 8: 24). Ibrahim (Abraham), considered the ancestor of Israel, was also the father of Ishmael [Genesis 21: 20-21; 25: 1-6, 12-18], and thus the Ishmaelites of Midian, as well as of many other tribes living in North Arabia, and even of the people Sheba, a tribe most probably connected with the old country of Sheba in Southern Arabia [S.D. Gortein, *Jews and Arabs*, New York 1964, pp. 31-32]. According the Bible, the Midianites were descendants of Abraham through his second wife Keturah [Genesis 25: 1-6; 37: 28, Judges 6: 8, Exodus 2: 16 ff., 3: 1].

Shu'ayb's message to Midian came considerably later than that of Hud to 'Ad in Southern Arabia, and the subsequent one of Salih to Thamud in the north. The Quran mentioned that Moses fled from Egypt to Midian when he killed the Egyptian by mistake, and there he married the daughter of a righteous man [20: 40; 28: 22-28, 45]. The question has been raised as to whether this man could have been Shu 'ayb, since Shu 'ayb was sent to the people of Midian. Could Shu'ayb be identified with Jethro, Moses' father-in-law according to the Bible, who was also called there "Reu-el" [Exodus II: 18], a name that means "faithful to God"? In fact, there is no explicit Quranic indication that the man whom Moses met in Midian and whose daughter he married was Shu 'ayb, and so we cannot explicitly gather from the Quran that Shu'ayb was a contemporary of Moses. According to the Quran, we are only sure that it was Midian to which Shu 'ayb was sent and to which Moses came.

It seems that all the three communities of 'Ad, Thamud and Midian were privileged with important commercial locations on the classical trade routes that connected South and South East Asia, East Africa, West Asia, and the Mediterranean and Europe [e.g. 15: 79]. They enjoyed economic and combative power, and they were able to produce great constructions [e.g. 'Ad 26: 128-130; 89:6-8, Thamud 7:74; 26:146-49; 89: 9, Midian 7:85-86; 26: 181-183]. It seems that Thamud also had its agricultural prosperity [26: 147-148]. Their prophet Salih reminded them of what may apply to all of humanity: "*He brought you into being out of the earth, made you thrive therein to develop it. Ask Him to forgive you...*" [11:61]. God's message was the same to all these communities: The worship of God alone [e.g. 7: 65, 73, 85; 11: 50, 61, 84], instead of the worship of one's own egoistic desires or the worship of others who enjoy power and superiority.

There were particular commands, tests and signs provided by each conveyor of God's message to his community. Thamud was tested by a she-camel that had to be devoted to God alone, and which was thus described by the Quran as "*God's she-camel*" [7: 73; 11: 64; 91: 13], a term that did not necessarily indicate any supernatural origin or merit for that she-camel. The people of Midian were particularly commanded by Shu 'ayb to give full measure and weight in all their dealings, and they were warned against depriving people of what is rightfully theirs and spreading corruption on earth after it has been so well ordered [7: 85; 11: 85; 26: 181-183]. Their argument with Shu'ayb stressed their wishes to continue with their forefathers' ways of beliefs and worship, and to maintain full

freedom in earning and spending wealth and doing whatever pleased them with what they possessed [11: 87]. Shu'ayb reminded them that they had not been many when they had settled there earlier, but it was of God's blessings that their number had increased [7:86]. He stressed to them his commitment to behave personally as he advised the people to behave, his aim to set things right, and his persistence to work hard for God's cause in a way that would not be less than his tribe's hard work for selfish interests and power [11: 88; 93].

Ultimately, the Quran does not want these stories to be connected only with the supernatural punishment of God to those folks who stubbornly denied the truth, nor does it want to present the conveyors of God's messages as responsible for changing the human nature and free choice, or for imposing God's message in any way against the people's will [e.g. 7: 75-9, 88-93; 11: 59, 64-65, 88-93; 26:128-130, 151-157]. Instead, it stresses the laws of God in testing individuals and societies through hardships and ease [7:94-96]. Moreover, the Quran reminds the human beings that individual stability and social cooperation and integration, achieved through faith in God and in the life to come, lead to benefits in this life even before the rewards that are fulfilled in the eternal life to come [7:96]. The belief in God and the eternal life to come should by no means reduce the human activity and productivity in this world, as it may be mistakenly thought, but instead should develop the human capacity to the maximum, since faith shields the believer and maintains his/her energy against the vicissitudes of success or failure. It makes the believer feel gratitude towards God for success, and patience in cases of failure. It is spiritual and moral indifference or passivity and indulgence in word's pleasures only that aggravate the effects of material success and failure to the extent sometimes of complete paralysis.

The stories of the previous communities and God's message conveyed to them have not been told in the Quran for entertainment purposes, but to teach the message and concretize God's laws and the need for them in the society [7: 101-102; 22: 45; 29: 38]. As for the supernatural requital for human evil-doing in these early cases [e.g. 7: 72, 78, 91; 11: 58, 60, 65-68, 94-95; 26: 139, 158, 189; 29: 40], it is obvious from tracing the Quranic history of God's messages that this was abandoned in the cases of later communities. God saved Ibrahim (Abraham) from the fire in which his people threw him without inflicting a direct divine punishment in this life on those who committed that crime. In general there were both successful and unsuccessful attempts to kill prophets, and the Quran does not mention that the perpetrators of these plots were punished in a supernatural way in this life [2:61, 87, 91; 3:21, 112; 5:70; 8:30; 12:9-10; 29:24].

In the case of Prophet Muhammad, the Quran has repeatedly emphasized that the believers and their enemies are tried with one another, and are left to God's laws in this world: *"If some harm touches you, a similar harm has touched the others as well; and such days [of happiness and distress] We deal in turn among people, and [this] to the end that God might [test and] mark out those who have [truly] attained to faith... and that God might render pure those who have attained to faith... Do you think that you enter paradise unless God knows those who have striven hard [in His cause] and knows those who have been enduring patiently in adversity?"* [3:140-142], *"And [know that] had God so willed, He could certainly have inflicted defeat on them [Himself]; but [He wills you to struggle] so as to test you [all] by one another"* [47:4].

IBRAHIM (ABRAHAM), ISMA'IL (ISHMAEL), IS-HAQ (ISAAC), LUT (LOT)

IBRAHIM (ABRAHAM) IN MESOPOTAMIA

(74) *And [call to mind] when Ibrahim (Abraham) said to his father Azar, "Do you take idols for gods? I see you and your folk in an obvious falseness."*
(75) *And thus We were directing the attention of Ibrahim (Abraham) to signs of] the mighty dominion [of God] over the heavens and the earth, so that he might be of those who know for certain.*
(76) *And when the night outspread over him and he saw a star he said, "This is my Lord"; but when it went down, he said, "I love not those that go down."*
(77) *Then, when he saw the moon rising, he said, "This is my Lord"; but when it went down, he said, "If my [true] Lord does not guide me, I shall surely be among those who go astray!"*
(78) *Then, when he saw the sun rising he said, "This is my Lord; this one is the greatest [of all]"; but when it too went down, he said, "O my people! Surely, far be it from me to join you in what you associate with God.*
(79) *"For me, I have turned truly my face to Him who brought into being the heavens and the earth, turning away from all that is false, and I am not of those who associate any with Him."*
(80) *And his people argued with him. He said [to them], "Do you argue with me about God, when it is He who has guided me? But I fear not what you associate with Him [for nothing can befall me] unless my Lord so wills; all things does my Lord embrace in His knowledge; will you not then be mindful?*
(81) *"And how should I fear what you have associated with God, seeing you fear not to associate with God that whereon He has not sent down to you any warrant? Which of the*

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَٰهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ
ءَازَرَ أَتَتَّخِذُ أَصْنَامًا ءَالِهَةً ۖ إِنِّى
أَرَىٰكَ وَقَوْمَكَ فِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٧٤﴾
وَكَذَٰلِكَ نُرِىٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ مَلَكُوتَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَلِيَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُوقِنِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾
فَلَمَّا جَنَّ عَلَيْهِ ٱلَّيْلُ رَءَا كَوْكَبًا ۖ قَالَ
هَٰذَا رَبِّى ۖ فَلَمَّآ أَفَلَ قَالَ لَآ أُحِبُّ
ٱلْأَفِلِينَ ﴿٧٦﴾ فَلَمَّا رَءَا ٱلْقَمَرَ بَازِغًا
قَالَ هَٰذَا رَبِّى ۖ فَلَمَّآ أَفَلَ قَالَ لَئِن لَّمْ
يَهْدِنِى رَبِّى لَأَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلضَّآلِّينَ
﴿٧٧﴾ فَلَمَّا رَءَا ٱلشَّمْسَ بَازِغَةً قَالَ
هَٰذَا رَبِّى هَٰذَآ أَكْبَرُ ۖ فَلَمَّآ أَفَلَتْ قَالَ
يَٰقَوْمِ إِنِّى بَرِىٓءٌ مِّمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾
إِنِّى وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِىَ لِلَّذِى فَطَرَ
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ حَنِيفًا ۖ وَمَآ أَنَا
مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٧٩﴾ وَحَآجَّهُۥ قَوْمُهُۥ ۚ
قَالَ أَتُحَٰٓجُّوٓنِّى فِى ٱللَّهِ وَقَدْ هَدَىٰنِ ۚ
وَلَآ أَخَافُ مَا تُشْرِكُونَ بِهِۦٓ إِلَّآ أَن يَشَآءَ
رَبِّى شَيْـًٔا ۖ وَسِعَ رَبِّى كُلَّ شَىْءٍ عِلْمًا ۖ
أَفَلَا تَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾ وَكَيْفَ أَخَافُ مَآ
أَشْرَكْتُمْ وَلَا تَخَافُونَ أَنَّكُمْ أَشْرَكْتُم

two parties has more right to feel secure, if you happen to know?
(82) *"It is those who have attained to faith, and who have not obscured their faith by wrongdoing that are in true security, and it is they who have found the right way".*
(83) *Such was the reasoning about Us which We bestowed upon Ibrahim (Abraham) confronting his people; We do raise in rank whom We will; surely your Lord is All-wise, All-knowing.* [6:74-83]

بِٱللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزِّلْ بِهِۦ عَلَيْكُمْ سُلْطَٰنًا ۚ
فَأَىُّ ٱلْفَرِيقَيْنِ أَحَقُّ بِٱلْأَمْنِ ۖ إِن كُنتُمْ
تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨١﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَلَمْ
يَلْبِسُوٓا۟ إِيمَٰنَهُم بِظُلْمٍ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمُ
ٱلْأَمْنُ ۖ وَهُم مُّهْتَدُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾ وَتِلْكَ
حُجَّتُنَآ ءَاتَيْنَٰهَآ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ عَلَىٰ قَوْمِهِۦ ۚ
نَرْفَعُ دَرَجَٰتٍ مَّن نَّشَآءُ ۗ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ حَكِيمٌ
عَلِيمٌ ﴿٨٣﴾

Surely, Abraham was a man who combined within himself/herself virtues and had merits of leadership. He was devout to God, turning away from all that is false, and was never of those who associated others with God. He was always grateful for the blessings granted by Him who has chosen him [for His message] and guided him to a straight way. And so We granted him in this world's life good, and in the life to come he shall be among the righteous. [16:120-122]

إِنَّ
إِبْرَٰهِيمَ كَانَ أُمَّةً قَانِتًا لِّلَّهِ حَنِيفًا وَلَمْ
يَكُ مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٢٠﴾ شَاكِرًا
لِّأَنْعُمِهِ ۚ ٱجْتَبَىٰهُ وَهَدَىٰهُ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ
مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿١٢١﴾ وَءَاتَيْنَٰهُ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا
حَسَنَةً ۖ وَإِنَّهُۥ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ لَمِنَ
ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿١٢٢﴾

(41) *And call to mind in [this] Book Ibrahim (Abraham); surely he was a man of truth, a prophet.* (42) *When he said to his father, "O father! Why do you worship that which neither hears nor sees, nor avails you anything?*
(43) *"Father, there has come to me knowledge such as came not to you; so follow me and I will guide you on a level path.*
(44) *"O my father, do not worship Satan, who is surely a rebel against the All-merciful.*
(45) *"O my father! I fear lest a chastisement should befall you from the All-merciful, and then you will become a partisan of Satan."*
(46) *Said he, 'What, are you shrinking from my gods, Abraham? If you give not over, I shall stone you; so forsake me now for some while'.* (47) *He said, 'Peace be upon you! I will ask my Lord to forgive you; surely He*

وَٱذْكُرْ فِى ٱلْكِتَٰبِ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ
صِدِّيقًا نَّبِيًّا ﴿٤١﴾ إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ يَٰٓأَبَتِ
لِمَ تَعْبُدُ مَا لَا يَسْمَعُ وَلَا يُبْصِرُ وَلَا
يُغْنِى عَنكَ شَيْـًٔا ﴿٤٢﴾ يَٰٓأَبَتِ إِنِّى قَدْ
جَآءَنِى مِنَ ٱلْعِلْمِ مَا لَمْ يَأْتِكَ فَٱتَّبِعْنِىٓ
أَهْدِكَ صِرَٰطًا سَوِيًّا ﴿٤٣﴾ يَٰٓأَبَتِ لَا تَعْبُدِ
ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ ۖ إِنَّ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ كَانَ لِلرَّحْمَٰنِ
عَصِيًّا ﴿٤٤﴾ يَٰٓأَبَتِ إِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ أَن
يَمَسَّكَ عَذَابٌ مِّنَ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ فَتَكُونَ
لِلشَّيْطَٰنِ وَلِيًّا ﴿٤٥﴾ قَالَ أَرَاغِبٌ أَنتَ
عَنْ ءَالِهَتِى يَٰٓإِبْرَٰهِيمُ ۖ لَئِن لَّمْ تَنتَهِ
لَأَرْجُمَنَّكَ ۖ وَٱهْجُرْنِى مَلِيًّا ﴿٤٦﴾ قَالَ

has been ever Gracious to me. (48) *Now, I will go apart from you and that which you call upon apart from God; I will call upon my Lord [alone], and I hope that by praying for His support, I shall not be wretched."*
(49) *And so, when he had withdrawn from them and from whatever they worshiped instead of God, We granted him Is-haq (Isaac) followed by [Isaac's son] Ya'qub (Jacob), and each We made a prophet.* (50)*And We bestowed of Our grace on them and granted them a sublime power to truthfully convey [the message].* [19:41-50]

سَلَٰمٌ عَلَيْكَ ۖ سَأَسْتَغْفِرُ لَكَ رَبِّى ۖ إِنَّهُۥ
كَانَ بِى حَفِيًّا ﴿٤٧﴾ وَ أَعْتَزِلُكُمْ وَ مَا
تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَ أَدْعُوا۟ رَبِّى
عَسَىٰٓ أَلَّآ أَكُونَ بِدُعَآءِ رَبِّى شَقِيًّا ﴿٤٨﴾
فَلَمَّا ٱعْتَزَلَهُمْ وَ مَا يَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ
ٱللَّهِ وَهَبْنَا لَهُۥٓ إِسْحَٰقَ وَ يَعْقُوبَ ۖ
وَكُلًّا جَعَلْنَا نَبِيًّا ﴿٤٩﴾ وَ وَهَبْنَا لَهُم مِّن
رَّحْمَتِنَا وَ جَعَلْنَا لَهُمْ لِسَانَ صِدْقٍ عَلِيًّا
﴿٥٠﴾

(51) *And We bestowed aforetime on Ibrahim (Abraham) his consciousness of what is right, and We were fully aware of him,* (52) *when he said to his father and his people, "What are these statues unto which you are so cleaving?"*
(53) *They said, "We found our forefathers worshipping them."*
(54) *He said, "Indeed you and your forefathers have been in an obvious stray."*
(55) *They said, "Have you come to us with the truth, or are you one of those who [are not serious and] merely jest?"*
(56) *He said, "Nay, but your Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth, He Who has originated them [from nothing[, and I am one of those who bear witness to this [truth].* (57) *And by God I shall assuredly plot against your idols as soon as you turn your backs and go away."*
(58) *So he broke them into pieces, [all] but the biggest of them, so that they might [be able to] turn to it [and realize that it could not defend the smaller ones].*
[When they saw what had happened,] They said, "Who has done this to our gods? (59) *He is indeed one of the worst wrongdoers!"*
(60) *Some [of them] said, "We heard a youth mention to them [with scorn]; he is named Abraham."*

وَ لَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَآ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ رُشْدَهُۥ مِن قَبْلُ
وَكُنَّا بِهِۦ عَٰلِمِينَ ﴿٥١﴾ إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ
وَقَوْمِهِۦ مَا هَٰذِهِ ٱلتَّمَاثِيلُ ٱلَّتِىٓ أَنتُمْ لَهَا
عَٰكِفُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾ قَالُوا۟ وَجَدْنَآ ءَابَآءَنَا
لَهَا عَٰبِدِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾ قَالَ لَقَدْ كُنتُمْ أَنتُمْ
وَءَابَآؤُكُمْ فِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٥٤﴾ قَالُوٓا۟
أَجِئْتَنَا بِٱلْحَقِّ أَمْ أَنتَ مِنَ ٱللَّٰعِبِينَ
﴿٥٥﴾ قَالَ بَل رَّبُّكُمْ رَبُّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَٱلْأَرْضِ ٱلَّذِى فَطَرَهُنَّ وَ أَنَا۠ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكُم
مِّنَ ٱلشَّٰهِدِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾ وَ تَٱللَّهِ لَأَكِيدَنَّ
أَصْنَٰمَكُم بَعْدَ أَن تُوَلُّوا۟ مُدْبِرِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾
فَجَعَلَهُمْ جُذَٰذًا إِلَّا كَبِيرًا لَّهُمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ
يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾ قَالُوا۟ مَن فَعَلَ هَٰذَا
بِـَٔالِهَتِنَآ إِنَّهُۥ لَمِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٥٩﴾
قَالُوا۟ سَمِعْنَا فَتًى يَذْكُرُهُمْ يُقَالُ لَهُۥٓ
إِبْرَٰهِيمُ ﴿٦٠﴾

(61) *[The others] said, "Then bring him before the people's eyes, so that they may witness [what will happen]."*
(62) *They said [to him], "Have you done this to our gods, O Abraham?"*
(63) *He said, "Nay, it was done by this biggest one of them! Ask them, if they can speak!"*
(64) *And so they turned upon one another and said, "Surely, it is you who are doing wrong."*
(65) *But then they relapsed to their way before and said, "You know very well that these cannot speak!"*
(66) *[Abraham] said, "Do you then worship instead of God something that can neither benefit you in any way nor do you harm?* (67) *Fie upon you, and upon all that you worship instead of God! Do you not use your minds?"*
(68) *They said, "Burn him and [thereby] support your gods if you are going to do [what might be done]!"*
(69) *We said, "O fire! Be cool and safe for Abraham!"*
(70) *And so they sought to do evil to him, but We caused them to suffer the greatest loss.* (71) *And We saved him and [his nephew] Lut [(Lot) and guided them] to the land which We have blessed for all.* (72) *And We bestowed on him Is-haq (Isaac) and as an additional gift (Isaac's son) Ya'qub (Jacob), and We caused all of them to be righteous, and We made them leaders who would guide [people] in accordance with Our command, and We inspired them to do good works, and keep up the prayer, and spend the purifying charity (zakat) [on those in need], and Us alone did they serve.* [21:51-73]

قَالُوا۟ فَأْتُوا۟ بِهِۦ عَلَىٰٓ
أَعْيُنِ ٱلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَشْهَدُونَ ﴿٦١﴾
قَالُوٓا۟ ءَأَنتَ فَعَلْتَ هَٰذَا بِـَٔالِهَتِنَا
يَـٰٓإِبْرَٰهِيمُ ﴿٦٢﴾ قَالَ بَلْ فَعَلَهُۥ كَبِيرُهُمْ
هَٰذَا فَسْـَٔلُوهُمْ إِن كَانُوا۟ يَنطِقُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾
فَرَجَعُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ فَقَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّكُمْ
أَنتُمُ ٱلظَّـٰلِمُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾ ثُمَّ نُكِسُوا۟ عَلَىٰ
رُءُوسِهِمْ لَقَدْ عَلِمْتَ مَا هَـٰٓؤُلَآءِ يَنطِقُونَ
﴿٦٥﴾ قَالَ أَفَتَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا
يَنفَعُكُمْ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا يَضُرُّكُمْ ﴿٦٦﴾ أُفٍّ لَّكُمْ
وَلِمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ أَفَلَا
تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾ قَالُوا۟ حَرِّقُوهُ وَٱنصُرُوٓا۟
ءَالِهَتَكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ فَـٰعِلِينَ ﴿٦٨﴾ قُلْنَا
يَـٰنَارُ كُونِى بَرْدًا وَسَلَـٰمًا عَلَىٰٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ
﴿٦٩﴾ وَأَرَادُوا۟ بِهِۦ كَيْدًا فَجَعَلْنَـٰهُمُ
ٱلْأَخْسَرِينَ ﴿٧٠﴾ وَنَجَّيْنَـٰهُ وَلُوطًا إِلَى
ٱلْأَرْضِ ٱلَّتِى بَـٰرَكْنَا فِيهَا لِلْعَـٰلَمِينَ
﴿٧١﴾ وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُۥٓ إِسْحَـٰقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ
نَافِلَةً ۖ وَكُلًّا جَعَلْنَا صَـٰلِحِينَ ﴿٧٢﴾
وَجَعَلْنَـٰهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا
وَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْهِمْ فِعْلَ ٱلْخَيْرَٰتِ وَإِقَامَ
ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَإِيتَآءَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةِ ۖ وَكَانُوا۟ لَنَا
عَـٰبِدِينَ ﴿٧٣﴾

(69) *And tell them the story of Ibrahim (Abraham),* (70) *when he said to his father and his people, "What do you worship?"*
(71) *They said, "We worship idols, and we remain cleaving to them."*
(72) *He said, "Do they hear you when you call,* (73) *or do they cause you any benefit or*

وَٱتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ ﴿٦٩﴾ إِذْ قَالَ
لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِۦ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾ قَالُوا۟
نَعْبُدُ أَصْنَامًا فَنَظَلُّ لَهَا عَـٰكِفِينَ ﴿٧١﴾
قَالَ هَلْ يَسْمَعُونَكُمْ إِذْ تَدْعُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾ أَوْ

harm?"
(74) *They said, "But we found our forefathers so doing."*
(75) *Said he [Abraham], "Then realize ever, that all what you have been worshipping,* (76) *you and those earliest forebears of yours,* (77) *they are all my enemy, save the Lord of all beings.* (78) *The One who has created me, and who Himself guides me,* (79) *and who He Himself gives me to eat and to drink,* (80) *and whenever I am sick He Himself heals me and brings me back to health,* (81) *and He is the One who will cause me to die and will bring me back to life,* (82) *and who - I hope - will forgive me on the Day of Judgement.*
(83) *[He prayed], "O my Lord! Endow me with [the capability of] correct judgement, and enable me to join the righteous,* (84) *and grant me a truthful acknowledgement [of my mission] among those of later times,* (85) *and place me among those who shall inherit the garden of bliss!*
(86) *"And forgive my father; he is one of those who have gone astray.* (87) *And do not disgrace me on the Day when all shall be raised from the dead,* (88) *the Day on which neither wealth will be of any benefit [for anyone] nor children; but only [will be of benefit] that one who comes to God with a clean, heart free from evil."* [26:69-89]

يَنفَعُونَكُمْ أَوْ يَضُرُّونَ ﴿٧٣﴾ قَالُوا۟ بَلْ
وَجَدْنَآ ءَابَآءَنَا كَذَٰلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾
قَالَ أَفَرَءَيْتُم مَّا كُنتُمْ تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾ أَنتُمْ
وَءَابَآؤُكُمُ ٱلْأَقْدَمُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾ فَإِنَّهُمْ عَدُوٌّ
لِىٓ إِلَّا رَبَّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾ ٱلَّذِى
خَلَقَنِى فَهُوَ يَهْدِينِ ﴿٧٨﴾ وَٱلَّذِى هُوَ
يُطْعِمُنِى وَيَسْقِينِ ﴿٧٩﴾ وَإِذَا مَرِضْتُ
فَهُوَ يَشْفِينِ ﴿٨٠﴾ وَٱلَّذِى يُمِيتُنِى ثُمَّ
يُحْيِينِ ﴿٨١﴾ وَٱلَّذِىٓ أَطْمَعُ أَن يَغْفِرَ لِى
خَطِيٓـَٔتِى يَوْمَ ٱلدِّينِ ﴿٨٢﴾ رَبِّ هَبْ لِى
حُكْمًا وَأَلْحِقْنِى بِٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾
وَٱجْعَل لِّى لِسَانَ صِدْقٍ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرِينَ
﴿٨٤﴾ وَٱجْعَلْنِى مِن وَرَثَةِ جَنَّةِ ٱلنَّعِيمِ
﴿٨٥﴾ وَٱغْفِرْ لِأَبِىٓ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ مِنَ
ٱلضَّآلِّينَ ﴿٨٦﴾ وَلَا تُخْزِنِى يَوْمَ يُبْعَثُونَ
﴿٨٧﴾ يَوْمَ لَا يَنفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾
إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى ٱللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ ﴿٨٩﴾

Ibrahim (/Abraham) asked no pardon for his father except because of a promise he had made to him; and when it became clear to him that he was an enemy of God, he declared himself quit of him; behold, Abraham was extremely tender-hearted, clement. [9:114]

وَمَا
كَانَ ٱسْتِغْفَارُ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ لِأَبِيهِ إِلَّا عَن
مَّوْعِدَةٍ وَعَدَهَآ إِيَّاهُ فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُۥٓ أَنَّهُۥ
عَدُوٌّ لِّلَّهِ تَبَرَّأَ مِنْهُ ۚ إِنَّ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ لَأَوَّٰهٌ
حَلِيمٌ ﴿١١٤﴾

And [Abraham conveyed God's messages], when he said to his people, "Worship God alone, and be conscious of Him; this is the best for you, if you can but know. You worship only idols instead

وَإِبْرَٰهِيمَ
إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱتَّقُوهُ ۖ
ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

إِنَّمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ أَوْثَٰنًا
وَتَخْلُقُونَ إِفْكًا ۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ تَعْبُدُونَ مِن
دُونِ ٱللَّهِ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ لَكُمْ رِزْقًا فَٱبْتَغُوا۟
عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرِّزْقَ وَٱعْبُدُوهُ وَٱشْكُرُوا۟
لَهُۥ ۖ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ وَإِن
تُكَذِّبُوا۟ فَقَدْ كَذَّبَ أُمَمٌ مِّن قَبْلِكُمْ ۖ وَمَا
عَلَى ٱلرَّسُولِ إِلَّا ٱلْبَلَٰغُ ٱلْمُبِينُ ﴿١٨﴾

of God, and you merely created falsehood! Those that you worship instead of God have no power to provide sustenance for you; seek, then, all sustenance from God, and worship Him alone, and be grateful to Him; unto Him you shall be brought back. And if you denounce me as a liar, other communities have done the same [to conveyors of God's messages] before you, but it is only for the conveyor of [God's] message to clearly convey the message. [29:16-18]

وَإِنَّ مِن شِيعَتِهِۦ لَإِبْرَٰهِيمَ ﴿٨٣﴾
إِذْ جَآءَ رَبَّهُۥ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ ﴿٨٤﴾ إِذْ قَالَ
لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِۦ مَاذَا تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾
أَئِفْكًا ءَالِهَةً دُونَ ٱللَّهِ تُرِيدُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾
فَمَا ظَنُّكُم بِرَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾ فَنَظَرَ
نَظْرَةً فِى ٱلنُّجُومِ ﴿٨٨﴾ فَقَالَ إِنِّى سَقِيمٌ
﴿٨٩﴾ فَتَوَلَّوْا۟ عَنْهُ مُدْبِرِينَ ﴿٩٠﴾ فَرَاغَ
إِلَىٰٓ ءَالِهَتِهِمْ فَقَالَ أَلَا تَأْكُلُونَ ﴿٩١﴾
مَا لَكُمْ لَا تَنطِقُونَ ﴿٩٢﴾ فَرَاغَ عَلَيْهِمْ
ضَرْبًۢا بِٱلْيَمِينِ ﴿٩٣﴾ فَأَقْبَلُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهِ
يَزِفُّونَ ﴿٩٤﴾ قَالَ أَتَعْبُدُونَ مَا تَنْحِتُونَ
﴿٩٥﴾ وَٱللَّهُ خَلَقَكُمْ وَمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾
قَالُوا۟ ٱبْنُوا۟ لَهُۥ بُنْيَٰنًا فَأَلْقُوهُ فِى
ٱلْجَحِيمِ ﴿٩٧﴾ فَأَرَادُوا۟ بِهِۦ كَيْدًا
فَجَعَلْنَٰهُمُ ٱلْأَسْفَلِينَ ﴿٩٨﴾ وَقَالَ إِنِّى
ذَاهِبٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّى سَيَهْدِينِ ﴿٩٩﴾ رَبِّ هَبْ
لِى مِنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

(83) *And among the followers of the same faith was Ibrahim (Abraham),* (84) *when he came to his Lord with a clear heart free from evil,* (85) *and when he said to his father and his people, "What is that which you are worshipping?* (86) *Do you want to worship that which you falsely forged as gods, apart from the only One God?* (87) *What think you then, of the Lord of all beings?" (*88) *Then he cast a glance at the stars and said,* (89) *"Surely, I feel heartsick."* (90) *But they turned their backs on him and went away.* (91) *Thereupon he approached their gods without being traced; he said, "Do you not eat [of the offerings before you]?* (92) *Why do you not speak?"*

(93) *And he [while being not watched] turned upon them striking with his right hand.*

(94) *They [the people of Abraham] quickly pounced on [finding out what Abraham had done].*

(95) *He said, "Do you worship something that you [yourselves] have carved,* (96) *while it is God who has created you and what you make."*

(97) *They said, [haughty], "Build a furnace for him and cast him into the blazing fire."*

(98) *But whereas they wanted to do evil to him, We brought them low.*

And he said, "I am going to my Lord; He will guide me." (100) *[And he prayed], "O my Lord! Grant me [a son who will be] of the*

righteous."
(101) *Then We gave him the good tidings of a boy-child [who will be] forebearing [like himself].* [37:83-101]

فَبَشَّرْنَٰهُ بِغُلَٰمٍ حَلِيمٍ ﴿١٠١﴾

Has that [stubborn denier of the truth] never been told of what was [stated] in the scrolls of Moses and of Abraham who fulfilled [what he was charged with] that no bearer of a burden shall bear the burden of another; and that nothing shall be accounted to a human being but what he [/she] strives for; and that in time one's striving shall [accurately] come in sight, then he [/she] shall be requited for it in full; and that unto your Lord is the ultimate end. [53:36-42]

أَمْ لَمْ يُنَبَّأْ بِمَا فِى صُحُفِ مُوسَىٰ ﴿٣٦﴾
وَإِبْرَٰهِيمَ ٱلَّذِى وَفَّىٰٓ ﴿٣٧﴾ أَلَّا تَزِرُ
وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَأَن لَّيْسَ
لِلْإِنسَٰنِ إِلَّا مَا سَعَىٰ ﴿٣٩﴾ وَأَنَّ سَعْيَهُۥ
سَوْفَ يُرَىٰ ﴿٤٠﴾ ثُمَّ يُجْزَىٰهُ ٱلْجَزَآءَ
ٱلْأَوْفَىٰ ﴿٤١﴾ وَأَنَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ
ٱلْمُنتَهَىٰ ﴿٤٢﴾

Surely this has indeed been in earlier [divine] writs, in the [divine] writs of Ibrahim (Abraham) and Musa (Moses). [87:18-19]

إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَفِى ٱلصُّحُفِ
ٱلْأُولَىٰ ﴿١٨﴾ صُحُفِ
إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَمُوسَىٰ ﴿١٩﴾

And remember when his Lord tried Ibrahim (Abraham) with [His] commandments and he fulfilled them, He [God] said, "Behold, I make you a leader for the people." Said he, "And of my offspring?" He said, "My promise does not embrace the evildoers." [2:124]

وَإِذِ
ٱبْتَلَىٰٓ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ رَبُّهُۥ بِكَلِمَٰتٍ فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ ۖ
قَالَ إِنِّى جَاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا ۖ قَالَ
وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِى ۖ قَالَ لَا يَنَالُ عَهْدِى
ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٢٤﴾

Are you not mindful of the one who argued with Abraham about his Lord, [feeling haughty] as God had granted him power and dominion as a king?
When Abraham said, "My Lord is He who gives life and makes to die," he said, "I give life and make to die."
Said Abraham, "God causes the sun to rise in the east; cause it to rise in the west!"
Then he who stubbornly denied the truth was struck dumb, and God does not guide those who are [persistently and obstinately] evildoers. [2:258]

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى ٱلَّذِى حَآجَّ
إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ فِى رَبِّهِۦٓ أَنْ ءَاتَىٰهُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُلْكَ
إِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ رَبِّىَ ٱلَّذِى يُحْىِۦ
وَيُمِيتُ قَالَ أَنَا۠ أُحْىِۦ وَأُمِيتُ ۖ قَالَ
إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَأْتِى بِٱلشَّمْسِ مِنَ
ٱلْمَشْرِقِ فَأْتِ بِهَا مِنَ ٱلْمَغْرِبِ فَبُهِتَ
ٱلَّذِى كَفَرَ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ
ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٢٥٨﴾

And when Ibrahim (Abraham) said, "O my Lord! Show me how you give life unto the dead." He said, "Have you not yet believed?" He [Abraham] answered, "Yes, but so that my heart may be at rest."
Said He, "Take, then, four birds and train them to be bound to you [following what you may instruct them]; later on place each [or part of each] of them on a [different] hill [around you where they are able to hear your voice]. Then call them, and they will come flying to you. And do know that God is All-mighty, All-wise. [2:260]

وَ إِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ رَبِّ أَرِنِى
كَيْفَ تُحْىِ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ ۖ قَالَ أَوَ لَمْ
تُؤْمِن ۖ قَالَ بَلَىٰ وَ لَٰكِن لِّيَطْمَئِنَّ
قَلْبِى ۖ قَالَ فَخُذْ أَرْبَعَةً مِّنَ ٱلطَّيْرِ
فَصُرْهُنَّ إِلَيْكَ ثُمَّ ٱجْعَلْ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ جَبَلٍ
مِّنْهُنَّ جُزْءًا ثُمَّ ٱدْعُهُنَّ يَأْتِينَكَ سَعْيًا
وَ ٱعْلَمْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٦٠﴾

And who could be of better faith than one who submits his [/her] whole self unto God, doing this sincerely and doing good, and follows the creed of Ibrahim (Abraham) who turned away from all that is false? And God exalted Abraham with His love. [4:125]

وَ مَنْ أَحْسَنُ دِينًا
مِّمَّنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُۥ لِلَّهِ وَ هُوَ مُحْسِنٌ
وَ ٱتَّبَعَ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ حَنِيفًا ۗ وَ ٱتَّخَذَ ٱللَّهُ
إِبْرَٰهِيمَ خَلِيلًا ﴿١٢٥﴾

You have had a good example in Ibrahim (Abraham) and those who followed him, when they said to their [idolatrous] people: "We are quit of you and that which you worship apart from God; we disbelieve in you, and enmity and dislike between us and you have become obvious for ever, until you believe in God alone." The only exception was that of Abraham's saying to his father, "I shall pray for [God's] forgiveness for you, but I have no power to secure anything from God to you." [And he and the believers prayed:] "Our Lord, in You we have placed our trust, and to You do we turn, and to You is all journeys' end. O our Lord! Keep us from being a temptation for those who might reject the truth[in their rejection of the truth, and/or their persecution of the believers], and forgive any wrongdoing on our side; Our Lord, You alone are the All-mighty, the All-wise". You have had a good example in

قَدْ كَانَتْ
لَكُمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فِىٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَ ٱلَّذِينَ
مَعَهُۥٓ إِذْ قَالُوا۟ لِقَوْمِهِمْ إِنَّا بُرَءَٰٓؤُا۟ مِنكُمْ
وَ مِمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ كَفَرْنَا بِكُمْ
وَ بَدَا بَيْنَنَا وَ بَيْنَكُمُ ٱلْعَدَٰوَةُ وَ ٱلْبَغْضَآءُ
أَبَدًا حَتَّىٰ تُؤْمِنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَحْدَهُۥٓ إِلَّا
قَوْلَ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ لِأَبِيهِ لَأَسْتَغْفِرَنَّ لَكَ وَ مَآ
أَمْلِكُ لَكَ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ مِن شَىْءٍ ۖ رَّبَّنَا عَلَيْكَ
تَوَكَّلْنَا وَ إِلَيْكَ أَنَبْنَا وَ إِلَيْكَ ٱلْمَصِيرُ
﴿٤﴾ رَبَّنَا لَا تَجْعَلْنَا فِتْنَةً لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟
وَ ٱغْفِرْ لَنَا رَبَّنَآ ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ
ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٥﴾ لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِيهِمْ أُسْوَةٌ
حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَ ٱلْيَوْمَ

them for whoever looks forward to [meeting] God and the Last Day. And whoever turns away, surely God is the All-sufficient, the One to whom all praise and thanks are due.[60:4-6]

ٱلْأَخِرَ ۖ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ
ٱلْغَنِىُّ ٱلْحَمِيدُ ﴿٦﴾

THE TWO CHILDREN OF IBRAHIM (ABRAHAM): ISMA'IL (ISHMAEL) AND IS-HAQ (ISAAC); HIS NEPHEW LUT (LOT)

(101) *Then We gave him the good tidings of a boy-child [who will be] forbearing [like himself].*
(102) *And one day when [the child] had become old enough to strive [with him], Ibrahim (Abraham) said, "O my dear son! I have seen in a dream that I should sacrifice you; consider, then, what do you think?"*
He said, "My father, do as you are bidden; you shall find me, God willing, one of those who are steadfastly patient."
(103) *And as soon as they both submitted themselves to the will of God, and [Abraham] had laid him [his son] down on his face,* (104) *We called unto him, "O Abraham!* (105) *You have so fulfilled that dream-vision." Thus, surely, do We reward the good doers.*
(106) *And this was indeed a [serious] trial that came out with clear proof [of truthfulness].*
(107) *And We ransomed him with a mighty sacrifice,* (108) *and left for him to be always remembered [as an example] among later generations,* (109) *"Peace be upon Abraham!"*
(110) *Thus do We reward the good-doers.*
(111) *He was truly one of Our believing servants.* (112) *And [in time] We gave him the good tidings of Is-haq (Isaac), a prophet and one of the righteous.*
(113) *And We blessed him and Is-haq(Isaac), but among their offspring there were both doers of good and others who clearly wronged their own-selves.* [37:101-113]

فَبَشَّرْنَٰهُ بِغُلَٰمٍ
حَلِيمٍ ﴿١٠١﴾ فَلَمَّا بَلَغَ مَعَهُ ٱلسَّعْىَ قَالَ
يَٰبُنَىَّ إِنِّىٓ أَرَىٰ فِى ٱلْمَنَامِ أَنِّىٓ
أَذْبَحُكَ فَٱنظُرْ مَاذَا تَرَىٰ ۚ قَالَ يَٰٓأَبَتِ
ٱفْعَلْ مَا تُؤْمَرُ ۖ سَتَجِدُنِىٓ إِن شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ
مِنَ ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ ﴿١٠٢﴾ فَلَمَّآ أَسْلَمَا وَتَلَّهُۥ
لِلْجَبِينِ ﴿١٠٣﴾ وَنَٰدَيْنَٰهُ أَن يَٰٓإِبْرَٰهِيمُ
﴿١٠٤﴾ قَدْ صَدَّقْتَ ٱلرُّءْيَآ ۚ إِنَّا كَذَٰلِكَ
نَجْزِى ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٠٥﴾ إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَهُوَ
ٱلْبَلَٰٓؤُا۟ ٱلْمُبِينُ ﴿١٠٦﴾ وَفَدَيْنَٰهُ بِذِبْحٍ
عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٠٧﴾ وَتَرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرِينَ
﴿١٠٨﴾ سَلَٰمٌ عَلَىٰٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ ﴿١٠٩﴾ كَذَٰلِكَ
نَجْزِى ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١١٠﴾ إِنَّهُۥ مِنْ
عِبَادِنَا ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١١١﴾ وَبَشَّرْنَٰهُ
بِإِسْحَٰقَ نَبِيًّا مِّنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿١١٢﴾
وَبَٰرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰٓ إِسْحَٰقَ ۚ وَمِن
ذُرِّيَّتِهِمَا مُحْسِنٌ وَظَالِمٌ لِّنَفْسِهِۦ مُبِينٌ
﴿١١٣﴾

"All praise be to God, who has granted unto me in my old age Isma'il

ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى وَهَبَ لِى عَلَى ٱلْكِبَرِ

(Ishmael) and Is-haq (Isaac); verily my Lord hears the prayer." [14:39]

إِسْمَٰعِيلَ وَ إِسْحَٰقَ ۚ إِنَّ رَبِّى لَسَمِيعُ ٱلدُّعَآءِ ﴿٣٩﴾

And call to mind in this book Isma'il (Ishmael); he kept true to what he said and promised, a conveyor of [God's] message and a prophet. And he used to bid his family [and people] to pray and to give purifying dues (zakat), and found favor from his Lord. [19:54-55]

وَ ٱذْكُرْ فِى ٱلْكِتَٰبِ إِسْمَٰعِيلَ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ
كَانَ صَادِقَ ٱلْوَعْدِ وَ كَانَ رَسُولًا نَّبِيًّا ﴿٥٤﴾
وَ كَانَ يَأْمُرُ أَهْلَهُۥ بِٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةِ
وَ كَانَ عِندَ رَبِّهِۦ مَرْضِيًّا ﴿٥٥﴾

And We saved him [Abraham] and Lut (Lot), [guiding them] to the land that We have blessed for all people, and We granted him Isaac followed by [Isaac's son] Jacob as an additional gift, and caused them all to be righteous, and We made them leaders who would guide [people] in accordance with Our command, and We inspired them to do good works, and keep up the prayer, and spend the purifying charity (zakat) [on those in need], and Us alone did they serve. And We granted to Lot [the capability of sound] judgement and knowledge, and saved him from the community which committed evil deeds; surely they were people lost in evil and iniquitous, whereas We admitted him into Our grace; verily, he was among the righteous. [21:71-75; see also 29:26-27]

وَ نَجَّيْنَٰهُ وَ لُوطًا إِلَى
ٱلْأَرْضِ ٱلَّتِى بَٰرَكْنَا فِيهَا لِلْعَٰلَمِينَ
﴿٧١﴾ وَ وَهَبْنَا لَهُۥ إِسْحَٰقَ وَ يَعْقُوبَ
نَافِلَةً ۖ وَ كُلًّا جَعَلْنَا صَٰلِحِينَ ﴿٧٢﴾
وَ جَعَلْنَٰهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا
وَ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْهِمْ فِعْلَ ٱلْخَيْرَٰتِ وَ إِقَامَ
ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَ إِيتَآءَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةِ ۖ وَ كَانُوا۟ لَنَا
عَٰبِدِينَ ﴿٧٣﴾ وَ لُوطًا ءَاتَيْنَٰهُ حُكْمًا
وَ عِلْمًا وَ نَجَّيْنَٰهُ مِنَ ٱلْقَرْيَةِ ٱلَّتِى كَانَت
تَّعْمَلُ ٱلْخَبَٰٓئِثَ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟ قَوْمَ سَوْءٍ
فَٰسِقِينَ ﴿٧٤﴾ وَ أَدْخَلْنَٰهُ فِى رَحْمَتِنَآ ۖ
إِنَّهُۥ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾

And Ibrahim (Abraham) charged his children with this, and [so did] Ya'qub (Jacob): "O my children! God has chosen for you the [purest] faith, so die not save in submission to Him." [2:132]

وَ وَصَّىٰ بِهَآ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ
بَنِيهِ وَ يَعْقُوبُ ۙ يَٰبَنِىَّ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱصْطَفَىٰ
لَكُمُ ٱلدِّينَ فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَ أَنتُم
مُّسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٣٢﴾

And We sent Nuh (Noah) and Ibrahim (Abraham) and established prophethood and the book [of God's guidance] among their descendants; and some of them were on the right way, but many others among them were iniquitous. [57:26]

وَ لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا وَ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ
وَ جَعَلْنَا فِى ذُرِّيَّتِهِمَا ٱلنُّبُوَّةَ وَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ ۖ
فَمِنْهُم مُّهْتَدٍ ۖ وَ كَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَٰسِقُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

وَ ٱذْكُرْ
عِبَٰدَنَآ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَ إِسْحَٰقَ وَ يَعْقُوبَ
أُو۟لِى ٱلْأَيْدِى وَ ٱلْأَبْصَٰرِ ﴿٤٥﴾ إِنَّآ
أَخْلَصْنَٰهُم بِخَالِصَةٍ ذِكْرَى ٱلدَّارِ ﴿٤٦﴾
وَ إِنَّهُمْ عِندَنَا لَمِنَ ٱلْمُصْطَفَيْنَ ٱلْأَخْيَارِ
﴿٤٧﴾ وَ ٱذْكُرْ إِسْمَٰعِيلَ وَ ٱلْيَسَعَ وَ ذَا
ٱلْكِفْلِ ۖ وَ كُلٌّ مِّنَ ٱلْأَخْيَارِ ﴿٤٨﴾

And call to mind Our servants Ibrahim(Abraham) and Is-haq (Isaac) and Ya'qub (Jacob), who were endowed with both might and vision. Assuredly We purified them endowing them with a quality most genuine: the remembrance of the final abode [in the eternal life to come], and in Our sight they were among the chosen, the truly good. And call to mind Isma'il (Ishmael) and Al-Yasa' [Elisha who succeeded Elijah] and Dhu-l-Kifl; each of them was of the truly good. [38:45-48]

وَ لَقَدْ جَآءَتْ رُسُلُنَآ
إِبْرَٰهِيمَ بِٱلْبُشْرَىٰ قَالُوا۟ سَلَٰمًا ۖ قَالَ
سَلَٰمٌ ۖ فَمَا لَبِثَ أَن جَآءَ بِعِجْلٍ حَنِيذٍ
﴿٦٩﴾ فَلَمَّا رَءَآ أَيْدِيَهُمْ لَا تَصِلُ إِلَيْهِ
نَكِرَهُمْ وَ أَوْجَسَ مِنْهُمْ خِيفَةً ۚ قَالُوا۟ لَا
تَخَفْ إِنَّآ أُرْسِلْنَآ إِلَىٰ قَوْمِ لُوطٍ ﴿٧٠﴾
وَ ٱمْرَأَتُهُۥ قَآئِمَةٌ فَضَحِكَتْ ۖ فَبَشَّرْنَٰهَا
بِإِسْحَٰقَ وَ مِن وَرَآءِ إِسْحَٰقَ يَعْقُوبَ
﴿٧١﴾ قَالَتْ يَٰوَيْلَتَىٰٓ ءَأَلِدُ وَ أَنَا۠ عَجُوزٌ
وَ هَٰذَا بَعْلِى شَيْخًا ۖ إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَشَىْءٌ
عَجِيبٌ ﴿٧٢﴾ قَالُوٓا۟ أَتَعْجَبِينَ مِنْ أَمْرِ
ٱللَّهِ ۖ رَحْمَتُ ٱللَّهِ وَ بَرَكَٰتُهُۥ عَلَيْكُمْ
أَهْلَ ٱلْبَيْتِ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ حَمِيدٌ مَّجِيدٌ ﴿٧٣﴾
فَلَمَّا ذَهَبَ عَنْ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ ٱلرَّوْعُ وَ جَآءَتْهُ
ٱلْبُشْرَىٰ يُجَٰدِلُنَا فِى قَوْمِ لُوطٍ ﴿٧٤﴾ إِنَّ
إِبْرَٰهِيمَ لَحَلِيمٌ أَوَّٰهٌ مُّنِيبٌ ﴿٧٥﴾

(69) *And Our [heavenly] messengers came to Ibrahim (Abraham) with the good tidings; they said, "Peace [be upon you]," and he answered, "Peace [be upon you too]," and soon he brought a roasted calf.* (70) *But when he saw that their hands were not reaching towards it, he felt uncomfortable [with their conduct] and became apprehensive of them. They said, "Fear not; we have been sent to the people of Lut (Lot)."*
(71) *And his wife, standing nearby, laughed [as she became sure that they were God's messengers]; then We gave her the good tidings of [the coming birth] of Is-haq(Isaac), who would be followed later by [his son] Ya'qub (Jacob).*
(72) *She said, "Woe is me! Shall I bear [a child], being an old woman, and this is my husband, an old man? This assuredly is a strange thing!"*
(73) *They said, "Do you consider strange what God wills and commands? God's grace and blessings be upon you, O people of this House! Surely, He is ever to be praised, All-glorious is He."*
(74) *And when Abraham was relieved of the awe, and the good tidings were conveyed to him, he began to plead with [Our messengers about the command of] Us for Lot's people;*
(75) *Abraham was most clement, constantly most tender-hearted, turning to God.*
(76) *"O Abraham! Desist from this [pleading]!*

Your Lord's command has already gone forth, and there shall be coming unto them a suffering that none can overt."

(77) *And when Our [heavenly] messengers came to Lot, he was upset [by their handsome look, and not knowing their real identity] seeing himself unable to protect them [against his people who would be attracted to them], and he said, "This is a woeful day!"* (78) *And his people come running to him, impelled by their evil-doing that they had been used to before; he [Lot] said to them, "O my people! Have [natural and legitimate] relations instead with these daughters of mine; this is more pure! Be then conscious of God, and disgrace me not [by committing your evil-doing] with my guests. Is there not just one right-minded man among you?"*

(79) *They said, "You have always known that we have no desire for [marrying] your daughters, and you know well that we want!"*

(80) *He said, "O would that I had the strength to confront you, or that I could lean upon some mighty support."*

[Then] they [the angels] said, "O Lot! We are the messengers of your Lord! (81) *They shall never reach you; so set forth with your family while it is yet night, and let none of you look back, but your wife would be an exception and that which is to befall these [people] shall befall her as well. Surely, their appointed time is the morning; is not the morning nigh?*

(82) *And so when Our command came to pass, We turned that [evil-doing area] upside down, and rained down upon them stone-hard blows of chastisement one beside the other,* (83) *marked out and assigned by your Lord [for the punishment of such as lost in evil], and never far from the evildoers.* [11:69-83; see also 15:51-77; 26: 160-175; 27:54-58; 29:28-35; 37:133-138; 54:33-39]

يَـٰٓإِبْرَٰهِيمُ أَعْرِضْ عَنْ هَـٰذَآ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ قَدْ
جَآءَ أَمْرُ رَبِّكَ ۖ وَ إِنَّهُمْ ءَاتِيهِمْ عَذَابٌ
غَيْرُ مَرْدُودٍ ﴿٧٦﴾ وَ لَمَّا جَآءَتْ رُسُلُنَا
لُوطًا سِىٓءَ بِهِمْ وَ ضَاقَ بِهِمْ ذَرْعًا وَ قَالَ
هَـٰذَا يَوْمٌ عَصِيبٌ ﴿٧٧﴾ وَ جَآءَهُۥ قَوْمُهُۥ
يُهْرَعُونَ إِلَيْهِ وَ مِن قَبْلُ كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ
ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ ۚ قَالَ يَـٰقَوْمِ هَـٰٓؤُلَآءِ بَنَاتِى هُنَّ
أَطْهَرُ لَكُمْ ۖ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَ لَا تُخْزُونِ
فِى ضَيْفِىٓ ۖ أَلَيْسَ مِنكُمْ رَجُلٌ رَّشِيدٌ
﴿٧٨﴾ قَالُوا۟ لَقَدْ عَلِمْتَ مَا لَنَا فِى بَنَاتِكَ
مِنْ حَقٍّ وَ إِنَّكَ لَتَعْلَمُ مَا نُرِيدُ ﴿٧٩﴾ قَالَ
لَوْ أَنَّ لِى بِكُمْ قُوَّةً أَوْ ءَاوِىٓ إِلَىٰ رُكْنٍ
شَدِيدٍ ﴿٨٠﴾ قَالُوا۟ يَـٰلُوطُ إِنَّا رُسُلُ رَبِّكَ
لَن يَصِلُوٓا۟ إِلَيْكَ ۖ فَأَسْرِ بِأَهْلِكَ بِقِطْعٍ مِّنَ
ٱلَّيْلِ وَ لَا يَلْتَفِتْ مِنكُمْ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا
ٱمْرَأَتَكَ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ مُصِيبُهَا مَآ أَصَابَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ
مَوْعِدَهُمُ ٱلصُّبْحُ ۚ أَلَيْسَ ٱلصُّبْحُ بِقَرِيبٍ
﴿٨١﴾ فَلَمَّا جَآءَ أَمْرُنَا جَعَلْنَا عَـٰلِيَهَا
سَافِلَهَا وَ أَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهَا حِجَارَةً مِّن
سِجِّيلٍ مَّنضُودٍ ﴿٨٢﴾ مُّسَوَّمَةً عِندَ رَبِّكَ ۚ
وَ مَا هِىَ مِنَ ٱلظَّـٰلِمِينَ بِبَعِيدٍ ﴿٨٣﴾

And [call to mind] Lut (Lot) when he said to his people, "Do you commit

وَ لُوطًا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِۦٓ أَتَأْتُونَ

such abominations that none among all people has ever done before you? You approach men with desire instead of women; nay, you are people who exceed all limits."
But the only answer of his people was that they said, "Drive them out of your land! Surely, they are folk who [keep themselves from the whole community and] try to make themselves pure!"
Thereupon We saved him and his family, except his wife, who was among those who stayed behind and elapsed, as We sent down on them a rain [of destruction]; so behold how was the end of those who are lost in evil. [7:80-84]

أَتَأْتُونَ الْفَاحِشَةَ مَا سَبَقَكُم بِهَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ مِّنَ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾ إِنَّكُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ الرِّجَالَ شَهْوَةً مِّن دُونِ النِّسَاءِ ۚ بَلْ أَنتُمْ قَوْمٌ مُّسْرِفُونَ ﴿٨١﴾ وَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِ إِلَّا أَن قَالُوا أَخْرِجُوهُم مِّن قَرْيَتِكُمْ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ أُنَاسٌ يَتَطَهَّرُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾ فَأَنجَيْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ إِلَّا امْرَأَتَهُ كَانَتْ مِنَ الْغَابِرِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾ وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِم مَّطَرًا ۖ فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٨٤﴾

...But then We did grant unto the House of Abraham the book and wisdom, and We did grant them a mighty dominion; and among them are those who [truly] believe in him, while others have turned away from him [and his message], and the fire of hell would be sufficiently burning [for the stubborn deniers of the truth]. [4:54-55]

أَمْ يَحْسُدُونَ النَّاسَ عَلَىٰ مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِ ۖ فَقَدْ آتَيْنَا آلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَآتَيْنَاهُم مُّلْكًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٥٤﴾ فَمِنْهُم مَّنْ آمَنَ بِهِ وَمِنْهُم مَّن صَدَّ عَنْهُ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِجَهَنَّمَ سَعِيرًا ﴿٥٥﴾

And We sent Nuh (Noah) and Ibrahim (Abraham) and established prophethood and the book [of God's guidance] among their descendants; and some of them were on the right way, but many others among them were iniquitous. [57:26]

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا وَإِبْرَاهِيمَ وَجَعَلْنَا فِي ذُرِّيَّتِهِمَا النُّبُوَّةَ وَالْكِتَابَ ۖ فَمِنْهُم مُّهْتَدٍ ۖ وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

Ibrahim (Abraham) and Isma'il (Ishmael) in Arabia

(124) *And when his Lord tried Ibrahim (Abraham) by [His] commandments and he fulfilled them, He said, "Behold, I shall make you a leader for the people." Abraham said, "And of my offspring?" He said, "My promise does not embrace the evildoers."*
(125) *And when We made the House [of Worship] a destination to which people may*

وَإِذِ ابْتَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبُّهُ بِكَلِمَاتٍ فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ ۖ قَالَ إِنِّي جَاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا ۖ قَالَ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِي ۖ قَالَ لَا يَنَالُ عَهْدِي الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٢٤﴾ وَإِذْ جَعَلْنَا الْبَيْتَ مَثَابَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَأَمْنًا وَاتَّخِذُوا مِن

turn repeatedly and a sanctuary: take, then, the place whereon Abraham once stood as your place of prayer. And thus did We commit Abraham and Isma'il (Ishmael): "Purify My House for those who will walk around it, and those who stay beside it for worship, and those who bow down and prostrate themselves in prayer.

(126) *And Abraham prayed, "O my Lord! Make this a land secure, and grant its people sustenance from its yield, such of them as believe in God and the Last Day."*

[God] said, "And whoever stubbornly denies the truth, I will let him [/her] enjoy [this life's pleasures] for a short while, then in the end I shall drive him [/her] to suffering through fire, and how awful a journey's end."

(127) *And when Abraham, and Ishmael with him, raised up the foundations of the House [of Worship, praying], "O our Lord! Accept this from us; You are All-hearing, All-knowing.*

(128) *"O our Lord! Make us submissive to You, and make out of our offspring a people submissive to You, and show us Your ways of worship, and accept our repentance; surely, You alone are the Acceptor of Repentance, the Most Gracious.*

(129) *"O Our Lord! Raise up to them [our offspring] a conveyor of [Your] message from among themselves, who shall convey to them Your messages and teach them the divine writ and the wisdom as well, and cause them to grow in purity; You are the All-mighty, the All-wise."* (130) *And who, unless one who fooled himself [/herself], would not want to join Abraham's creed; We have indeed chosen him [for a high rank] in this life, and in the life to come he shall be among the righteous.*

(131) *Behold, his Lord said to him, "Submit yourself to Me;" he said, "I have submitted myself to [You], the Lord and Cherisher of the whole universe."*

(132) *And Abraham charged his children with*

مَّقَامِ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ مُصَلًّى ۖ وَعَهِدْنَآ إِلَىٰٓ
إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ وَإِسْمَٰعِيلَ أَن طَهِّرَا بَيْتِىَ
لِلطَّآئِفِينَ وَٱلْعَٰكِفِينَ وَٱلرُّكَّعِ ٱلسُّجُودِ
﴿١٢٥﴾ وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ رَبِّ ٱجْعَلْ هَٰذَا
بَلَدًا ءَامِنًا وَٱرْزُقْ أَهْلَهُۥ مِنَ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ
مَنْ ءَامَنَ مِنْهُم بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ ۖ
قَالَ وَمَن كَفَرَ فَأُمَتِّعُهُۥ قَلِيلًا ثُمَّ أَضْطَرُّهُۥٓ
إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ ٱلنَّارِ ۖ وَبِئْسَ ٱلْمَصِيرُ
﴿١٢٦﴾ وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ ٱلْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ
ٱلْبَيْتِ وَإِسْمَٰعِيلُ رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّآ ۖ
إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿١٢٧﴾ رَبَّنَا
وَٱجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمَيْنِ لَكَ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِنَآ أُمَّةً
مُّسْلِمَةً لَّكَ وَأَرِنَا مَنَاسِكَنَا وَتُبْ
عَلَيْنَآ ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلتَّوَّابُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ
﴿١٢٨﴾ رَبَّنَا وَٱبْعَثْ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ
يَتْلُوا۟ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَٰتِكَ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ
وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ ۚ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ
ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿١٢٩﴾ وَمَن يَرْغَبُ عَن مِّلَّةِ
إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ إِلَّا مَن سَفِهَ نَفْسَهُۥ ۚ وَلَقَدِ
ٱصْطَفَيْنَٰهُ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَإِنَّهُۥ فِى
ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ لَمِنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿١٣٠﴾ إِذْ قَالَ
لَهُۥ رَبُّهُۥٓ أَسْلِمْ ۖ قَالَ أَسْلَمْتُ لِرَبِّ
ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٣١﴾ وَوَصَّىٰ بِهَآ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ
بَنِيهِ وَيَعْقُوبُ ۙ يَٰبَنِىَّ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱصْطَفَىٰ

this, and [so did]Y'qub (Jacob): "O my children! God has chosen for you the [purest] faith, so die not save in submission to Him." [2:124-132]

لَكُمُ ٱلدِّينَ فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَ أَنتُم
مُّسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٣٢﴾

Say, "God has spoken the truth; follow, then, the creed of Ibrahim (Abraham), who turned away from all that is false, and was not one of those who associate any with God." The first House [of worship] established for the people was indeed the one at Bakka [Makka/ Mecca], blessed and guiding to all people; therein are clear signs and messages from where Abraham once stood, and whoever enters it feels secure [and finds inner peace]. And pilgrimage unto the House is a duty of all people towards God, any who is able to make his [/her] way there. And as for those who stubbornly deny the truth, surely, God is All-sufficient and never needs any being. [3:95-97]

قُلْ صَدَقَ ٱللَّهُ ۗ
فَٱتَّبِعُوا۟ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ حَنِيفًا ۖ وَ مَا كَانَ
مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٩٥﴾ إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ
لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِى بِبَكَّةَ مُبَارَكًا وَ هُدًى
لِّلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٩٦﴾ فِيهِ ءَايَٰتٌۢ بَيِّنَٰتٌ مَّقَامُ
إِبْرَٰهِيمَ ۖ وَ مَن دَخَلَهُۥ كَانَ ءَامِنًا ۗ
وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى ٱلنَّاسِ حِجُّ ٱلْبَيْتِ مَنِ ٱسْتَطَاعَ
إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا ۚ وَ مَن كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَنِىٌّ
عَنِ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٩٧﴾

(35) *And [call to mind] when Ibrahim (Abraham) said, "O my Lord! Make this a land secure, and keep me and my children away from ever worshipping idols.* (36) *My Lord! They have led astray many people. Only the one who follows me [in worshipping the One God] is truly of me, and as for the who disobeys me, You are All-forgiving, Most Gracious.*
(37) *"O our Lord! I have settled some of my offspring in a valley where the land is not arable, close to Your Sanctified House [of worship], so that, O our Lord, they might keep up prayers; so cause people's hearts to yearn towards them, and grant them sustenance from land produce, so that they might feel grateful [for Your blessing].*
(38) *"O our Lord! Truly, You do know all that we may conceal and all that we may reveal: for nothing whatsoever, be it on earth or in heaven, remains hidden from God.*
(39) *"All praise be to God, Who has granted*

وَ إِذْ قَالَ
إِبْرَٰهِيمُ رَبِّ ٱجْعَلْ هَٰذَا ٱلْبَلَدَ ءَامِنًا
وَ ٱجْنُبْنِى وَ بَنِىَّ أَن نَّعْبُدَ ٱلْأَصْنَامَ ﴿٣٥﴾
رَبِّ إِنَّهُنَّ أَضْلَلْنَ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ ٱلنَّاسِ ۖ
فَمَن تَبِعَنِى فَإِنَّهُۥ مِنِّى ۖ وَ مَنْ عَصَانِى
فَإِنَّكَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٣٦﴾ رَّبَّنَآ إِنِّىٓ
أَسْكَنتُ مِن ذُرِّيَّتِى بِوَادٍ غَيْرِ ذِى زَرْعٍ
عِندَ بَيْتِكَ ٱلْمُحَرَّمِ رَبَّنَا لِيُقِيمُوا۟
ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ فَٱجْعَلْ أَفْـِٔدَةً مِّنَ ٱلنَّاسِ تَهْوِىٓ
إِلَيْهِمْ وَ ٱرْزُقْهُم مِّنَ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾ رَبَّنَآ إِنَّكَ تَعْلَمُ مَا نُخْفِى
وَ مَا نُعْلِنُ ۗ وَ مَا يَخْفَىٰ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ مِن
شَىْءٍ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَ لَا فِى ٱلسَّمَآءِ ﴿٣٨﴾
ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى وَهَبَ لِى عَلَى ٱلْكِبَرِ

unto me in my old age Isma'il (Ishmael) and Is-haq (Isaac); verily my Lord hears the prayer. (40) *"O my Lord! Help me to keep up the prayer, and let there be among my offspring those who do [the same]; O our Lord, accept my prayer.* (41) *O our Lord! Grant Your forgiveness unto me and my parents and all the believers, on the Day when the reckoning will come to pass."* [14:35-41]

إِسْمَٰعِيلَ وَ إِسْحَٰقَ ۚ إِنَّ رَبِّى لَسَمِيعُ
ٱلدُّعَآءِ ﴿٣٩﴾ رَبِّ ٱجْعَلْنِى مُقِيمَ
ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَ مِن ذُرِّيَّتِى ۚ رَبَّنَا وَ تَقَبَّلْ
دُعَآءِ ﴿٤٠﴾ رَبَّنَا ٱغْفِرْ لِى وَ لِوَٰلِدَىَّ
وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ ٱلْحِسَابُ ﴿٤١﴾

And when We settled for Ibrahim (Abraham) the place of the House [of Worship, and unto him God said], "Associate not any with Me, and purify My House for those who walk around it and those who stand up at it [for worship], and those who bow down and prostrate themselves [therein in prayer]. And proclaim among people the pilgrimage, they will come unto you on foot and on every fast mount, coming from every remote path [on earth], so that they might experience that which shall be of benefit to them, and that they might extol the name of God, during the days appointed [for sacrifice], over the livestock [they offer] which He has provided for them as sustenance: eat, then thereof and feed the wretched poor." Then let them bring to an end their state of self-denial and let them fulfill their vows, and let them walk [once again] around the ancient House [of worship]. [22:26-29]

وَ إِذْ بَوَّأْنَا لِإِبْرَٰهِيمَ مَكَانَ ٱلْبَيْتِ أَن لَّا
تُشْرِكْ بِى شَيْـًٔا وَ طَهِّرْ بَيْتِىَ لِلطَّآئِفِينَ
وَ ٱلْقَآئِمِينَ وَ ٱلرُّكَّعِ ٱلسُّجُودِ ﴿٢٦﴾
وَأَذِّن فِى ٱلنَّاسِ بِٱلْحَجِّ يَأْتُوكَ رِجَالًا
وَعَلَىٰ كُلِّ ضَامِرٍ يَأْتِينَ مِن كُلِّ فَجٍّ عَمِيقٍ
﴿٢٧﴾ لِّيَشْهَدُوا۟ مَنَٰفِعَ لَهُمْ وَ يَذْكُرُوا۟ ٱسْمَ
ٱللَّهِ فِىٓ أَيَّامٍ مَّعْلُومَٰتٍ عَلَىٰ مَا رَزَقَهُم
مِّنۢ بَهِيمَةِ ٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ ۖ فَكُلُوا۟ مِنْهَا
وَأَطْعِمُوا۟ ٱلْبَآئِسَ ٱلْفَقِيرَ ﴿٢٨﴾ ثُمَّ
لْيَقْضُوا۟ تَفَثَهُمْ وَ لْيُوفُوا۟ نُذُورَهُمْ
وَلْيَطَّوَّفُوا۟ بِٱلْبَيْتِ ٱلْعَتِيقِ ﴿٢٩﴾

Ibrahim (Abraham) was a significant milestone in the history of prophethood. When he was young he persistently conveyed the message of worshipping the One God wherever his circumstances led him to go. He made use of the powers of human observation and reasoning in arguing against worshipping the stars [6:74-83], a phenomenon that had been dominant in Mesopotamia where he had been born. He shifted his attention from one celestial body to another that seems bigger in search for his Lord, until he reached the sound result of worshipping the Creator and Lord of the stars, the whole universe, and all beings.

Abraham was gifted with an outstanding ability of argument for his faith in the One God, and against those who associated any with Him. He used his capability of argument and reasoning without fear against even such a tyrant who boldly and falsely claimed, "I give life and make to die." Abraham intelligently and skillfully did not argue directly

against the claim of this short-sighted and simple-minded person, but instead challenged the tyrant in another area in which he would definitely run short of any claim: changing the directions of the rising and the setting of the sun which was worshiped by many in the area. In this way the tyrant, who thought that he could cause death by killing and could grant life by pardoning one whose death had been previously ordered by him, could not find any claim for himself with regard to the solar system [2:258].

A further indication of the honesty and seriousness of Abraham's search for the truth is that he asked God to show him how he shall return life to the dead *"so that his heart may be at rest"* [2:260]. God has power over all His creation, whether it dead or alive, to follow His orders: *"whenever He wills a thing to be, He but says to it, "Be;" and it is"* [36:82].

Even when Abraham decided to break the idols, he wanted his action to raise an argument so that he would have a chance to prove his faith. Naturally, he did not think that this would be the end of the worship of idols in his region; on the contrary, a man of his intelligence would have been sure that the idols could be replaced and that he might be killed. His action was thus a kind of practical argument, even if it presented a serious risk to his own life. Had the All-mighty not commanded Abraham's rescue, the prophet could have been burned to death [21:51-73; 37:83-99].

It may be significant and interesting that the prominent Andalusian theologian and jurist Ibn Hazm [d. 456 A.H./1064 C.E.], who was well-known for his argumentative attitude, found strong support in the enlightening precedents of Abraham, stating that Muslims have to follow his creed and way, [e.g. 2:135; 3:95; 4:125; 16:123] and in Abraham's creed "argument was basic." The message of Abraham, as that of the other conveyors of God's message, is to worship God alone, " *the Lord of all beings, the One who has created me, and who Himself guides me, and who He Himself gives me to eat and to drink,and whenever I am sick He Himself heals me and brings me back to health, and He is the One who will cause me to die and will bring me back to life"* [26:77-81].

Abraham stressed the importance of the life to come, in which every human being will face judgement and requital. His faith was never shaken about that, even though he asked God to show him how the dead would be brought back to life "*just to let his heart be set fully at rest"* [2:260]. He strongly hoped that God might forgive him on the Day of Judgement [26:82], and prayed for all the believers to be forgiven as well [14:41]. He looked for God's forgiveness and grace even for those who might not follow him: "*Only the one who follows me is truly of me; and as for the one who disobeys me, You are, verily, All-forgiving, Most Gracious*" [14:36]. He also emphasized that individual responsibility is essential for justice in this life and in the life to come [53:36-42].

Although he was keen to maintain the light of the truth, particularly among his offspring, Abraham was a pioneer in stressing that God's message is for every time and place, and that his own offspring should hold on steadfastly to the faith in the One God [2:124, 132; 3:33, 96; 4:54]. He moved from Mesopotamia to Canaan, and went to Egypt, according to the Bible, and to Arabia, according to the Quran. Wherever he went, he called for the worship of the One God. When he had to settle his wife Hajar (Hagar) and his son Isma'il (Ishmael) "*in a valley where there is no arable land,*" he established "the Inviolable House" there, and prayed to God to let some people's hearts yearn towards the child and

his mother. His prayer was answered by God, and that site became an outstanding commercial and religious base in Arabia which preserved the light of the Abrahamic monotheism there - albeit with some blemishes - for about 25 centuries, until the message of Muhammad emerged. Thus Abraham was "a leader" in the history of God's messages [2:124], and was one who combined within himself a spectrum of virtues and who brought the light of faith and morality by his message and through his descendants to a wide range of humanity [16:120], as his message and mission are accepted by the followers of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, *"And who could be of better faith than one who submits his [/her] whole self unto God, doing this sincerely and doing good, and follows the creed of Ibrahim (Abraham) who turned away from all that is false? And God exalted Ibrahim with His love."* [4:125]. Abraham has been revered and loved by billions of people who have been bearing witness of his truthfulness through successive generations, and thus his prayer was answered [26:84], and even beyond this human love, "*God exalted Abraham with His love*" [4:125].

Muslims are happy and proud to follow the creed of Abraham [2:135; 3:68, 95; 6:161; 16:123; 22:78]. In each of the five obligatory prayers of Muslims during the day, in addition to other voluntary ones, they pray to God once or twice - according to the length of the prayer - to bestow His peace and blessings on Muhammad, as He has been bestowing His peace and blessings on Abraham. *"Say, 'My Lord has guided me to a straight way through an ever-true faith, the way of Abraham, who turned away from all that is false, and was not of those who associate any with God.' Say, "Truly, my prayer and [all] my acts of worship and my living and my dying, are for God [alone], the Lord of All-being; no associate has He; for thus have I been bidden, and I shall [always] be foremost among those who submit themselves to Him."* [6:161-163].

YA'QUB (JACOB/ ISRAEL), YUSUF (JOSEPH) AND HIS BROTHERS; THE DESCENDANTS (THE TRIBES, AL-ASBAT)

And Ibrahim (Abraham) charged his children with this, and [so did] Y'qub (Jacob): "O my children! God has chosen for you the [purest] faith, so die not save in submission to Him."
Were you witnesses when death approached Jacob, and when he said to his children, "Whom will you be worshipping after I am gone?" They said: "We will be worshipping your God, the God of your forefathers Abraham, Ishmael, and Isaac, the One God; and to Him do we submit ourselves."
Those were people who passed away; unto them are accounted what they have earned, and unto you what you have earned; and you

وَوَصَّىٰ بِهَآ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ
بَنِيهِ وَيَعْقُوبُ ۖ يَٰبَنِىَّ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱصْطَفَىٰ
لَكُمُ ٱلدِّينَ فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُم
مُّسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٣٢﴾ أَمْ كُنتُمْ شُهَدَآءَ إِذْ حَضَرَ
يَعْقُوبَ ٱلْمَوْتُ إِذْ قَالَ لِبَنِيهِ مَا
تَعْبُدُونَ مِنۢ بَعْدِى قَالُوا۟ نَعْبُدُ إِلَٰهَكَ
وَإِلَٰهَ ءَابَآئِكَ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ وَإِسْمَٰعِيلَ
وَإِسْحَٰقَ إِلَٰهًا وَٰحِدًا وَنَحْنُ لَهُۥ
مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٣٣﴾ تِلْكَ أُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ ۖ لَهَا
مَا كَسَبَتْ وَلَكُم مَّا كَسَبْتُمْ ۖ

shall not be asked about what they did. [2:132-134]

وَ لَا تُسْـَٔلُونَ عَمَّا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٣٤﴾

All food was lawful to the children of Israel, save what Israel forbade for himself before the Torah was sent down; say: "Bring you the Torah, then, and recite it, if you are saying the truth." And whosoever forges falsehood about God, it is they who are truly evildoers. [3:93-94]

كُلُّ ٱلطَّعَامِ كَانَ حِلًّا لِّبَنِىٓ
إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ إِلَّا مَا حَرَّمَ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلُ عَلَىٰ
نَفْسِهِۦ مِن قَبْلِ أَن تُنَزَّلَ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةُ ۗ قُلْ
فَأْتُوا۟ بِٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ فَٱتْلُوهَآ إِن كُنتُمْ
صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٩٣﴾ فَمَنِ ٱفْتَرَىٰ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ
ٱلْكَذِبَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ
ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ ﴿٩٤﴾

We have sent to you [O Muhammad] revelation, as We sent it to Nuh (Noah) and the prophets after him; and [also] We sent inspiration to Ibrahim [Abraham], and Isma'il (Ishmael), and Is-haq [Isaac] and Ya'qub (Jacob) and their descendants [the tribes, al-Asbat]; and to 'Isa (Jesus), and Ayyub (Job), and Yunus (Jonah), and Harun (Aaron), and Sulayman [Solomon], and to Dawud (David) We gave a book of divine wisdom. About some conveyors of [God's] messages We have told you; about others We have not; and to Musa (Moses) God spoke directly. [4:163-164]

إِنَّآ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ كَمَآ
أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰ نُوحٍ وَ ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ ۚ
وَ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَ إِسْمَٰعِيلَ
وَ إِسْحَٰقَ وَ يَعْقُوبَ وَ ٱلْأَسْبَاطِ وَ عِيسَىٰ
وَ أَيُّوبَ وَ يُونُسَ وَ هَٰرُونَ وَ سُلَيْمَٰنَ ۚ
وَ ءَاتَيْنَا دَاوُۥدَ زَبُورًا ﴿١٦٣﴾ وَ رُسُلًا قَدْ
قَصَصْنَٰهُمْ عَلَيْكَ مِن قَبْلُ وَ رُسُلًا لَّمْ
نَقْصُصْهُمْ عَلَيْكَ ۚ وَ كَلَّمَ ٱللَّهُ مُوسَىٰ
تَكْلِيمًا ﴿١٦٤﴾

And We granted him [Abraham] Is-haq (Isaac) followed by [Isaac's son] Y'qub (Jacob) as an additional gift, and caused them all to be righteous, and We made them leaders who would guide [people] in accordance with Our command, and We inspired them to do good works, and keep up the prayer, and spend the purifying charity (zakat) [on those in need], and Us alone did they serve. [21:72-73]

وَ وَهَبْنَا لَهُۥٓ إِسْحَٰقَ وَ يَعْقُوبَ
نَافِلَةً ۖ وَ كُلًّا جَعَلْنَا صَٰلِحِينَ ﴿٧٢﴾
وَ جَعَلْنَٰهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا
وَ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْهِمْ فِعْلَ ٱلْخَيْرَٰتِ وَ إِقَامَ
ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَ إِيتَآءَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةِ ۖ وَ كَانُوا۟ لَنَا
عَٰبِدِينَ ﴿٧٣﴾

And We granted Abraham Isaac and [Isaac's son] Jacob, and caused the prophethood and the book to continue among his offspring; and We gave him his

وَ وَهَبْنَا لَهُۥٓ إِسْحَٰقَ
وَيَعْقُوبَ وَ جَعَلْنَا فِى ذُرِّيَّتِهِ ٱلنُّبُوَّةَ
وَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُ أَجْرَهُۥ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ

reward in this life and in the life to come he shall be among the righteous. [29:27]

وَ إِنَّهُۥ فِى ٱلْأَخِرَةِ لَمِنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾

And call to mind Our servants Ibrahim (Abraham) and Is-haq (Isaac) and Ya'qub (Jacob), who were endowed with both might and vision. [38:45]

وَ ٱذْكُرْ
عِبَٰدَنَآ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَ إِسْحَٰقَ وَ يَعْقُوبَ
أُو۟لِى ٱلْأَيْدِى وَ ٱلْأَبْصَٰرِ ﴿٤٥﴾

(3) *We tell you the best of stories [in content and in form as well as in their messages], as We reveal to you this Quran, though before it you were not aware [of God's revelation and His previous messages].*

نَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ أَحْسَنَ ٱلْقَصَصِ
بِمَآ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ هَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانَ وَ إِن
كُنتَ مِن قَبْلِهِۦ لَمِنَ ٱلْغَٰفِلِينَ ﴿٣﴾ إِذْ
قَالَ يُوسُفُ لِأَبِيهِ يَٰٓأَبَتِ إِنِّى رَأَيْتُ
أَحَدَ عَشَرَ كَوْكَبًا وَ ٱلشَّمْسَ وَ ٱلْقَمَرَ
رَأَيْتُهُمْ لِى سَٰجِدِينَ ﴿٤﴾ قَالَ يَٰبُنَىَّ لَا
تَقْصُصْ رُءْيَاكَ عَلَىٰٓ إِخْوَتِكَ فَيَكِيدُوا۟
لَكَ كَيْدًا ۖ إِنَّ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ لِلْإِنسَٰنِ عَدُوٌّ
مُّبِينٌ ﴿٥﴾ وَ كَذَٰلِكَ يَجْتَبِيكَ رَبُّكَ
وَيُعَلِّمُكَ مِن تَأْوِيلِ ٱلْأَحَادِيثِ وَ يُتِمُّ
نِعْمَتَهُۥ عَلَيْكَ وَ عَلَىٰٓ ءَالِ يَعْقُوبَ كَمَآ
أَتَمَّهَا عَلَىٰٓ أَبَوَيْكَ مِن قَبْلُ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ
وَإِسْحَٰقَ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٦﴾ ۞ لَّقَدْ
كَانَ فِى يُوسُفَ وَ إِخْوَتِهِۦٓ ءَايَٰتٌ
لِّلسَّآئِلِينَ ﴿٧﴾ إِذْ قَالُوا۟ لَيُوسُفُ
وَأَخُوهُ أَحَبُّ إِلَىٰٓ أَبِينَا مِنَّا وَ نَحْنُ
عُصْبَةٌ ۚ إِنَّ أَبَانَا لَفِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٨﴾
ٱقْتُلُوا۟ يُوسُفَ أَوِ ٱطْرَحُوهُ أَرْضًا يَخْلُ
لَكُمْ وَجْهُ أَبِيكُمْ وَ تَكُونُوا۟ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ

(4) *When Yusuf (Joseph) said to his father, "Father, I saw [in a dream] eleven stars, as well as the sun and the moon, I saw them prostrate themselves before me!"*

(5) *He [his father] said, "O my dear son! Do not relate your dream to your brothers, lest they [out of envy] plot something evil against you; surely Satan is to the human being a determinate enemy."* (6) *And so your Lord is choosing you and will be imparting unto you some comprehension of the meaning of the happenings and grants full measure of His blessings upon you and the house of Ya'qub (Jacob), as aforetime He bestowed them in full measure upon your forefathers Ibrahim (Abraham) and Is-haq (Isaac); surely your Lord is All-knowing, All-wise.*

(7) *Indeed, in [the story of] Joseph and his brothers, there are messages for all who search [for the truth of what happened and about the human self].*

(8) *When they said, 'Surely Yusuf (Joseph) and his brother are dearer to our father than we, even though we are a band. Surely, our father is in obvious error.* (9) *Kill you Joseph, or cast him forth into some land [faraway], so that your father's regard may be for you alone; and thereafter*

you will be people of integrity [by gaining what you actually desire, while intending to repent afterwards]." (10) *Another of them said, "No, kill not Joseph, but rather cast him into the bottom of the well, [from which] some travellers may pick him up."*

(11) *[Agreeing on this,] they said [to their father,] "Father! How does it come that you do not trust us with Joseph? Surely we are his sincere well-wishers.* (12) *Let him go out with us tomorrow, so that he may enjoy himself and play; and surely we shall be watching over him."*

(13) *He [Jacob] said, "It grieves me that you might take him with you, and I fear that the wolf may prey upon him while you are inattentive of him."*

(14) *They said, "If the wolf preys upon him and we are a band of many, then we are really the losers!"*

(15) *And as they went away with him, and together decided to cast him in the depth of the well, We then revealed to him: "You shall tell them about this deed of them at a time when they will not be aware [who you are]."*

(16) *And in the evening, they came to their father weeping.* (17) *They [said,] "O our father! We went off racing with one another, and left Joseph behind with our belongings, and thereupon the wolf preyed upon him, and you would not believe us even though we speak the truth."* (18) *And they brought his shirt with false blood on it, but Y'qub (Jacob) said, "Nay, but it is rather your own selves that tempted you to do something [terrible;] but let me have good patience; and it is from God [alone] I seek help to bear what you have described."*

(19) *And there came a caravan, and they sent forth a water-drawer of them,and as he let down his bucket [in the well and saw Joseph] he said, "What good news! Here is a boy!" And they intended in themselves to sell him; but God knew all that they were doing.*

قَوْمًا صَٰلِحِينَ ﴿٩﴾ قَالَ قَآئِلٌ مِّنْهُمْ لَا
تَقْتُلُوا۟ يُوسُفَ وَ أَلْقُوهُ فِى غَيَٰبَتِ
ٱلْجُبِّ يَلْتَقِطْهُ بَعْضُ ٱلسَّيَّارَةِ إِن كُنتُمْ
فَٰعِلِينَ ﴿١٠﴾ قَالُوا۟ يَٰٓأَبَانَا مَا لَكَ لَا
تَأْمَنَّا عَلَىٰ يُوسُفَ وَ إِنَّا لَهُۥ لَنَٰصِحُونَ
﴿١١﴾ أَرْسِلْهُ مَعَنَا غَدًا يَرْتَعْ وَ يَلْعَبْ
وَ إِنَّا لَهُۥ لَحَٰفِظُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ قَالَ إِنِّى
لَيَحْزُنُنِىٓ أَن تَذْهَبُوا۟ بِهِۦ وَ أَخَافُ أَن
يَأْكُلَهُ ٱلذِّئْبُ وَ أَنتُمْ عَنْهُ غَٰفِلُونَ ﴿١٣﴾
قَالُوا۟ لَئِنْ أَكَلَهُ ٱلذِّئْبُ وَ نَحْنُ عُصْبَةٌ
إِنَّآ إِذًا لَّخَٰسِرُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ فَلَمَّا ذَهَبُوا۟ بِهِۦ
وَ أَجْمَعُوٓا۟ أَن يَجْعَلُوهُ فِى غَيَٰبَتِ
ٱلْجُبِّ ۚ وَ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْهِ لَتُنَبِّئَنَّهُم
بِأَمْرِهِمْ هَٰذَا وَ هُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١٥﴾
وَ جَآءُوٓ أَبَاهُمْ عِشَآءً يَبْكُونَ ﴿١٦﴾ قَالُوا۟
يَٰٓأَبَانَآ إِنَّا ذَهَبْنَا نَسْتَبِقُ وَ تَرَكْنَا
يُوسُفَ عِندَ مَتَٰعِنَا فَأَكَلَهُ ٱلذِّئْبُ ۖ وَ مَآ
أَنتَ بِمُؤْمِنٍ لَّنَا وَ لَوْ كُنَّا صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿١٧﴾
وَ جَآءُو عَلَىٰ قَمِيصِهِۦ بِدَمٍ كَذِبٍ ۚ قَالَ
بَلْ سَوَّلَتْ لَكُمْ أَنفُسُكُمْ أَمْرًا ۖ فَصَبْرٌ
جَمِيلٌ ۖ وَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُسْتَعَانُ عَلَىٰ مَا
تَصِفُونَ ﴿١٨﴾ وَ جَآءَتْ سَيَّارَةٌ فَأَرْسَلُوا۟
وَارِدَهُمْ فَأَدْلَىٰ دَلْوَهُۥ ۖ قَالَ يَٰبُشْرَىٰ
هَٰذَا غُلَٰمٌ ۚ وَ أَسَرُّوهُ بِضَٰعَةً ۚ وَ ٱللَّهُ
عَلِيمٌۢ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٩﴾ وَ شَرَوْهُ بِثَمَنٍ

(20) *And they sold him for a paltry price, a handful of counted coins for whatever low price.* (21) *And the man from Egypt who brought him said to his wife, "Let his stay here be nice; he may well be of some benefit for us, or we may take him for our own son." And thus We gave unto Joseph a firm place on earth, and that We might impart unto him some comprehension of the happenings [he would come upon]; and God always prevails in whatever be His purpose, but most people know it not.*
(22) *And when he was fully grown, We granted him [the ability of good] judgement and knowledge, and thus We reward the doers of good.*
(23) *Now the woman in whose house he was living made an advance to him to yield himself to her, bolting the doors and saying, "Come, take me!" 'But he said, "May God preserve me! My master has made my stay here nice. Surely, to no success come the evil-doers!"*
(24) *And she approached him, and he would 'have taken her, had he not felt evidence of God's Providence; and so [it turned out] in order to avert from him evil and abomination; as he was truly one of Our devoted worshippers.* (25) *And they both rushed to the door in a race, and trying to grasp him, she tore his shirt from behind.*
They met her master at the door! She said, "What should be the punishment of one who had evil desires and designs about your wife, but imprisonment or a grievous suffering?"
(26) *Joseph said, "It was she who made the advance to me." Now one who was present from her own folk suggested [a way to reach the truth]: "If his shirt has been torn from the front, then she is telling the truth and he is a liar;* (27) *and if it be that his shirt has been torn from behind, then she has lied and he is speaking the truth."*
(28) *And when [her husband] saw that his shirt was torn from behind he said, "This is of*

بَخْسٍ دَرَٰهِمَ مَعْدُودَةٍ وَكَانُوا۟ فِيهِ مِنَ
ٱلزَّٰهِدِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِى ٱشْتَرَىٰهُ مِن
مِّصْرَ لِٱمْرَأَتِهِۦٓ أَكْرِمِى مَثْوَىٰهُ عَسَىٰٓ أَن
يَنفَعَنَآ أَوْ نَتَّخِذَهُۥ وَلَدًا ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ مَكَّنَّا
لِيُوسُفَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلِنُعَلِّمَهُۥ مِن
تَأْوِيلِ ٱلْأَحَادِيثِ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ غَالِبٌ عَلَىٰٓ
أَمْرِهِۦ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ
﴿٢١﴾ وَلَمَّا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُۥٓ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُ حُكْمًا
وَعِلْمًا ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِى ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾
وَرَٰوَدَتْهُ ٱلَّتِى هُوَ فِى بَيْتِهَا عَن نَّفْسِهِۦ
وَغَلَّقَتِ ٱلْأَبْوَٰبَ وَقَالَتْ هَيْتَ لَكَ ۚ
قَالَ مَعَاذَ ٱللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ رَبِّىٓ أَحْسَنَ
مَثْوَاىَ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُفْلِحُ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾
وَلَقَدْ هَمَّتْ بِهِۦ ۖ وَهَمَّ بِهَا لَوْلَآ أَن رَّءَا
بُرْهَٰنَ رَبِّهِۦ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ لِنَصْرِفَ عَنْهُ ٱلسُّوٓءَ
وَٱلْفَحْشَآءَ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا
ٱلْمُخْلَصِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾ وَٱسْتَبَقَا ٱلْبَابَ
وَقَدَّتْ قَمِيصَهُۥ مِن دُبُرٍ وَأَلْفَيَا سَيِّدَهَا لَدَا
ٱلْبَابِ ۚ قَالَتْ مَا جَزَآءُ مَنْ أَرَادَ بِأَهْلِكَ
سُوٓءًا إِلَّآ أَن يُسْجَنَ أَوْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ۚ
﴿٢٥﴾ قَالَ هِىَ رَٰوَدَتْنِى عَن نَّفْسِى
وَشَهِدَ شَاهِدٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِهَآ إِن كَانَ قَمِيصُهُۥ قُدَّ
مِن قُبُلٍ فَصَدَقَتْ وَهُوَ مِنَ ٱلْكَٰذِبِينَ
﴿٢٦﴾ وَإِن كَانَ قَمِيصُهُۥ قُدَّ مِن دُبُرٍ
فَكَذَبَتْ وَهُوَ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾ فَلَمَّا
رَءَا قَمِيصَهُۥ قُدَّ مِن دُبُرٍ قَالَ إِنَّهُۥ مِن

كَيْدِكُنَّ ۖ إِنَّ كَيْدَكُنَّ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٢٨﴾ يُوسُفُ
أَعْرِضْ عَنْ هَٰذَا ۚ وَ ٱسْتَغْفِرِى لِذَنۢبِكِ ۖ
إِنَّكِ كُنتِ مِنَ ٱلْخَاطِـِٔينَ ﴿٢٩﴾ ۞ وَ قَالَ
نِسْوَةٌ فِى ٱلْمَدِينَةِ ٱمْرَأَتُ ٱلْعَزِيزِ
تُرَٰوِدُ فَتَىٰهَا عَن نَّفْسِهِۦ ۖ قَدْ شَغَفَهَا
حُبًّا ۖ إِنَّا لَنَرَىٰهَا فِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٣٠﴾
فَلَمَّا سَمِعَتْ بِمَكْرِهِنَّ أَرْسَلَتْ إِلَيْهِنَّ
وَ أَعْتَدَتْ لَهُنَّ مُتَّكَـًٔا وَ ءَاتَتْ كُلَّ وَٰحِدَةٍ
مِّنْهُنَّ سِكِّينًا وَ قَالَتِ ٱخْرُجْ عَلَيْهِنَّ ۖ
فَلَمَّا رَأَيْنَهُۥٓ أَكْبَرْنَهُۥ وَ قَطَّعْنَ أَيْدِيَهُنَّ
وَ قُلْنَ حَٰشَ لِلَّهِ مَا هَٰذَا بَشَرًا إِنْ هَٰذَآ إِلَّا
مَلَكٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٣١﴾ قَالَتْ فَذَٰلِكُنَّ ٱلَّذِى
لُمْتُنَّنِى فِيهِ ۖ وَ لَقَدْ رَٰوَدتُّهُۥ عَن نَّفْسِهِۦ
فَٱسْتَعْصَمَ ۖ وَ لَئِن لَّمْ يَفْعَلْ مَآ ءَامُرُهُۥ
لَيُسْجَنَنَّ وَ لَيَكُونًا مِّنَ ٱلصَّٰغِرِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾
قَالَ رَبِّ ٱلسِّجْنُ أَحَبُّ إِلَىَّ مِمَّا
يَدْعُونَنِىٓ إِلَيْهِ ۖ وَ إِلَّا تَصْرِفْ عَنِّى
كَيْدَهُنَّ أَصْبُ إِلَيْهِنَّ وَ أَكُن مِّنَ ٱلْجَٰهِلِينَ
﴿٣٣﴾ فَٱسْتَجَابَ لَهُۥ رَبُّهُۥ فَصَرَفَ عَنْهُ
كَيْدَهُنَّ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿٣٤﴾ ثُمَّ
بَدَا لَهُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ مَا رَأَوُا۟ ٱلْـَٔايَٰتِ
لَيَسْجُنُنَّهُۥ حَتَّىٰ حِينٍ ﴿٣٥﴾ وَ دَخَلَ مَعَهُ
ٱلسِّجْنَ فَتَيَانِ ۖ قَالَ أَحَدُهُمَآ إِنِّىٓ
أَرَىٰنِىٓ أَعْصِرُ خَمْرًا ۖ وَ قَالَ ٱلْـَٔاخَرُ
إِنِّىٓ أَرَىٰنِىٓ أَحْمِلُ فَوْقَ رَأْسِى خُبْزًا
تَأْكُلُ ٱلطَّيْرُ مِنْهُ ۖ نَبِّئْنَا بِتَأْوِيلِهِۦٓ ۖ

your guile, O women! Surely, awesome is your guile! (29) *Joseph, keep away from this.*
And you, woman, ask forgiveness for your evil-doing; surely you have been seriously at fault."
(30) *And some women of the city spoke [to one another,] "The wife of this high-ranking man is trying to seduce her slave-boy to yield himself to her! She has been overwhelmed with her love for him; indeed we see her in an evident error."*
(31) *Then, when she heard of their malicious talk, she sent for them and made ready for them a repast with comfortable cushioned couches, and handed each of them a knife, and said[to Joseph], "Come forth to them!"*
And when the women saw him [Joseph], they so admired him that they cut their hands [with their knives unconsciously], saying, "Limitless is God's power in creation! This is not a human being [as a human being is known]! This is no other than a graceful angel."
(32) *Said she [the wife of the high-ranking man], "So now you see. This is he whom you blamed me for. Yes, I made an advance to him, but he abstained. Yet if he will not do what I command him, he shall certainly be imprisoned and shall be one of the humiliated."*
(33) *Joseph said, "O my Lord! Prison is more desirable to me than what they are calling me to; and unless you turn their guile away from me, I might yearn towards their allure and become one of those who do not know [what is right and what is wrong]."*
(34) *And his Lord answered his prayer, and He turned their guile away from him; surely He is the All-hearing, the All-knowing.*
(35) *Then it seemed good to them, after they had seen all signs [of Joseph's innocence], that they should imprison him for a while.*

(36) *Now two young men happened to enter the prison with him. Once, one of them said, "I saw myself [in a dream] pressing wine."*

The other said, "I saw myself [in a dream] carrying on my head bread that birds were eating of." [Both asked Joseph,] "Let us know what these [dreams] really mean; we see you one of the doers of good."

(37) *He [Joseph] said, "No food shall come to you as a sustenance but before it comes I can tell you what it may mean to you. This is of the knowledge which my Lord imparted to me. I have left behind the beliefs of those who do not believe in God persistently and who stubbornly deny the life to come;* (38) *and I have followed the creed of my forefathers Ibrahim (Abraham) and Is-haq (Isaac) and Ya'qub (Jacob). We cannot be among those who associate any with God; this is of God's bounty to us and to all human beings, but most people are ungrateful.*

(39) *"O my two fellow-prisoners! Which is better and more sensible: many divine lords different from one another, or the One God, who holds absolute sway over all that exists?*

(40) *"Whatever you worship apart from Him is nothing but [empty] names which you have formulated, you and your forefathers, for which God has never brought any warrant. Judgment [as to what is right and what is wrong] rests with God alone; [and] He has bidden that you should worship none but Him; this is the [one] ever-true faith with genuine value, but most people know not.*

(41) *"O my two fellow-prisoners! As for one of you, he will give his Lord wine to drink; but as for the other, he will be crucified and birds will eat off his head. The matter about which you asked me has been decided [by God according to the knowledge granted to me by Him.]"* (42) *And then he said to the one of the two [fellow prisoners] that he took as saved, "Mention me [and my case of unjust imprisonment] to your lord [when you become free]." But Satan caused him to forget to mention [this] to his lord, and thus he [Joseph] continued in prison a few [more] years.*

إِنَّا نَرَىٰكَ مِنَ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾ قَالَ لَا
يَأْتِيكُمَا طَعَامٌ تُرْزَقَانِهِۦٓ إِلَّا نَبَّأْتُكُمَا
بِتَأْوِيلِهِۦ قَبْلَ أَن يَأْتِيَكُمَا ۚ ذَٰلِكُمَا ۚ مِمَّا
عَلَّمَنِى رَبِّىٓ ۚ إِنِّى تَرَكْتُ مِلَّةَ قَوْمٍ لَّا
يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَهُم بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ هُمْ كَٰفِرُونَ
﴿٣٧﴾ وَٱتَّبَعْتُ مِلَّةَ ءَابَآءِىٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ
وَإِسْحَٰقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ ۚ مَا كَانَ لَنَآ أَن
نُّشْرِكَ بِٱللَّهِ مِن شَىْءٍ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ مِن فَضْلِ
ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْنَا وَعَلَى ٱلنَّاسِ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ
ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾ يَٰصَٰحِبَىِ
ٱلسِّجْنِ ءَأَرْبَابٌ مُّتَفَرِّقُونَ خَيْرٌ أَمِ ٱللَّهُ
ٱلْوَٰحِدُ ٱلْقَهَّارُ ﴿٣٩﴾ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن
دُونِهِۦٓ إِلَّآ أَسْمَآءً سَمَّيْتُمُوهَآ أَنتُمْ
وَءَابَآؤُكُم مَّآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ بِهَا مِن سُلْطَٰنٍ ۚ
إِنِ ٱلْحُكْمُ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ ۚ أَمَرَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ
إِيَّاهُ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلدِّينُ ٱلْقَيِّمُ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ
ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾ يَٰصَٰحِبَىِ
ٱلسِّجْنِ أَمَّآ أَحَدُكُمَا فَيَسْقِى رَبَّهُۥ
خَمْرًا ۖ وَأَمَّا ٱلْءَاخَرُ فَيُصْلَبُ فَتَأْكُلُ
ٱلطَّيْرُ مِن رَّأْسِهِۦ ۚ قُضِىَ ٱلْأَمْرُ ٱلَّذِى
فِيهِ تَسْتَفْتِيَانِ ﴿٤١﴾ وَقَالَ لِلَّذِى ظَنَّ
أَنَّهُۥ نَاجٍ مِّنْهُمَا ٱذْكُرْنِى عِندَ رَبِّكَ
فَأَنسَىٰهُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ ذِكْرَ رَبِّهِۦ فَلَبِثَ فِى
ٱلسِّجْنِ بِضْعَ سِنِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾ وَقَالَ ٱلْمَلِكُ

(43) *And [one day] the king said, "I saw [in a dream] seven fat cows being eaten by seven lean ones, likewise seven green ears [of grain] and seven others dried up. O you notable people, give me your view about my dream, if you can interpret dreams."*

(44) *They said, "This is a confused mixture of nightmares; and we have no knowledge of interpreting such a confusing mixture of nightmares."*

(45) *And the one [of the two prisoners] who had been saved and [suddenly] remembered [Joseph] after that time, said, "It is I [who can tell you its interpretation]; so send me forth."*

(46) *[And in the prison he said to Joseph,] "Joseph, you truthful man, give us your interpretation regarding seven fat cows being eaten by seven lean ones, and seven green ears [of grain] and seven others dried up, so that I return to the people [with your interpretation] that they may come to know."*

(47) *He [Joseph] said, "You shall sow for seven years consecutively as you are used to, so let all [the grain] that you harvest remain [untouched] in its ear, excepting only a little whereof you may eat.* (48) *Then thereafter there shall come upon you seven hard years that shall devour what you have laid up in advance for them, excepting only a little of what you may [be after all able to] keep in store.* (49) *Then thereafter there shall come a year wherein the people will be relieved [from the hardship] and wherein they will [be able to] press [seeds and fruit to obtain oil and drink] in season [as before]."*

(50) *[And as Joseph's interpretation reached him] the king said, "Bring him to me!" And when the messenger came to him, [Joseph] said, "Go back to your lord and ask him about those women who cut their hands. [Until now it is] my Lord [alone who] has full knowledge of their guile!"*

(51) *[Thereupon] the king asked [those women,] "What was the matter with you,*

إِنِّيٓ أَرَىٰ سَبۡعَ بَقَرَٰتٖ سِمَانٖ يَأۡكُلُهُنَّ
سَبۡعٌ عِجَافٞ وَسَبۡعَ سُنۢبُلَٰتٍ خُضۡرٖ وَأُخَرَ
يَابِسَٰتٖۖ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلۡمَلَأُ أَفۡتُونِي فِي
رُءۡيَايَ إِن كُنتُمۡ لِلرُّءۡيَا تَعۡبُرُونَ ٤٣
قَالُوٓاْ أَضۡغَٰثُ أَحۡلَٰمٖۖ وَمَا نَحۡنُ
بِتَأۡوِيلِ ٱلۡأَحۡلَٰمِ بِعَٰلِمِينَ ٤٤ وَقَالَ
ٱلَّذِي نَجَا مِنۡهُمَا وَٱدَّكَرَ بَعۡدَ أُمَّةٍ أَنَا
أُنَبِّئُكُم بِتَأۡوِيلِهِۦ فَأَرۡسِلُونِ ٤٥
يُوسُفُ أَيُّهَا ٱلصِّدِّيقُ أَفۡتِنَا فِي سَبۡعِ
بَقَرَٰتٖ سِمَانٖ يَأۡكُلُهُنَّ سَبۡعٌ عِجَافٞ وَسَبۡعِ
سُنۢبُلَٰتٍ خُضۡرٖ وَأُخَرَ يَابِسَٰتٖ لَّعَلِّيٓ
أَرۡجِعُ إِلَى ٱلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمۡ يَعۡلَمُونَ ٤٦
قَالَ تَزۡرَعُونَ سَبۡعَ سِنِينَ دَأَبٗا فَمَا
حَصَدتُّمۡ فَذَرُوهُ فِي سُنۢبُلِهِۦٓ إِلَّا قَلِيلٗا
مِّمَّا تَأۡكُلُونَ ٤٧ ثُمَّ يَأۡتِي مِنۢ بَعۡدِ ذَٰلِكَ
سَبۡعٞ شِدَادٞ يَأۡكُلۡنَ مَا قَدَّمۡتُمۡ لَهُنَّ إِلَّا قَلِيلٗا
مِّمَّا تُحۡصِنُونَ ٤٨ ثُمَّ يَأۡتِي مِنۢ بَعۡدِ
ذَٰلِكَ عَامٞ فِيهِ يُغَاثُ ٱلنَّاسُ وَفِيهِ
يَعۡصِرُونَ ٤٩ وَقَالَ ٱلۡمَلِكُ ٱئۡتُونِي
بِهِۦۖ فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُ ٱلرَّسُولُ قَالَ ٱرۡجِعۡ
إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ فَسۡـَٔلۡهُ مَا بَالُ ٱلنِّسۡوَةِ ٱلَّٰتِي
قَطَّعۡنَ أَيۡدِيَهُنَّۚ إِنَّ رَبِّي بِكَيۡدِهِنَّ عَلِيمٞ
٥٠ قَالَ مَا خَطۡبُكُنَّ إِذۡ رَٰوَدتُّنَّ يُوسُفَ

women, when you made an advance to Joseph?
They said, "God save us! We know nothing evil on his part." And the wife of the high ranking one [Joseph's master] said, "Now the truth has at last come to light! It was I who made the advance to him so as to make him yield himself unto me, whereas he is a truthful man [in what he said about the matter.]"
(52) *[And seeing the truth emerging Joseph said,] "I asked about what happened] so that he [my master who was generous and kind to me] might know that I did not betray him behind his back, and that God does not lead to success the guile of those who betray the trust given to them.* (53) *And yet I do not claim the absolute innocence of my own inner-self; verily this human inner self does incite the person to evil, except in as much as my Lord bestows His grace: truly my Lord is All-forgiving, Most Gracious.*
(54) *And the King said, "Bring him to me! I would make him close to me and serve me exclusively. Then, speaking to him, he [the King] said, "From today, you are established firmly close to us, enjoying trust".* (55) *He [Joseph] said, "Place me in charge of the storehouses of the land; I shall be a well-guarding and knowing keeper."* (56) *Thus We established Joseph firmly in the land; he had full mastery over it, [doing] whatever he willed. We bestow Our grace upon whomever We will, and We leave not to waste the recompensation of the good-doers.* (57) *Yet, the reward of the [eternal] life to come is far better for those who have attained to faith and have always been conscious of God.*

(58) *And [after some years] Joseph's brothers came [to Egypt], and entered to him, and he knew them while they knew him not.* (59) *And when he had provided them with their provisions, he said [to them,] "[When you come here next time] bring to me that brother of*

عَن نَّفْسِهِۦ ۚ قُلْنَ حَٰشَ لِلَّهِ مَا عَلِمْنَا
عَلَيْهِ مِن سُوٓءٍ ۚ قَالَتِ ٱمْرَأَتُ ٱلْعَزِيزِ
ٱلْـَٰٔنَ حَصْحَصَ ٱلْحَقُّ أَنَا۠ رَٰوَدتُّهُۥ عَن
نَّفْسِهِۦ وَإِنَّهُۥ لَمِنَ ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ ﴿٥١﴾ ذَٰلِكَ
لِيَعْلَمَ أَنِّى لَمْ أَخُنْهُ بِٱلْغَيْبِ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ
لَا يَهْدِى كَيْدَ ٱلْخَآئِنِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾
۞ وَمَآ أُبَرِّئُ نَفْسِىٓ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلنَّفْسَ لَأَمَّارَةٌۢ
بِٱلسُّوٓءِ إِلَّا مَا رَحِمَ رَبِّىٓ ۚ إِنَّ رَبِّى
غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٥٣﴾ وَقَالَ ٱلْمَلِكُ
ٱئْتُونِى بِهِۦٓ أَسْتَخْلِصْهُ لِنَفْسِى ۖ فَلَمَّا
كَلَّمَهُۥ قَالَ إِنَّكَ ٱلْيَوْمَ لَدَيْنَا مَكِينٌ أَمِينٌ
﴿٥٤﴾ قَالَ ٱجْعَلْنِى عَلَىٰ خَزَآئِنِ
ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ إِنِّى حَفِيظٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٥٥﴾
وَكَذَٰلِكَ مَكَّنَّا لِيُوسُفَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ يَتَبَوَّأُ
مِنْهَا حَيْثُ يَشَآءُ ۖ نُصِيبُ بِرَحْمَتِنَا مَن
نَّشَآءُ ۖ وَلَا نُضِيعُ أَجْرَ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ
﴿٥٦﴾ وَلَأَجْرُ ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ لِّلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا۟ وَكَانُوا۟ يَتَّقُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾ وَجَآءَ
إِخْوَةُ يُوسُفَ فَدَخَلُوا۟ عَلَيْهِ فَعَرَفَهُمْ
وَهُمْ لَهُۥ مُنكِرُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾ وَلَمَّا جَهَّزَهُم
بِجَهَازِهِمْ قَالَ ٱئْتُونِى بِأَخٍ لَّكُم مِّنْ

yours from your father's side. Do you not see that I give a full measure and I am the best of hosts? (60) *But if you do not bring him to me, there shall be no measure [of grain] for you from me, nor shall you [be allowed to] approach me."* (61) *They said, "We shall persuade his father [to let him come with us]; that we will do [as best as we can]."* (62) *And he [Joseph] said to his serving boys, "Put their merchandise [which they had bartered for grain] in their camel packs, so that they may find it when they come home, and hence they become more persuaded to return."*

(63) *And so when they returned to their father they said, "O our father! Any measure would be denied to us [next time;] so send with us our brother so that we may get our measure [of grain], and surely we shall be watching over him."* (64) *He [Jacob] said, "Shall I trust you with him but as I trusted you with his brother before? But God Himself is far better a guardian, and He is the Most Merciful of all the merciful."*

(65) *And when they opened their packs, they found that their merchandise had been returned to them, and [so] they said, "Father, what more could we desire? Here is our merchandise returned to us, [and with over our brother on the next journey] we shall get food for our family, and surely we shall be watching our brother, and we shall be able to obtain an extra camel's load of grain [as we fulfill what the man in charge there wishes, and we add another person to our number]; that which we have brought now was but a scanty measure."*

(66) *He [Jacob] said, "Never will I send him with you until you give me a solemn pledge by God that you will surely bring him back to me, unless it be that you are encompassed [by circumstances that you cannot overcome]." And when they gave him their solemn pledge, Jacob said, "God is the Guardian over all that we say."* (67) *And Jacob added, "O my sons! Do not enter [the city] all through one gate, but*

أَبِيكُمْ ۚ أَلَا تَرَوْنَ أَنِّيٓ أُوفِي ٱلْكَيْلَ
وَأَنَا۠ خَيْرُ ٱلْمُنزِلِينَ ﴿٥٩﴾ فَإِن لَّمْ
تَأْتُونِي بِهِۦ فَلَا كَيْلَ لَكُمْ عِندِي وَلَا
تَقْرَبُونِ ﴿٦٠﴾ قَالُوا۟ سَنُرَٰوِدُ عَنْهُ أَبَاهُ
وَإِنَّا لَفَٰعِلُونَ ﴿٦١﴾ وَقَالَ لِفِتْيَٰنِهِ
ٱجْعَلُوا۟ بِضَٰعَتَهُمْ فِى رِحَالِهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَعْرِفُونَهَآ إِذَا ٱنقَلَبُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰٓ أَهْلِهِمْ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾ فَلَمَّا رَجَعُوٓا۟
إِلَىٰٓ أَبِيهِمْ قَالُوا۟ يَٰٓأَبَانَا مُنِعَ مِنَّا
ٱلْكَيْلُ فَأَرْسِلْ مَعَنَآ أَخَانَا نَكْتَلْ وَإِنَّا
لَهُۥ لَحَٰفِظُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾ قَالَ هَلْ ءَامَنُكُمْ
عَلَيْهِ إِلَّا كَمَآ أَمِنتُكُمْ عَلَىٰٓ أَخِيهِ مِن
قَبْلُ ۖ فَٱللَّهُ خَيْرٌ حَٰفِظًا ۖ وَهُوَ أَرْحَمُ
ٱلرَّٰحِمِينَ ﴿٦٤﴾ وَلَمَّا فَتَحُوا۟ مَتَٰعَهُمْ
وَجَدُوا۟ بِضَٰعَتَهُمْ رُدَّتْ إِلَيْهِمْ ۖ قَالُوا۟
يَٰٓأَبَانَا مَا نَبْغِى ۖ هَٰذِهِۦ بِضَٰعَتُنَا رُدَّتْ
إِلَيْنَا ۖ وَنَمِيرُ أَهْلَنَا وَنَحْفَظُ أَخَانَا
وَنَزْدَادُ كَيْلَ بَعِيرٍ ۖ ذَٰلِكَ كَيْلٌ يَسِيرٌ ﴿٦٥﴾
قَالَ لَنْ أُرْسِلَهُۥ مَعَكُمْ حَتَّىٰ تُؤْتُونِ
مَوْثِقًا مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ لَتَأْتُنَّنِى بِهِۦٓ إِلَّآ أَن
يُحَاطَ بِكُمْ ۖ فَلَمَّآ ءَاتَوْهُ مَوْثِقَهُمْ قَالَ
ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ مَا نَقُولُ وَكِيلٌ ﴿٦٦﴾ وَقَالَ
يَٰبَنِىَّ لَا تَدْخُلُوا۟ مِنۢ بَابٍ وَٰحِدٍ

enter through different gates. Yet, I can be of no avail whatever to you against [whatever may be willed by] God; the final decision [as to what may happen] rests with none but God. In Him alone I have placed my trust, and in Him alone let all who may trust [anyone] put their trust."

(68) *And when they entered [the city] in the manner that their father commanded them to follow, this availed them nothing with regard to God's plan, since Jacob aimed only to satisfy a heartfelt desire [to protect his sons, but as he stated he could be of no avail to them against what may be willed by God]. Surely, he was endowed with knowledge that We had imparted on him; but most people know not.*

(69) *And when [the sons of Jacob] entered upon Joseph, he drew his brother close to himself, saying to him, "I am your brother; so grieve not over what they might have done before."*

(70) *And when he had provided them with their provisions, he placed his drinking goblets into his brother's camel-pack. And [as they were leaving] a herald called out, "O you people of the caravan! You are thieves!"*

(71) *They said, turning to the herald and his fellows, "What is that you are missing?"* (72) *They said, "We are missing the king's goblet, and whoever brings it shall receive a camel's load [of grain as a reward]". [And the herald added,] "I guarantee my promise!"*

(73) *The brothers said, "By God, you know well that we came not to commit corruption in the land, and that we are not thieves."*

(74) *[Joseph's palace officers, the Egyptians] said, "But what shall be the requital of [this] deed if you are liars?"*

(75) *They replied, "Its requital! He in whose camel-pack is found the cup shall be [as a person] a requital thereof. Thus do we requite the doers of such a wrong."*

(76) *So [Joseph] began his search by their other sacks before his brother's sack, and in the end*

وَٱدۡخُلُواْ مِنۡ أَبۡوَٰبٖ مُّتَفَرِّقَةٖۖ وَمَآ
أُغۡنِي عَنكُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ مِن شَيۡءٍۖ إِنِ
ٱلۡحُكۡمُ إِلَّا لِلَّهِۖ عَلَيۡهِ تَوَكَّلۡتُۖ وَعَلَيۡهِ
فَلۡيَتَوَكَّلِ ٱلۡمُتَوَكِّلُونَ ٦٧ وَلَمَّا
دَخَلُواْ مِنۡ حَيۡثُ أَمَرَهُمۡ أَبُوهُم مَّا كَانَ
يُغۡنِي عَنۡهُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ مِن شَيۡءٍ إِلَّا حَاجَةٗ
فِي نَفۡسِ يَعۡقُوبَ قَضَىٰهَاۚ وَإِنَّهُۥ لَذُو
عِلۡمٖ لِّمَا عَلَّمۡنَٰهُ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكۡثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا
يَعۡلَمُونَ ٦٨ وَلَمَّا دَخَلُواْ عَلَىٰ
يُوسُفَ ءَاوَىٰٓ إِلَيۡهِ أَخَاهُۖ قَالَ إِنِّيٓ
أَنَا۠ أَخُوكَ فَلَا تَبۡتَئِسۡ بِمَا كَانُواْ
يَعۡمَلُونَ ٦٩ فَلَمَّا جَهَّزَهُم بِجَهَازِهِمۡ
جَعَلَ ٱلسِّقَايَةَ فِي رَحۡلِ أَخِيهِ ثُمَّ أَذَّنَ
مُؤَذِّنٌ أَيَّتُهَا ٱلۡعِيرُ إِنَّكُمۡ لَسَٰرِقُونَ ٧٠
قَالُواْ وَأَقۡبَلُواْ عَلَيۡهِم مَّاذَا تَفۡقِدُونَ
٧١ قَالُواْ نَفۡقِدُ صُوَاعَ ٱلۡمَلِكِ وَلِمَن
جَآءَ بِهِۦ حِمۡلُ بَعِيرٖ وَأَنَا۠ بِهِۦ زَعِيمٞ
٧٢ قَالُواْ تَٱللَّهِ لَقَدۡ عَلِمۡتُم مَّا جِئۡنَا
لِنُفۡسِدَ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَمَا كُنَّا سَٰرِقِينَ
٧٣ قَالُواْ فَمَا جَزَٰٓؤُهُۥٓ إِن كُنتُمۡ
كَٰذِبِينَ ٧٤ قَالُواْ جَزَٰٓؤُهُۥ مَن وُجِدَ
فِي رَحۡلِهِۦ فَهُوَ جَزَٰٓؤُهُۥۚ كَذَٰلِكَ نَجۡزِي
ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ٧٥ فَبَدَأَ بِأَوۡعِيَتِهِمۡ قَبۡلَ
وِعَآءِ أَخِيهِ ثُمَّ ٱسۡتَخۡرَجَهَا مِن وِعَآءِ

he brought forth the drinking cup out of his brother's sack. In this way, did we contrive for Joseph's sake; he could not [otherwise] have been able to take his brother under the king's law, had not God so willed. We raise in rank whomever We will, but above everyone who may have knowledge, there is the One who has full knowledge. (77) *The brothers said, "If he is a thief, a brother of his used to be a thief before!". Thereupon Joseph said to himself without revealing it to them, "You are far more evil in the way you act, and God is fully aware of what you have mentioned."*
(78) *They said, "O you great one! He has a father who is very old; take, therefore, one of us in his place; we see you as one of the doers of good."* (79) *He answered, "May God preserve us from taking any but the one with whom we found our property; we would be evildoers."*
(80) *And when they lost all hope [in changing his mind], they withdrew to discuss the matter privately among themselves. Said the eldest of them, "Do you not remember how your father has taken a solemn pledge from you by God, and how before that you had failed with regard to Joseph? Never will I leave this land until my father gives me leave or God judges in my favor; and He is the best of judges.* (81) *Return you all to your father and say, 'Father, your son has stolen, and we bear witness only to what has become known to us; and we could not guard against what is beyond the reach of our perception.* (82) *And enquire you in the city wherein we were and the people of the caravan with whom we came; and [you will find that] we are but telling the truth."*
(83) *[And when they returned to their father and told him what had happened,] he said, "Nay, but it is your own selves that tempted you to that matter. But let me [again] have good patience! May God well bring them all [back] to me; He is alone All-knowing, All-wise.* (84) *And he turned away from them*

أَخِيهِ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ كِدْنَا لِيُوسُفَ ۖ مَا كَانَ
لِيَأْخُذَ أَخَاهُ فِي دِينِ الْمَلِكِ إِلَّا أَن
يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ ۚ نَرْفَعُ دَرَجَاتٍ مَّن نَّشَاءُ ۗ
وَفَوْقَ كُلِّ ذِي عِلْمٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٦﴾ ۞ قَالُوا إِن
يَسْرِقْ فَقَدْ سَرَقَ أَخٌ لَّهُ مِن قَبْلُ ۚ
فَأَسَرَّهَا يُوسُفُ فِي نَفْسِهِ وَلَمْ يُبْدِهَا
لَهُمْ ۚ قَالَ أَنتُمْ شَرٌّ مَّكَانًا ۖ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ
بِمَا تَصِفُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾ قَالُوا يَا أَيُّهَا الْعَزِيزُ
إِنَّ لَهُ أَبًا شَيْخًا كَبِيرًا فَخُذْ أَحَدَنَا
مَكَانَهُ ۖ إِنَّا نَرَاكَ مِنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ
﴿٧٨﴾ قَالَ مَعَاذَ اللَّهِ أَن نَّأْخُذَ إِلَّا مَن
وَجَدْنَا مَتَاعَنَا عِندَهُ ۙ إِنَّا إِذًا لَّظَالِمُونَ
﴿٧٩﴾ فَلَمَّا اسْتَيْأَسُوا مِنْهُ خَلَصُوا
نَجِيًّا ۖ قَالَ كَبِيرُهُمْ أَلَمْ تَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ
أَبَاكُمْ قَدْ أَخَذَ عَلَيْكُم مَّوْثِقًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ
وَمِن قَبْلُ مَا فَرَّطتُمْ فِي يُوسُفَ ۖ فَلَنْ
أَبْرَحَ الْأَرْضَ حَتَّىٰ يَأْذَنَ لِي أَبِي أَوْ
يَحْكُمَ اللَّهُ لِي ۖ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الْحَاكِمِينَ
﴿٨٠﴾ ارْجِعُوا إِلَىٰ أَبِيكُمْ فَقُولُوا
يَا أَبَانَا إِنَّ ابْنَكَ سَرَقَ وَمَا شَهِدْنَا إِلَّا
بِمَا عَلِمْنَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِلْغَيْبِ حَافِظِينَ
﴿٨١﴾ وَاسْأَلِ الْقَرْيَةَ الَّتِي كُنَّا فِيهَا
وَالْعِيرَ الَّتِي أَقْبَلْنَا فِيهَا ۖ وَإِنَّا
لَصَادِقُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾ قَالَ بَلْ سَوَّلَتْ لَكُمْ
أَنفُسُكُمْ أَمْرًا ۖ فَصَبْرٌ جَمِيلٌ ۖ عَسَى
اللَّهُ أَن يَأْتِيَنِي بِهِمْ جَمِيعًا ۚ إِنَّهُ هُوَ
الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٨٣﴾ وَتَوَلَّىٰ عَنْهُمْ

and said, "Ah, woe is me for Joseph!" and his eyes became dim, because of the grief with which he was filled.

(85) *They [his sons] said, "By God! You will never cease to remember Joseph till you become totally broken or be numbered with the dead!"*

(86) *He said, "It is only to God that I complain of my deep grief and sorrow; and I know from God what you do not know.* (87) *My sons, go forth and try to find out about Joseph and his brother, and do not lose hope of God's inspiring grace; none but people without faith lose hope of God's inspiring grace."*

(88) *[And the sons of Jacob went back to Egypt] and when they entered unto him[Joseph], they said, "O you great one! Hardship has visited us and our folk, and so we have brought but scanty merchandise. [However, we hope that you may] give us a full measure [of grain] and be charitable to us; surely God rewards those who give in charity!"*

(89) *He said, "Do you remember what you did to Joseph and his brother in your lack of sensitivity and sensibility?"*

(90) *They said, "It is you who are Joseph?" He said, "I am Joseph, and this is my brother. God has indeed been gracious unto us. Verily, whoever is conscious of Him and patiently perseveres; surely God does never fail to reward the doers of good."*

(91) *They [the brothers] said, "By God! God has surely raised you high above us, and certainly we have been evil-doers."*

(92) *He said, "No reproach shall be uttered today against you. May God forgive you for what you did, and He is the Most Merciful of all the merciful.* (93) *[And now] go and take this shirt of mine and do cast it over my father's face and he shall recover his sight; then bring me your family all together."*

(94) *So, when the caravan set forth on its way back, their father said, "Surely, were it not that*

وَقَالَ يَٰٓأَسَفَىٰ عَلَىٰ يُوسُفَ وَٱبۡيَضَّتۡ
عَيۡنَاهُ مِنَ ٱلۡحُزۡنِ فَهُوَ كَظِيمٞ ﴿٨٤﴾ قَالُواْ
تَٱللَّهِ تَفۡتَؤُاْ تَذۡكُرُ يُوسُفَ حَتَّىٰ تَكُونَ
حَرَضًا أَوۡ تَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلۡهَٰلِكِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾ قَالَ
إِنَّمَآ أَشۡكُواْ بَثِّي وَحُزۡنِيٓ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ
وَأَعۡلَمُ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعۡلَمُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾ يَٰبَنِيَّ
ٱذۡهَبُواْ فَتَحَسَّسُواْ مِن يُوسُفَ وَأَخِيهِ
وَلَا تَاْيۡـَٔسُواْ مِن رَّوۡحِ ٱللَّهِۖ إِنَّهُۥ لَا
يَاْيۡـَٔسُ مِن رَّوۡحِ ٱللَّهِ إِلَّا ٱلۡقَوۡمُ
ٱلۡكَٰفِرُونَ ﴿٨٧﴾ فَلَمَّا دَخَلُواْ عَلَيۡهِ
قَالُواْ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلۡعَزِيزُ مَسَّنَا وَأَهۡلَنَا
ٱلضُّرُّ وَجِئۡنَا بِبِضَٰعَةٖ مُّزۡجَىٰةٖ فَأَوۡفِ
لَنَا ٱلۡكَيۡلَ وَتَصَدَّقۡ عَلَيۡنَآۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
يَجۡزِي ٱلۡمُتَصَدِّقِينَ ﴿٨٨﴾ قَالَ هَلۡ عَلِمۡتُم مَّا
فَعَلۡتُم بِيُوسُفَ وَأَخِيهِ إِذۡ أَنتُمۡ جَٰهِلُونَ
﴿٨٩﴾ قَالُوٓاْ أَءِنَّكَ لَأَنتَ يُوسُفُۖ قَالَ
أَنَا۠ يُوسُفُ وَهَٰذَآ أَخِيۖ قَدۡ مَنَّ ٱللَّهُ
عَلَيۡنَآۖ إِنَّهُۥ مَن يَتَّقِ وَيَصۡبِرۡ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
لَا يُضِيعُ أَجۡرَ ٱلۡمُحۡسِنِينَ ﴿٩٠﴾ قَالُواْ
تَٱللَّهِ لَقَدۡ ءَاثَرَكَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيۡنَا وَإِن كُنَّا
لَخَٰطِـِٔينَ ﴿٩١﴾ قَالَ لَا تَثۡرِيبَ عَلَيۡكُمُ
ٱلۡيَوۡمَۖ يَغۡفِرُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمۡۖ وَهُوَ أَرۡحَمُ
ٱلرَّٰحِمِينَ ﴿٩٢﴾ ٱذۡهَبُواْ بِقَمِيصِي هَٰذَا
فَأَلۡقُوهُ عَلَىٰ وَجۡهِ أَبِي يَأۡتِ بَصِيرٗا
وَأۡتُونِي بِأَهۡلِكُمۡ أَجۡمَعِينَ ﴿٩٣﴾ وَلَمَّا
فَصَلَتِ ٱلۡعِيرُ قَالَ أَبُوهُمۡ إِنِّي لَأَجِدُ رِيحَ

you might ridicule me, I truly feel the breath of Joseph!" (95) *Those around him said, "By God! You are certainly still lost in your old aberration!"* (96) *But when the bearer of good tidings came [with Joseph's shirt to Jacob], he laid it over his face; and soon he regained his sight, and said, "Have I not been telling you that I know from God what you do not know!"*

(97) *[His sons] said, "Our father, ask God to forgive us our wrongdoing; we have certainly been wrongdoers!"* (98) *He said, "I shall ask my Lord to forgive you; He alone is truly the All-forgiving, the Most Gracious."*

(99) *And when they entered upon Joseph, he drew his parents unto himself, saying, "Enter Egypt, if God wills, and be secure!"*

(100) *And he raised his parents to the throne, and they [all] fell down prostrating themselves before him.Thereupon he [Joseph] said, "O my father! This is the interpretation of my dream of long ago which my Lord has made come true. And He [God] was indeed good to me when He freed me from prison, and [again when] He brought you [all to me] from the desert, after Satan had infused discord between me and my brothers. Surely, my Lord is kind in whatever He wills; He is the All-knowing, the All-wise.*

(101) *"O my Lord! You have given me to rule, and have imparted unto me some knowledge of what may happen and what the happenings may mean. O You, the Originator of the heavens and earth; You are the One who cares for me and supports me in this world and the life to come; let me die in true submission to You, and let me join the righteous."*

(102) *This account of what was beyond the reach of your perception, We [now] reveal unto you; and you were not with them when they resolved upon them what they were going to do and devised their plot.* [12:3-102]

يُوسُفَ ۖ لَوْلَآ أَن تُفَنِّدُونِ ﴿٩٤﴾ قَالُوا۟
تَٱللَّهِ إِنَّكَ لَفِى ضَلَٰلِكَ ٱلْقَدِيمِ ﴿٩٥﴾
فَلَمَّآ أَن جَآءَ ٱلْبَشِيرُ أَلْقَىٰهُ عَلَىٰ
وَجْهِهِۦ فَٱرْتَدَّ بَصِيرًا ۖ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُل
لَّكُمْ إِنِّىٓ أَعْلَمُ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ
﴿٩٦﴾ قَالُوا۟ يَٰٓأَبَانَا ٱسْتَغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَآ
إِنَّا كُنَّا خَٰطِـِٔينَ ﴿٩٧﴾ قَالَ سَوْفَ
أَسْتَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ رَبِّىٓ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلْغَفُورُ
ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٩٨﴾ فَلَمَّا دَخَلُوا۟ عَلَىٰ يُوسُفَ
ءَاوَىٰٓ إِلَيْهِ أَبَوَيْهِ وَقَالَ ٱدْخُلُوا۟ مِصْرَ
إِن شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ ءَامِنِينَ ﴿٩٩﴾ وَرَفَعَ أَبَوَيْهِ
عَلَى ٱلْعَرْشِ وَخَرُّوا۟ لَهُۥ سُجَّدًا ۖ
وَقَالَ يَٰٓأَبَتِ هَٰذَا تَأْوِيلُ رُءْيَىَ مِن قَبْلُ
قَدْ جَعَلَهَا رَبِّى حَقًّا ۖ وَقَدْ أَحْسَنَ بِىٓ
إِذْ أَخْرَجَنِى مِنَ ٱلسِّجْنِ وَجَآءَ بِكُم مِّنَ
ٱلْبَدْوِ مِنۢ بَعْدِ أَن نَّزَغَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ بَيْنِى
وَبَيْنَ إِخْوَتِىٓ ۚ إِنَّ رَبِّى لَطِيفٌ لِّمَا
يَشَآءُ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿١٠٠﴾
رَبِّ قَدْ ءَاتَيْتَنِى مِنَ ٱلْمُلْكِ وَعَلَّمْتَنِى
مِن تَأْوِيلِ ٱلْأَحَادِيثِ ۚ فَاطِرَ
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ أَنتَ وَلِيِّۦ فِى
ٱلدُّنْيَا وَٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۖ تَوَفَّنِى مُسْلِمًا
وَأَلْحِقْنِى بِٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿١٠١﴾ ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ
أَنۢبَآءِ ٱلْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهِ إِلَيْكَ ۖ وَمَا كُنتَ
لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ أَجْمَعُوٓا۟ أَمْرَهُمْ وَهُمْ يَمْكُرُونَ
﴿١٠٢﴾

Ya'qub (Jacob), the son of Is-haq (Isaac) and the grandson of Ibrahim (Abraham), portrayed unshaking faith in the One God throughout all of his life, with its various seri-

ous events. In his last days, he tried to make sure, as his grandfather Abraham had done before him, that his children would follow the ever-true faith of the whole self-submission to God [2:132-133]. The Quran presents the faith in the One God as a "family" responsibility and pride held by the descendants of Abraham. It was a responsibility that represented invaluable spiritual heritage and which had to be deeply rooted and nurtured and transmitted from generation to generation: *"We will [only] worship your God, the God of your fathers Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac, the One God, and unto Him we submit our whole selves"* [2:133]. Hand in hand with this, the Quran repeatedly stresses individual responsibility, and so a person's relation to certain forefathers does not bring him/her any privilege or exempt him/her from being accountable for his/her own decisions: "*Those were people who passed away; unto them [shall be accounted] what they earned, and unto you what you have earned; and you will not be judged for what they did*" [2:134].

Jacob proved his strong faith in God, when he was tested by the absence of his dear son Joseph, who was very close to his heart, and by the shocking fact that absence had been plotted by Jacob's own sons, who were half-brothers of Joseph. However, his faith was never shaken through this long test and even when he later lost Joseph's brother, although that loss turned out to be only temporary; *"But let me have good patience, and it is to God [alone] that I pray to let me bear what you have described"* [12:18; see also 12:83]. In this way Jacob sought God's support to overcome his grief and maintain *hope: "It is only to God that I complain of my deep grief and sorrow"* [12:86]; *"and do not lose hope of God's inspiring mercy; surely, none but people who stubbornly deny the truth can ever lose hope of God's inspiring mercy"* [12:87].

In spite of his sons' plots against Joseph that hurt him very much Jacob still had a father's emotions towards his sons. He advised them to enter the Egyptian city *"from different gates"* in order to avoid any suspicion or harassment that might occur as a result of their large number or their foreign status, and so their safety would be secured as much as possible [12:67-68]. Meanwhile, he also stressed to his sons that this caution is "*of no avail whatsoever to you against whatever may be willed by God; the final decision [as to what is to happen] rests with none but God. In Him alone I have placed my trust; and in Him alone [anyone] place their trust... surely he was endowed with the knowledge of what We had imparted unto him"* [12:67-68].

In the time of Jacob, also known as "Israel," the message stressed the faith in the One God, moral values and the accountability of the human being, but it seemed not to present details about lawful and unlawful food: *"All food was lawful to the children of Israel, save what Israel forbade for himself before the Torah was sent down"* [3:93]. Later, the Torah gave details in this respect, some of which were restrictions that came down as punishments for certain deviations from the right way: *"So, because of the evil-doing of those who followed Judaism did We deny unto them certain good things of life"* [4:160], *" And to those who followed the Jewish faith did We forbid all beasts that have claws, and We did forbid unto them the fat of both oxen and sheep, except what is in their backs or entrails or that is mingled with bone; thus did We requite them for their evil-doing; surely We speak truly"* [6:146, and see also Leviticus VII:23]. On the other hand, one of the goals of Jesus' message was *"to make lawful unto you some of what was forbidden to you [before]"* [3:50]. In the message of Muhammad, which Muslims believe is the final message of God, determining what is lawful and unlawful has been made on the objective merits of what the law is dealing with and not because of occasional considerations: *"and*

makes lawful to them the good and wholesome things of life, and forbids them the bad and harmful things, and lifts from them their burdens and the shackles that were upon them" [7:157]. Thus, the divine development may be understood in light of the various sociological, psychological, and theological circumstances in addition to the mere considerations of everyday life.

The story of Joseph is very informative and educational from various angles, be they historical, sociological, psychological or literary. It opens with a dream of Joseph when he was young [12:4], which is rementioned towards the end and explained. This method of recounting represents an angle which had not been previously used in the Arabic literature and which ought to inspire a subsequent genuine development in the Arabic art of story writing, although this did not in fact happen for long successive centuries. The succession of events and their escalation to reach the dramatic climax, Jacob's loss of his two dear young sons, and the denouement to reach the happy end of the family reunion and reconciliation and secure life in Egypt, are all reasonable and interesting developments of a very beautiful written story. Furthermore, the story is rich with its inspiring religious and moral messages which are smoothly woven through its structure without the inclusion of heavy-handed preaching.

Through the beginning of the story we meet frequent feelings of jealousy known among numerous brothers in a big family, which in this case was especially directed towards the half-brothers: *"Surely, Joseph and his brother are dearer to our father than we, even though we are a band of many ..."* [12:8]. This understandable feeling developed into an evil one which had to continuously generate many lies [12:9-18] culminating in a criminal plot by the brothers to get rid of Joseph. However, the impact of this deed was so hard on the father's heart that Joseph's brothers were not able to reach their goal of eliminating Joseph from their lives or their father's altogether and their action did not clear the way for them to be at the center of their father's attention and emotions, since Joseph remained in their father's heart and memory.

Joseph was able to survive his brothers' treacherous plot, since he was rescued from the well and found a comfortable dignified life at the house of a high-ranking man in Egypt, although this man had originally bought him at a low price as a slave [12:20-21]. However, it happened that Joseph had to face more challenges at the house of that man. He grew up to be attractive in his appearance and personality and he combined together the virtues of knowledge and proper judgement [12:22]. As a result, the lady of the house became extremely attracted to him and she worked hard to seduce him. When her plans of seduction failed, she tried to put pressure on Joseph through false accusations. The details about the material evidence of Joseph's innocence were beautifully injected into the critical developments of this story [12:25-29], to lighten the tension somewhat on the reader about the false accusation against an innocent but weak person from some who enjoyed power, and to assure God's care and help. Another picture of palace life is that of the women at the party, who unconsciously cut their hands when they saw Joseph, thus indicating the extent of the young man's attractiveness [12:30-34].

As these plots of seduction failed, pressure began to be exerted, and Joseph was put in prison [12:35]. There, he maintained his strong faith in God, conveyed his message to his fellow prisoners [12:36-42] and later interpreted their dreams. Then, the divine

providence, that had brought Joseph out of the well in which his brothers had thrown him to a comfortable life in the palace of a high-ranking man in Egypt, again clearly manifested itself. When the king and his court were frightened by a dream that no one could interpret, one of Joseph's fellow prisoners who had been released told the king about Joseph's skill in this field and Joseph indeed intelligently interpreted the dream. He warned the king about a seven-year drought that would follow an upcoming agriculturally fruitful seven-year season, and he combined his warning with a suggestion plan for overcoming the expected long hardship [12:43-49]. Before presenting the badly needed and anxiously expected interpretation of the king's dream, Joseph seized the chance to recall to mind the false accusation that brought him unjustly to prison, and the women who had been invited to the party of the prominent man's wife and the seducing wife herself stated the truth about the matter, and thus Joseph's innocence was proved [12:50-52].

Joseph himself suggested that he be in charge of the country stores to carry out his plans, and he underlined his moral and organizational qualifications for the position [12:55]. This was a significant precedent for the legitimacy of seeking a public position by any capable person, and for any candidate to indicate his/her qualifications for a certain position. It was also a significant precedent from a prophet to accept a high position from the pharaoh of Egypt for the benefit of the people, in spite of the serious religious differences between him and them. The whole situation underlined the fact that naturally difficulties may happen for the believer in the One God and moral values with regard to his/her aspirations for the betterment of the people, but the human mind has to rise to the level of these challenges and plan for different ways to solve any problem or carry out any possible reform.

Joseph's concern about bringing his full brother to Egypt adds to the dramatic escalation of the events. Joseph's brothers came to barter for the Egyptian wheat, and he saw them as he was in full charge of the Egyptian yield which he was distributing according to his plan. He suggested to his brothers to bring their half-brother with them the next time they came and he warned them that they would not get any wheat if they did not do so. The brothers were able to obtain their father's acceptance sending this brother the next time, after giving their solemn pledge to guard and protect him [12:58-66]. By "finding" a goblet belonging to the palace in the camel-pack of this brother, Joseph was able to keep him in Egypt [12:70-76].

Did Joseph put the goblet in his brother's camel-pack as a gift about which the palace security body was unaware, and thus did he merely seize a chance to keep his brother for which he had not planned, or did he devise the whole plan including the placement of the goblet in his brother's camel-pack? Was the decision to keep Joseph's brother as a thief in Egypt made according to the Egyptian law, or to the customary punishment for theft among the ancient Hebrews [e.g. Exodus XXII:3]? In other words to whom did the pronoun "we" refer in the statement *"thus do we requite the doers of such wrong"* [12:75]? Did this pronoun refer to the Egyptian who enquired about the missing goblet, or to Joseph's brothers in their responsibility to the enquirer? These are interesting questions related to the areas of criminal investigation and conflict of laws that this event might raise.

Significantly, the Quranic text *reads: " In this way, did we contrive for Joseph's sake; he could not [otherwise] have been able to take his brother under the king's law, had not God so willed"* [12:76]. Does this mean that the whole plan was a result of God's

contriving through the incidental enquiry of the palace's security officers, and it had not been planned or even expected by Joseph who in good faith had put the goblet in his brother's camel-pack as a gift without telling the officers? Or was God's contriving fulfilled through a deliberate plan thought out by Joseph? The prominent commentator on the Quran, al-Razi, said in his commentary on the verse 12:70, "Nowhere in the Quran is it stated that they [the palace's security body] made the accusation [at Joseph's brother] at Joseph's orders; the more apparent evidence in the Quranic text shows rather they did this on their own", and according to their own doubts, in contrast to the Biblical version about that incident. According to this understanding and to the verse 12:76: *"In this way did We contrive for Joseph's sake ...."* Muhammad Asad presents his thinking as follows: "Joseph had wanted to keep his brother with him, but under the law of Egypt he could not do this without the consent of his half-brothers who were the legal guardians of their minor brother, and they - bound by the solemn promise given to their father - would certainly not have agreed [to let] Joseph's brother remain behind." Asad continues, "the only other alternative open to Joseph was to disclose his identity to them, but since he was not yet prepared to go so far, he was obliged to allow his brother to depart. The accidental discovery of his gift, entirely unexpected by Joseph, changed everything: for now Joseph's brother appeared to be guilty of theft, and under the law of the land, Joseph was entitled to keep him. The words, "*In this way did We contrive for Joseph's sake*" (kidna li-Yusuf) referring to the incident, indicate that the final outcome was neither planned nor even foreseen by Joseph' [The Message of the Quran, note no. 77 on the verse 12:76, see also note no. 72 on the verse 12:70].

The dramatic escalation of the events made Jacob lose three of his sons, the two youngest full brothers who were now in Egypt, and the eldest who decided to stay there *"until my father gives me leave, or God judges in my favor"* [12:80]. Jacob almost lost his sight and became terribly broken-hearted, and as his sons told Joseph whose real identity was not known to them until that moment, *"hardship has visited us and our folk"* [12:88]. But as the story reaches a dramatic culmination, the happy ending approached. Joseph disclosed his identity to his brothers who asked for his forgiveness which he compassionately offered, "*No reproach shall be uttered today against you. May God forgive you for what you did; He is the Most Merciful of all the merciful*" [12:92]. The good news reached the father whose heart had been full of sadness but who had never given up hope. He regained his sight by casting Joseph's shirt over his face and the whole family was invited by Joseph to come to Egypt where they could live secure [12:93-96].

The closing note in the story is the materialization of the early symbolic dream of Joseph [12:100], as its beginning was that dream [12:4]. Now, at such a happy end, Joseph praised God and thanked him for His continuous blessings through the past hardships, *"And He [God] was indeed good to me when He freed me from prison, and [again when] He brought you [all to me] from the desert, after Satan had infused discord between me and my brothers. Surely, my Lord is kind in whatever He wills; He is the All-knowing, the All-wise. O my Lord! You have given me to rule, and have imparted unto me some knowledge of what may happen..."* [12:100-101].

Joseph's morality, like his father's, was at the expected level of a prophet's throughout all the developments of the story. He successfully resisted the seduction of the lady of the house when he was considered legally a slave, although he was treated well at her

house. As al-Zamakhshari, the outstanding commentator on the Quran rightfully stated, the moral significance of virtue only means "one's inner victory over a wrongful desire, not the absence of such a desire" [Zamakhshari's commentary on 12:24]. A tradition of the Prophet reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim indicates that if a believer desires to commit something wrong, but does not commit it as his/her consciousness of God prevails, it shall be counted by God as a good deed, since he/she has refrained from doing it for God's sake.

Joseph was keen to let his master completely see that he had never betrayed him behind his back. A significant statement emerges out in the story: *"And yet, I am not trying to absolve myself; surely, the human inner-self does incite [one] to what is wrong"* [12:53] Some commentators have understood this statement to be related to the wife of Joseph's master after her complete confession of her seduction of Joseph, while others interpreted it as coming from Joseph himself. This statement follows another that reads *"... so that he might know that I did not betray him behind his back."* According to the first interpretation, the lady of the house is stating here that she did not betray Joseph behind his back, but this was not true, as she lied against him and led him to prison in the end, from which he could not be freed except by God's help. It is thus sensible to assume that the statement was said by Joseph to emphasize that he had never betrayed his master. The following statement that Joseph *"was not trying to absolve himself, since the human inner-self does incite [one] to what is wrong,"* does not hurt by any means Joseph's personality as a prophet, just as the verse 12:24 does not hurt it. Every human inner self, including that of a prophet who is merely a human being receiving God's revelation [e.g. 18:110], may induce one to something that is wrong, but what makes a prophet different is that he is always able to overcome such a prompting [22:52]. While the verse 12:53 refers to the human inner self inciting one to what is wrong, another Quranic verse refers to *"the accusing inner self [that represents one's own conscience]"* [75:2], and from the struggle of these two extreme and contradictory sides of the human self comes the balanced and feeling secure human self *"that has attained to inner peace"* [89:27].

In addition to Joseph's morality and his knowledge and ability to make a proper judgement [12:22], the Quranic story repeatedly refers to his ability of *"interpretation"* [12:6, 21, 101]. Joseph was able to interpret the dreams of his fellow-prisoners, the dream of the king, and his own early dream when it came true [12:36-49, 100]. Was this ability of *"interpretation"* restricted in this way to " dreams" only, or did it encompass the "meanings of events" and "of what may happen", as can be meant by the Arabic word "*ahadith*", the root of which is the verb "*hadatha*" meaning "happened, emerged, came out etc." I am inclined to accept the wider meaning -as did al-Razi and Muhammad Asad- within which I see that the narrower meaning may also be accommodated. Joseph's ability to devise a plan to deal with the drought to which the king's dream referred, proved that his intellectual abilities were not only limited to the understanding of the symbols of the dream, but that they also encompassed efficient planning to deal with concrete realities. He mentioned to the king his moral and organizational capabilities to handle the crisis which Egypt would face after seven years, and which would continue for another seven years. Besides this, his knowledge and general ability to make *"proper judgements"* [12:22] would support the wider meaning of Joseph's ability of *"interpretation"*.

Even if the word "*interpretation*" is understood in its wider sense, interpreting dreams was definitely practiced by Joseph with complete success. A person's spiritual ability to receive some symbols about future events is supported by the Quranic presenta-

tion of Joseph's life, and by what was reported about the dreams of Prophet Muhammad that used to come true before he received the inspiration from God. Also, this cannot be contradicted by the Freudian explanation of dreams as related to the past experiences and suppressed wishes of a person and which are stored in the subconscience; both kinds can coexist together in the dreams of the human being. Even traditional scholars differentiate between the "vision", 'or "*ru'ya*" in Arabic, and "dream", or "*hulm*" in Arabic. Both occur when a person is sleeping, but the first is a true foresight of the future, while the second may be something else. In the Quranic story of Joseph, the king of Egypt talked about his "vision/ *ru'ya*" [12:43], but some in his court responded that it might be merely among the "*confused mixture of nightmares or dreams/ahlam (plural of hulm)*" [12:44].

In the happy ending of Joseph's story, the whole family was settled in Egypt where Joseph enjoyed a high position and where they would be secure at a time when there seemingly was an acceptance of foreign settlers in Egypt, which apparently continued for some time without interruption. It has been suggested that this took place during the Hyksos dynasty of the 18th century B.C.E., since the Hyksos were themselves Asian Semites who invaded Egypt between 1720 and 1710 B.C.E.and who formed the XV-XVII dynasties, coming to an end in 1550 B.C. Later, the whole situation was changed, and the Israelites suffered oppression which was escalated most probably under the Pharaoh Ramses II [about 1279-1213 B.C.E.], when the prophet Moses was sent to liberate them.

Joseph was the only son of Jacob whose story is detailed in the Quran, although there are brief references to his brothers. However the Quran in other places just mentions the name of "the descendants/ *al-Asbat*" as prophets in whom a Muslim should believe [2:136, 140; 3:84, 4:163]. Did this term represent Jacob's immediate descendants, and subsequently the twelve tribes which followed: "*And We divided them into twelve tribes who formed distinctive communities*" [7:160]. Could Joseph's brothers who conspired against him, and among whom at least one suggested to kill him [12:9], be considered as prophets? A continuation of prophethood through Jacob's descendants "*'asbat*" may not necessarily encompass all of the brothers, since God initially excluded from His promise about Abraham's leadership any evil-doer from among the descendants: "*And when his Lord tried Ibrahim (Abraham) by [His] commandments and he fulfilled them, He said, "Behold, I shall make you a leader for the people." Abraham said, "And of my offspring?" He said, "My promise does not embrace the evildoers"* [2:124]. It may be more appropriate to understand the term "*al-Asbat*" to mean those chosen for prophethood from the descendants of Jacob in any generation, and not necessarily all the twelve sons of Jacob. On the other hand, Joseph's half brothers did admit in the end their evil-doings, asked their father to pray to God for their forgiveness, and obtained the forgiveness of Joseph [12:91-2, 97-8].

The sura starts with indicating that the best "story narration" is presented in the Quran [12:3], and ends with crystallizing the message of this narration. Its goal is not to be a technical historical study, or mere literary art or fun and entertainment; its importance is rather to highlight that it is the human self and morality for which the guidance is relevant and useful in every time and place: "*In the stories of these [people of the past] there are lessons for those who have minds; it is not a tale forged, but a confirmation of what came [of God's revelation] before it, clearly spelling out knowledge [that the human beings need] and offering guidance and grace to people who believe*" [12:111].

AYYUB (JOB)

For the mention of his name among the prophets see 4:163; 6:84.

And Ayyub (Job) when he cried out unto His Lord, "Affliction has befallen me, but You are the Most Merciful of all the merciful." So We answered him, and removed all the affliction from which he suffered; and We secured for him his family [and children], doubling their number [with more children] grace from Us, and a reminder unto all who worship Us. [21:83-84]

وَأَيُّوبَ إِذْ نَادَىٰ رَبَّهُۥٓ أَنِّى مَسَّنِىَ ٱلضُّرُّ
وَأَنتَ أَرْحَمُ ٱلرَّٰحِمِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾
فَٱسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُۥ فَكَشَفْنَا مَا بِهِۦ مِن ضُرٍّ ۖ
وَءَاتَيْنَٰهُ أَهْلَهُۥ وَمِثْلَهُم مَّعَهُمْ رَحْمَةً مِّنْ
عِندِنَا وَذِكْرَىٰ لِلْعَٰبِدِينَ ﴿٨٤﴾

And call to mind Our servant Ayyub [Job], when he cried out to his Lord, "Satan has afflicted me with weariness and suffering." [Thereupon he was told:] "Scurry on your feet; here is cool water to wash with and to drink." And We secured for him his family, doubling their number [with more children] as grace from Us, and as a reminder to those who have minds. And [he was also told,] "Take in your hand a bunch of grass and strike therewith, and thus you will not break your oath." Surely, We found him steadfastly patient in adversity, an excellent worshipper [of Us], who always turns unto Us. [38:41-44]

وَٱذْكُرْ عَبْدَنَآ أَيُّوبَ
إِذْ نَادَىٰ رَبَّهُۥٓ أَنِّى مَسَّنِىَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ
بِنُصْبٍ وَعَذَابٍ ﴿٤١﴾ ٱرْكُضْ بِرِجْلِكَ ۖ
هَٰذَا مُغْتَسَلٌۢ بَارِدٌ وَشَرَابٌ ﴿٤٢﴾
وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُۥٓ أَهْلَهُۥ وَمِثْلَهُم مَّعَهُمْ رَحْمَةً
مِّنَّا وَذِكْرَىٰ لِأُو۟لِى ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ﴿٤٣﴾
وَخُذْ بِيَدِكَ ضِغْثًا فَٱضْرِب بِّهِۦ وَلَا
تَحْنَثْ ۗ إِنَّا وَجَدْنَٰهُ صَابِرًا ۚ نِّعْمَ
ٱلْعَبْدُ ۖ إِنَّهُۥٓ أَوَّابٌ ﴿٤٤﴾

Ayyub (Job) is mentioned in the Quran among the Prophets of God [4:163, 6:84] and one learns from the verse 6:84 that he was a descendant of Ibrahim [Abraham]. Also, a book was devoted to his story in the Bible. *Smith's Bible Dictionary* states that Job's "residence in the land of Uz which took its name from a son of Aram [Genesis X:23], or Nahor [Genesis XXII:21] marks him as belonging to a branch of the Aramaean race, which had settled in the lower part of Mesopotamia (probably to the south or south east of Palestine, in Idumaean Arabia), adjacent to the Sabaeans and Chaldaeans." The Biblical story presented most probably a Hebrew translation of an ancient Nabatean (i.e. North Arabian) piece of literature that might be "the finest piece of poetry that the Semitic world produced, and Job was an Arab as the form of his name and the scene of his book indicate" according to Philip Hitti [*History of the Arabs*, 1970, pp. 42-43]. *Smith's Bible Dictionary* considered the Book of Job "as exhibiting an aspect of the patriarchal religion outside the family of Abraham". However, Job's name is mentioned in the Quran among the descendants of Jacob [6:84].

Job's story pictures the terrible suffering of a good man as a test of God, not as a punishment for any sin. He had wealth and children, and he lost them in addition to losing his own health. His endurance, steadfastness and patience in adversity did not betray him during his long painful test; in fact, he swore to punish his wife with a hundred strikes when she was once overwhelmed by despair and told her husband to reject his faith after all such suffering. When Job persistently cried out to God about the utter weariness and suffering afflicted on him by Satan, he was advised to strike the ground with his foot, whereupon a healing spring would appear and end his suffering when he washed his body and drank from its waters. Once Job did this he recovered and he regretted his hasty oath to punish his wife for something that she had said out of her circumstantial grief for his formidable suffering, not out of stable thinking and conviction. He was thus advised to fulfill the oath in a symbolic way, by striking her with a bunch of a hundred leaves of grass. He was rewarded for his patience and faith by being granted a doubling of the previous offspring and wealth that he had lost during his hard test.

MUSA (MOSES) AND HARUN (AARON)

Musa (Moses): From Birth to Receiving Revelation

(1) *Ta Si`n Mi`m.* (2) *These are messages from the Book that is clearly expressing the truth.* (3) *We relate unto you some of the story of Musa (Moses) and Pharaoh, with the whole truth for people who believe.*
(4) *Pharaoh exalted himself in the land and divided its people into castes; deeming a group of them utterly low and oppressing them; he slaughtered their sons and spared their women; he was indeed among those who spread corruption and damage on earth.*
(5) *Yet, We willed to bestow Our grace upon those people who were deemed utterly low and oppressed in the land, and to make them leading exemplars and to enable them to be the [prevailing] heirs [to power],* (6) *and to establish them secure on earth, and let Pharaoh and Haman and their hosts experience what they had dreaded and sought to avoid.*
(7) *And so [when Moses was born] We inspired Moses' mother, "Suckle him [for a time], and then when you have reason to fear for him, cast him into the river, and have no*

طسٓمٓ ﴿١﴾ تِلۡكَ ءَايَٰتُ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ ٱلۡمُبِينِ
﴿٢﴾ نَتۡلُواْ عَلَيۡكَ مِن نَّبَإِ مُوسَىٰ
وَفِرۡعَوۡنَ بِٱلۡحَقِّ لِقَوۡمٖ يُؤۡمِنُونَ ﴿٣﴾ إِنَّ
فِرۡعَوۡنَ عَلَا فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَجَعَلَ أَهۡلَهَا
شِيَعٗا يَسۡتَضۡعِفُ طَآئِفَةٗ مِّنۡهُمۡ يُذَبِّحُ
أَبۡنَآءَهُمۡ وَيَسۡتَحۡيِۦ نِسَآءَهُمۡۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ
مِنَ ٱلۡمُفۡسِدِينَ ﴿٤﴾ وَنُرِيدُ أَن نَّمُنَّ عَلَى
ٱلَّذِينَ ٱسۡتُضۡعِفُواْ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَنَجۡعَلَهُمۡ
أَئِمَّةٗ وَنَجۡعَلَهُمُ ٱلۡوَٰرِثِينَ ﴿٥﴾ وَنُمَكِّنَ
لَهُمۡ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَنُرِيَ فِرۡعَوۡنَ وَهَٰمَٰنَ
وَجُنُودَهُمَا مِنۡهُم مَّا كَانُواْ يَحۡذَرُونَ
﴿٦﴾ وَأَوۡحَيۡنَآ إِلَىٰٓ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰٓ أَنۡ
أَرۡضِعِيهِۖ فَإِذَا خِفۡتِ عَلَيۡهِ فَأَلۡقِيهِ فِي

fear nor grief, for We shall return him to you and shall make him one of the conveyors of Our messages."

(8) *And thus [some of] Pharaoh's household picked him out and [saved him] to be for them an enemy and [a source of] sorrow; surely, Pharaoh and Haman and their hosts were merely [in oppressing these people] evildoers.*

(9) *Now the wife of Pharaoh said [to her husband], "A joy to the eye [will this child be] for me and you. Slay him not; he may well be of benefit to us, or we may take him for a son. And they have no awareness [of what this child will be in the future.]"*

(10) *On the morrow, the heart of Moses' mother ran out of patience, and she was about to disclose the whole matter; had We not strengthened her heart to be among the true believers [in God's guidance and promises].*

(11) *And she said to his sister, "Follow him," and [the girl] watched him from afar, even while they were not aware.*

(12) *Now We caused him to refuse the breast of nurses, and therefore she [Moses' sister seized the chance and] said, "Shall I guide you to a family that will take care of him for you and sincerely look after him?"*

(13) *So We returned him to his mother, that she might be comforted and not grieve, and that she might know that God's promise always comes true, even though most of them know not.*

(14) *And when he was fully grown and reached maturity, We bestowed upon him [the ability of proper judgement] and knowledge; and thus do We reward the doers of good.*

(15) *And [one day] he entered the city at a time when [most] of its people were relaxing and unaware of what was going on [in the streets], and there he found two men fighting: one was of his own people and the other was of his enemies. And the one who belonged to his own people cried out to him for help against the one who was of his enemies; so Moses struck*

ٱلْيَمِّ وَلَا تَخَافِى وَلَا تَحْزَنِىٓ ۖ إِنَّا
رَآدُّوهُ إِلَيْكِ وَجَاعِلُوهُ مِنَ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ
(٧) فَٱلْتَقَطَهُۥٓ ءَالُ فِرْعَوْنَ لِيَكُونَ لَهُمْ
عَدُوًّا وَحَزَنًا ۗ إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَٰمَٰنَ
وَجُنُودَهُمَا كَانُوا۟ خَٰطِـِٔينَ (٨) وَقَالَتِ
ٱمْرَأَتُ فِرْعَوْنَ قُرَّتُ عَيْنٍ لِّى وَلَكَ ۖ لَا
تَقْتُلُوهُ عَسَىٰٓ أَن يَنفَعَنَآ أَوْ نَتَّخِذَهُۥ
وَلَدًا وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ (٩) وَأَصْبَحَ
فُؤَادُ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰ فَٰرِغًا ۖ إِن كَادَتْ
لَتُبْدِى بِهِۦ لَوْلَآ أَن رَّبَطْنَا عَلَىٰ قَلْبِهَا
لِتَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ (١٠) وَقَالَتْ
لِأُخْتِهِۦ قُصِّيهِ ۖ فَبَصُرَتْ بِهِۦ عَن جُنُبٍ
وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ (١١) ۞ وَحَرَّمْنَا عَلَيْهِ
ٱلْمَرَاضِعَ مِن قَبْلُ فَقَالَتْ هَلْ أَدُلُّكُمْ
عَلَىٰٓ أَهْلِ بَيْتٍ يَكْفُلُونَهُۥ لَكُمْ وَهُمْ لَهُۥ
نَٰصِحُونَ (١٢) فَرَدَدْنَٰهُ إِلَىٰٓ أُمِّهِۦ كَىْ
تَقَرَّ عَيْنُهَا وَلَا تَحْزَنَ وَلِتَعْلَمَ أَنَّ وَعْدَ
ٱللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ
(١٣) وَلَمَّا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُۥ وَٱسْتَوَىٰٓ
ءَاتَيْنَٰهُ حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِى
ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ (١٤) وَدَخَلَ ٱلْمَدِينَةَ عَلَىٰ
حِينِ غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ أَهْلِهَا فَوَجَدَ فِيهَا رَجُلَيْنِ
يَقْتَتِلَانِ هَٰذَا مِن شِيعَتِهِۦ وَهَٰذَا مِنْ
عَدُوِّهِۦ ۖ فَٱسْتَغَٰثَهُ ٱلَّذِى مِن شِيعَتِهِۦ
عَلَى ٱلَّذِى مِنْ عَدُوِّهِۦ فَوَكَزَهُۥ مُوسَىٰ

him down with his fist, and [thus] ended his life. He said [to himself], "This is of Satan's doing, he is surely an evident foe who leads [the human being] astray." (16) *And he prayed, "O my Lord! Truly, I have wronged myself; so grant me your forgiveness."*
And He forgave him, and He alone is the All-forgiving, the Most Gracious.(17) *He said, "O my Lord! For as much as you have blessed me, never I shall be a supporter of such as are lost in evil."*
(18) *And next morning he was in the city, looking fearfully around; and [shockingly] the one who had sought his help the day before [once again] cried out to him again. Moses said unto him, "Clearly you are lost in evil!"*
(19) *But then, as soon as he was [moved emotionally to support the one of his people and] about to knock out the man who was their [common] enemy, the man said, "O Moses, do you want to kill me as you killed another man yesterday?" You only want to be a tyrant in the land, and you do not want to be of those who set things right."*
(20) *And then a man came running from the furthest part of the city; he said, "O Moses! The leading ones are deliberating to kill you. Clear out, then; I am sincerely advising you."*
(21) *So he left the city looking fearfully around, and prayed, "O my Lord! Save me from [all] evil-doing folk."*
(22) *And as he turned towards Madyan (Midian) he said, "It may well be that my Lord will guide me to the right way."*
(23) *Now when he arrived at the wells of Midian, he found there a large group of men who were drawing water [for their animals], and at some distance he found two women holding back their flock. He asked [them,] "What is the matter with you?" They answered, "We cannot draw water until the shepherds drive theirs and go, and our father is very old."*
(24) *So he drew water for them; then he turned*

فَقَضَىٰ عَلَيْهِ ۖ قَالَ هَٰذَا مِنْ عَمَلِ
ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ عَدُوٌّ مُّضِلٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٥﴾
قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّى ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِى فَٱغْفِرْ لِى
فَغَفَرَ لَهُۥٓ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلْغَفُورُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ
﴿١٦﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ بِمَآ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَىَّ فَلَنْ
أَكُونَ ظَهِيرًا لِّلْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿١٧﴾ فَأَصْبَحَ
فِى ٱلْمَدِينَةِ خَآئِفًا يَتَرَقَّبُ فَإِذَا ٱلَّذِى
ٱسْتَنصَرَهُۥ بِٱلْأَمْسِ يَسْتَصْرِخُهُۥ ۚ قَالَ
لَهُۥ مُوسَىٰٓ إِنَّكَ لَغَوِىٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٨﴾ فَلَمَّآ
أَنْ أَرَادَ أَن يَبْطِشَ بِٱلَّذِى هُوَ عَدُوٌّ لَّهُمَا
قَالَ يَٰمُوسَىٰٓ أَتُرِيدُ أَن تَقْتُلَنِى كَمَا
قَتَلْتَ نَفْسًۢا بِٱلْأَمْسِ ۖ إِن تُرِيدُ إِلَّآ أَن
تَكُونَ جَبَّارًا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا تُرِيدُ أَن
تَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُصْلِحِينَ ﴿١٩﴾ وَجَآءَ رَجُلٌ
مِّنْ أَقْصَا ٱلْمَدِينَةِ يَسْعَىٰ قَالَ يَٰمُوسَىٰٓ
إِنَّ ٱلْمَلَأَ يَأْتَمِرُونَ بِكَ لِيَقْتُلُوكَ فَٱخْرُجْ
إِنِّى لَكَ مِنَ ٱلنَّٰصِحِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾ فَخَرَجَ مِنْهَا
خَآئِفًا يَتَرَقَّبُ ۖ قَالَ رَبِّ نَجِّنِى مِنَ
ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٢١﴾ وَلَمَّا تَوَجَّهَ
تِلْقَآءَ مَدْيَنَ قَالَ عَسَىٰ رَبِّىٓ أَن يَهْدِيَنِى
سَوَآءَ ٱلسَّبِيلِ ﴿٢٢﴾ وَلَمَّا وَرَدَ مَآءَ
مَدْيَنَ وَجَدَ عَلَيْهِ أُمَّةً مِّنَ ٱلنَّاسِ يَسْقُونَ
وَوَجَدَ مِن دُونِهِمُ ٱمْرَأَتَيْنِ تَذُودَانِ ۖ
قَالَ مَا خَطْبُكُمَا ۖ قَالَتَا لَا نَسْقِى
حَتَّىٰ يُصْدِرَ ٱلرِّعَآءُ ۖ وَأَبُونَا شَيْخٌ
كَبِيرٌ ﴿٢٣﴾ فَسَقَىٰ لَهُمَا ثُمَّ تَوَلَّىٰٓ إِلَى
ٱلظِّلِّ فَقَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّى لِمَآ أَنزَلْتَ إِلَىَّ
مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَقِيرٌ ﴿٢٤﴾ فَجَآءَتْهُ إِحْدَىٰهُمَا

away to the shade and prayed, "O my Lord! Surely I am in real need of whatever good You may bestow upon me."

(25) *Then came one of the two women to him, walking shyly, and said, "My father invites you, so that he might duly recompense you for having watered [our flock] for us." And when [Moses] came unto him and told him the story [of his coming to Midian], the man said to him, "Have no fear! You are now safe from the evil-doing folk."*

(26) *And one of the two daughters said [to her father,] "Father! Hire him; surely the best you can hire is one who is strong and worthy of trust."*

(27) *Then the father said [to Moses,] "I am willing to let you marry one of these two daughters of mine, on condition that you will remain eight years in my service; and it is up to you to complete ten [years] and I do not want to press hard upon you; you will find me, if God so wills, one of the righteous."*

(28) *[Moses] answered, "Thus shall it be between me and you. Whichever of the two terms I fulfill, there will be nothing wrong that I may expect against me."*

(29) *And when Moses had fulfilled the term, and departed with his family [through the desert,] he perceived a fire on the side of the Tur [Mount of Sinai]. He said to his family, "Wait here; I have glimpsed a fire [there]; I may bring from there some information [about where we are and how we should go], or [at least] I may bring an ember from the fire, so that you may warm yourselves."*

(30) *But when he came close to it, a call was sounded from the right-side bank of the water-course valley, out of the sacred spot of the tree: "O Moses! I am God, the Lord of all being."*

(31) *And then He said, "Cast down your staff!" But as soon as [Moses] saw it quivering like a snake [or as a jinn] he drew back [in terror] and did not [dare to] return.*

تَمْشِى عَلَى ٱسْتِحْيَآءٍ قَالَتْ إِنَّ أَبِى
يَدْعُوكَ لِيَجْزِيَكَ أَجْرَ مَا سَقَيْتَ لَنَا ۚ
فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُۥ وَقَصَّ عَلَيْهِ ٱلْقَصَصَ قَالَ
لَا تَخَفْ ۖ نَجَوْتَ مِنَ ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ
﴿٢٥﴾ قَالَتْ إِحْدَىٰهُمَا يَٰٓأَبَتِ
ٱسْتَـْٔجِرْهُ ۖ إِنَّ خَيْرَ مَنِ ٱسْتَـْٔجَرْتَ
ٱلْقَوِىُّ ٱلْأَمِينُ ﴿٢٦﴾ قَالَ إِنِّىٓ أُرِيدُ أَنْ
أُنكِحَكَ إِحْدَى ٱبْنَتَىَّ هَٰتَيْنِ عَلَىٰٓ أَن
تَأْجُرَنِى ثَمَٰنِىَ حِجَجٍ ۖ فَإِنْ أَتْمَمْتَ
عَشْرًا فَمِنْ عِندِكَ ۖ وَمَآ أُرِيدُ أَنْ أَشُقَّ
عَلَيْكَ ۚ سَتَجِدُنِىٓ إِن شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ مِنَ
ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾ قَالَ ذَٰلِكَ بَيْنِى
وَبَيْنَكَ ۖ أَيَّمَا ٱلْأَجَلَيْنِ قَضَيْتُ فَلَا عُدْوَٰنَ
عَلَىَّ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ مَا نَقُولُ وَكِيلٌ
﴿٢٨﴾ ۞ فَلَمَّا قَضَىٰ مُوسَى ٱلْأَجَلَ
وَسَارَ بِأَهْلِهِۦٓ ءَانَسَ مِن جَانِبِ ٱلطُّورِ
نَارًا ۖ قَالَ لِأَهْلِهِ ٱمْكُثُوٓا۟ إِنِّىٓ ءَانَسْتُ
نَارًا لَّعَلِّىٓ ءَاتِيكُم مِّنْهَا بِخَبَرٍ أَوْ جَذْوَةٍ
مِّنَ ٱلنَّارِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَصْطَلُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾ فَلَمَّآ
أَتَىٰهَا نُودِىَ مِن شَٰطِئِ ٱلْوَادِ ٱلْأَيْمَنِ
فِى ٱلْبُقْعَةِ ٱلْمُبَٰرَكَةِ مِنَ ٱلشَّجَرَةِ أَن
يَٰمُوسَىٰٓ إِنِّىٓ أَنَا ٱللَّهُ رَبُّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ
﴿٣٠﴾ وَأَنْ أَلْقِ عَصَاكَ ۖ فَلَمَّا رَءَاهَا
تَهْتَزُّ كَأَنَّهَا جَآنٌّ وَلَّىٰ مُدْبِرًا وَلَمْ يُعَقِّبْ

يَٰمُوسَىٰٓ أَقۡبِلۡ وَلَا تَخَفۡۖ إِنَّكَ مِنَ
ٱلۡأٓمِنِينَ ﴿٣١﴾ ٱسۡلُكۡ يَدَكَ فِي جَيۡبِكَ
تَخۡرُجۡ بَيۡضَآءَ مِنۡ غَيۡرِ سُوٓءٖ وَٱضۡمُمۡ إِلَيۡكَ
جَنَاحَكَ مِنَ ٱلرَّهۡبِۖ فَذَٰنِكَ بُرۡهَٰنَانِ
مِن رَّبِّكَ إِلَىٰ فِرۡعَوۡنَ وَمَلَإِيْهِۦٓۚ إِنَّهُمۡ
كَانُواْ قَوۡمٗا فَٰسِقِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي
قَتَلۡتُ مِنۡهُمۡ نَفۡسٗا فَأَخَافُ أَن يَقۡتُلُونِ
﴿٣٣﴾ وَأَخِي هَٰرُونُ هُوَ أَفۡصَحُ مِنِّي
لِسَانٗا فَأَرۡسِلۡهُ مَعِيَ رِدۡءٗا يُصَدِّقُنِيٓۖ
إِنِّيٓ أَخَافُ أَن يُكَذِّبُونِ ﴿٣٤﴾ قَالَ
سَنَشُدُّ عَضُدَكَ بِأَخِيكَ وَنَجۡعَلُ لَكُمَا
سُلۡطَٰنٗا فَلَا يَصِلُونَ إِلَيۡكُمَاۚ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَآ
أَنتُمَا وَمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَكُمَا ٱلۡغَٰلِبُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

[And God spoke to him again,] "O Moses! Draw near and have no fear; you are one of those who are secure. (32) *Insert your hand into your bosom, it will come forth [shining] white without any wrong about it, and hold your arm close to yourself and you will be free from all fear." These, then, shall be two signs [for your message] from your Lord to Pharaoh and the leading persons around him; for surely they are iniquitous people.*
(33) He *[Moses,] said "O my Lord! I have killed one of them, and I fear that they will kill me!* (34) *And my brother Harun (Aaron) — he is far better in speech and more eloquent than myself. Send him with me as a supporter who confirms what I shall say; indeed I fear that they will denounce me as a liar."*
(35) *Said He, "We shall strengthen your arm by [sending with you] your brother, and We shall endow you both with power [from Us], so that they shall not be able to reach you; by virtue of Our messages you two and whoever follows you shall prevail."* [28:1-35]

وَهَلۡ أَتَىٰكَ حَدِيثُ
مُوسَىٰٓ ﴿٩﴾ إِذۡ رَءَا نَارٗا فَقَالَ لِأَهۡلِهِ
ٱمۡكُثُوٓاْ إِنِّيٓ ءَانَسۡتُ نَارٗا لَّعَلِّيٓ ءَاتِيكُم
مِّنۡهَا بِقَبَسٍ أَوۡ أَجِدُ عَلَى ٱلنَّارِ هُدٗى
﴿١٠﴾ فَلَمَّآ أَتَىٰهَا نُودِيَ يَٰمُوسَىٰٓ ﴿١١﴾
إِنِّيٓ أَنَا رَبُّكَ فَٱخۡلَعۡ نَعۡلَيۡكَۖ إِنَّكَ
بِٱلۡوَادِ ٱلۡمُقَدَّسِ طُوٗى ﴿١٢﴾ وَأَنَا
ٱخۡتَرۡتُكَ فَٱسۡتَمِعۡ لِمَا يُوحَىٰٓ ﴿١٣﴾
إِنَّنِيٓ أَنَا ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّآ أَنَا۠ فَٱعۡبُدۡنِي
وَأَقِمِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ لِذِكۡرِيٓ ﴿١٤﴾ إِنَّ ٱلسَّاعَةَ
ءَاتِيَةٌ أَكَادُ أُخۡفِيهَا لِتُجۡزَىٰ كُلُّ نَفۡسِۭ
بِمَا تَسۡعَىٰ ﴿١٥﴾ فَلَا يَصُدَّنَّكَ عَنۡهَا مَن لَّا

(9) *And has ever come to you the story of Moses?* (10) *When he saw a fire, and said to his family, "Wait here, I perceive a fire [there], perhaps I can bring you an ember, or find at the fire some guidance."* (11) *But when he came close to it, a voice called out, "O Moses!* (12) *I am your Lord! Take off, then, your shoes! You are in the twice-hallowed valley [with all its curves], and I have chosen you [to be the conveyor of My message]. Listen, then, to what is revealed [unto you].* (14) *Verily, I -alone- am God; there is no god but I; hence, worship Me alone, and be constant in prayer to keep alive your consciousness of Me.* (15) *The Last Hour is bound to come but I have willed to keep it concealed so that every human being is requited according to what he [/she] strove for [in the previous life.]* (16) *So, let not anyone who does not*

believe in its coming and follows only his [/her] own whims turn you away from [belief in] it, lest you die away.

(17) *"And what is that you have in your right hand, Moses?"*

(18) *He answered, "It is my staff; I lean on it, and with it I beat down leaves [from trees] for [feeding] my sheep, and other uses also I find in it."*

(19) *Said He, "Cast it down, O Moses!"* (20) *And he cast it down, and it was a snake, crawling.* (21) *Said He, "Take it, and fear not, We shall restore it to its former state.* (22) *Now gather your hand to your armpit; it will come forth [shining] white, without any wrong about it, as another sign [to prove your message],* (23) *so that We might make you aware of some of Our greatest wonders.* (24) *Go to Pharaoh; he haughtily transgressed all bounds in his tyranny!"*

(25) *Said [Moses], "O my Lord! Open my heart,* (26) *and make my task easy for me,*(27) *and loosen the knot from my tongue* (28) *so that they might fully understand my speech,* (29) *and appoint for me out of my kinsfolk one who will help me to bear my burden:* (30) *Harun (Aaron), my brother.* (31) *Add through him to my strength,* (32) *and let him share with me my task,* (33) *so that [together] we might abundantly extol Your limitless glory* (34) *and abundantly remember You.* (35) *Surely, You see all within us and care about us."*

(36) *Said He, "You are granted all that you have asked for, O Moses!* (37) *And We bestowed Our favor upon you at another time before,* (38) *when We inspired your mother with that inspiration:* (39) *"Place him in a chest and cast it in the river, and thereupon the river will cast him ashore; and an enemy of Mine and of him shall take him. And [from the beginning] I spread over you love from Me, and My will has been always to get you formed under My own sight and care.* (40) *[And] when your sister went forth and said [to Pharaoh's*

يُؤْمِنُ بِهَا وَ اتَّبَعَ هَوٰىهُ فَتَرْدٰى ﴿١٦﴾
وَمَا تِلْكَ بِيَمِينِكَ يٰمُوسٰى ﴿١٧﴾ قَالَ هِيَ
عَصَايَ أَتَوَكَّؤُا عَلَيْهَا وَ أَهُشُّ بِهَا عَلٰى
غَنَمِي وَ لِيَ فِيهَا مَآرِبُ أُخْرٰى ﴿١٨﴾
قَالَ أَلْقِهَا يٰمُوسٰى ﴿١٩﴾ فَأَلْقٰىهَا فَإِذَا
هِيَ حَيَّةٌ تَسْعٰى ﴿٢٠﴾ قَالَ خُذْهَا وَ لَا
تَخَفْ ۖ سَنُعِيدُهَا سِيرَتَهَا الْأُولٰى
﴿٢١﴾ وَ اضْمُمْ يَدَكَ إِلٰى جَنَاحِكَ تَخْرُجْ
بَيْضَآءَ مِنْ غَيْرِ سُوٓءٍ ءَايَةً أُخْرٰى ﴿٢٢﴾
لِنُرِيَكَ مِنْ ءَايَاتِنَا الْكُبْرَى ﴿٢٣﴾ اذْهَبْ
إِلٰى فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّهُ طَغٰى ﴿٢٤﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ
اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي ﴿٢٥﴾ وَ يَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي
﴿٢٦﴾ وَ احْلُلْ عُقْدَةً مِنْ لِسَانِي ﴿٢٧﴾
يَفْقَهُوا قَوْلِي ﴿٢٨﴾ وَ اجْعَلْ لِي وَزِيرًا
مِنْ أَهْلِي ﴿٢٩﴾ هٰرُونَ أَخِي ﴿٣٠﴾ اشْدُدْ
بِهِ أَزْرِي ﴿٣١﴾ وَ أَشْرِكْهُ فِي أَمْرِي
﴿٣٢﴾ كَيْ نُسَبِّحَكَ كَثِيرًا ﴿٣٣﴾ وَ نَذْكُرَكَ
كَثِيرًا ﴿٣٤﴾ إِنَّكَ كُنْتَ بِنَا بَصِيرًا ﴿٣٥﴾
قَالَ قَدْ أُوتِيتَ سُؤْلَكَ يٰمُوسٰى ﴿٣٦﴾
وَلَقَدْ مَنَنَّا عَلَيْكَ مَرَّةً أُخْرٰى ﴿٣٧﴾ إِذْ
أَوْحَيْنَا إِلٰى أُمِّكَ مَا يُوحٰى ﴿٣٨﴾ أَنِ
اقْذِفِيهِ فِي التَّابُوتِ فَاقْذِفِيهِ فِي الْيَمِّ
فَلْيُلْقِهِ الْيَمُّ بِالسَّاحِلِ يَأْخُذْهُ عَدُوٌّ لِي
وَعَدُوٌّ لَهُ ۚ وَ أَلْقَيْتُ عَلَيْكَ مَحَبَّةً مِنِّي
وَلِتُصْنَعَ عَلٰى عَيْنِي ﴿٣٩﴾ إِذْ تَمْشِي
أُخْتُكَ فَتَقُولُ هَلْ أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلٰى مَنْ

household], 'Shall I guide you to [a woman] who might rear him?' And so We returned you to your mother, so that she might be comforted and might not sorrow [any more]. And [when] later you killed a man, but We did save you from a grief, and We tried you in various ways. And then you did sojourn for years among the people of Midian; and now you have come [here] as it is decided [by Me], O Moses, (41) *and I have chosen you for My Own service [to convey My message].*
(42) *"Go forth you and your brother, with my signs and messages, and never be weakened in remembering Me.* (43) *Go forth, both of you, to Pharaoh; he has transgressed all bounds in his tyranny.* (44) *But speak mildly to him; he might himself bethink or perchance fear [God when he sees His signs presented by Moses]."*
(45) *The two [brothers] said, "O Our Lord! Truly, we fear he may act excessively against us or deal with us tyrannically [as he is used to]."*
(46) *Said He, "Fear not. Surely I shall be with you both, hearing and seeing [all that may happen].* (47) *So go you both to Pharaoh and say, 'We are the conveyors of your Lord's message; let, then, the children of Israel go with us, and do stop their suffering. We have brought you a sign from your Lord; and peace be upon one who follows His guidance.* (48) *It has been revealed to us that suffering shall befall all who denounce the truth as a lie and turn away from it.'"* [20:9-48; see also 26:10- 17]

يَكْفُلُهُۥ ۖ فَرَجَعْنَٰكَ إِلَىٰٓ أُمِّكَ كَىْ تَقَرَّ
عَيْنُهَا وَلَا تَحْزَنَ ۚ وَقَتَلْتَ نَفْسًا
فَنَجَّيْنَٰكَ مِنَ ٱلْغَمِّ وَفَتَنَّٰكَ فُتُونًا ۚ
فَلَبِثْتَ سِنِينَ فِىٓ أَهْلِ مَدْيَنَ ثُمَّ جِئْتَ
عَلَىٰ قَدَرٍ يَٰمُوسَىٰ ﴿٤٠﴾ وَٱصْطَنَعْتُكَ
لِنَفْسِى ﴿٤١﴾ ٱذْهَبْ أَنتَ وَأَخُوكَ
بِـَٔايَٰتِى وَلَا تَنِيَا فِى ذِكْرِى ﴿٤٢﴾ ٱذْهَبَآ
إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّهُۥ طَغَىٰ ﴿٤٣﴾ فَقُولَا لَهُۥ
قَوْلًا لَّيِّنًا لَّعَلَّهُۥ يَتَذَكَّرُ أَوْ يَخْشَىٰ ﴿٤٤﴾
قَالَا رَبَّنَآ إِنَّنَا نَخَافُ أَن يَفْرُطَ عَلَيْنَآ
أَوْ أَن يَطْغَىٰ ﴿٤٥﴾ قَالَ لَا تَخَافَآ ۖ
إِنَّنِى مَعَكُمَآ أَسْمَعُ وَأَرَىٰ ﴿٤٦﴾ فَأْتِيَاهُ
فَقُولَآ إِنَّا رَسُولَا رَبِّكَ فَأَرْسِلْ مَعَنَا بَنِىٓ
إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ وَلَا تُعَذِّبْهُمْ ۖ قَدْ جِئْنَٰكَ
بِـَٔايَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكَ ۖ وَٱلسَّلَٰمُ عَلَىٰ مَنِ ٱتَّبَعَ
ٱلْهُدَىٰٓ ﴿٤٧﴾ إِنَّا قَدْ أُوحِىَ إِلَيْنَآ أَنَّ
ٱلْعَذَابَ عَلَىٰ مَن كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّىٰ ﴿٤٨﴾

About some conveyors of [God's] messages We have told you; about others We have not; and to Moses God spoke directly. [4:164]

وَرُسُلًا قَدْ
قَصَصْنَٰهُمْ عَلَيْكَ مِن قَبْلُ وَرُسُلًا لَّمْ
نَقْصُصْهُمْ عَلَيْكَ ۚ وَكَلَّمَ ٱللَّهُ مُوسَىٰ
تَكْلِيمًا ﴿١٦٤﴾

Musa (Moses) and 'Isa (Jesus) were the only two prophets whose birth events have been reported with some detail in the Quran. Those of Moses dramatically reflected Pharaoh's oppression of the Israelites in Egypt: *"[Pharoah was] deeming a group of them [the people] utterly low and oppressing them, slaughtering their sons and sparing their*

women" [28:4]. Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad were the Prophets about whom the Quran presents the main features of messages, and missions, and in the cases of Moses and Muhammad the Quran especially casts some light on their personalities that helps us understand them. However, the Quran offers no information about the birth of Muhammad, since it did not have the dramatic character of Moses's birth which was related to Pharaoh's oppression of the Jews, nor had it the miraculous character of Jesus' birth.

The twenty eighth sura of the Quran, "The Stories," opens with mentioning Pharaoh's oppression of the Israelites and pursues in some detail the birth of Moses and his early life until he received God's message, then it condenses in a few verses of this sura the conflict between Moses and Pharaoh which ended with the liberating exodus of the Israelites and Pharaoh's humiliating failure to stop it. Other details about Moses in Egypt, and the exodus to Sinai and the events there were presented in more than 400 verses distributed throughout the Quran. Forty-six successive verses of the total eighty eight verses of the sura are devoted to the story of Moses, and another nine verses present the story of Qarun [identified by many with Korah in the Bible: Numbers XVI] who was one of Moses' flock [28:76-84].

This sura begins with three disjointed letters in the Arabic Alphabet: "*Ta, Sin, Mim.*" Such disjointed letters, "*al-muqatta'at,*" or openings, "*fawatih,*" which appear at the beginning of twenty seven suras of the Quran cannot be interpreted with definitiveness, nor can their significance or symbolism be clarified with certainty. In their totality, these fourteen disjointed letters which appear at the beginning of certain suras represent half of the letters of the Arabic alphabet. No reliable explanation from the Prophet or his companions has reached us. What seems to be the most sensible of the later approaches to this mystery is probably that these letters may point out that the Quran, which is unmatchable in its style, is just constructed of Arabic words and each of them is formed of the usual letters of the alphabet with which every Arab is familiar. This view may be supported by the fact that the verses which follow these disjointed letters either explicitly or implicitly refer to the Book or the revelation [e.g. explicitly suras 2, 3, 7, 10-15, 20, 26-28, 31, 32, 36, 38, 40-46, 50; implicitly 17, 29, 30, 68]. This view is supported by some prominent linguists, commentators on the Quran and jurists both classical and modern such as al-Mubarrad, Ibn Hazm, al-Zamakhshari, al-Razi, al- Baydawi, Ibn Taymiyyah, Ibn Kathir and others [See, for example, the commentary of Zamakhshari on the verse 2:1, vol I; commentary of Ibn Kathir on the same verse, *Tafsir al-Manar* (Muhammad Abduh and Muhammad Rashid Rida):commentary on the same verse, and see in English: Muhammad Asad, *The Message of the Quran,* Appendix II, p. 992-993].

The future rescue of the children of Israel in Egypt from the tyrannical oppression of Pharaoh which went as far as slaughtering the males and sparing only the females, could only be achieved through God's guidance which was presented to the people by a conveyor of God's message who led them in their striving for deliverance. The plan started with an inspiration to the mother of the baby who would be the future leader and conveyor of God's message. She was inspired to put the child in a chest and cast that chest in the river [28:7, 20:38-39]. The Quran tells us about only two women who received God's inspiration [in Arabic *ilham*], Moses' mother and Jesus' mother, and both these women received

inspiration about their children, the would-be prophets [for Moses' mother 20:38-39, 28:7; and for Jesus' mother see 3:42, 45-51; 19:16-21]. This does not necessarily imply that these mothers were prophets, even if their children were.] Only God's care could save a baby thrown in the river from being drowned or starved to death, and could furthermore cause that baby to be raised by the enemies of his people but under his mother's charge [28:8-13, 20:37-40]. It is interesting that the Hebrew form of Moses' name "Mosheh" is from "*mashah*" that means "to draw out," because he was drawn out from the water. *Smith's Bible Dictionary* by William Smith indicates that "this is probably the Hebrew form given to a foreign word. In Coptic "*mo*" means "water" and "*ushu*" means "saved". This is the explanation given by [the Jewish historian] Josephus [37-100 C.E.]. Smith further explains that since the child was adopted by the princess, for many years he must have been considered to be an Egyptian. "In the Pentateuch this period is a blank," he writes, but in the New Testament he is represented as 'educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians' and as 'mighty in words and deeds' (Acts VII:22)." God had willed Moses to lead the future deliverance of the Israelites in Egypt to be ready for his message and mission. He caused him to go through certain circumstances under His own care and guidance [20:39] and He chose him for His Own Service [20:41]. However, Moses physically lived in the most insecure place for an Israelite: the palace of the enemy and oppressor himself [28:8-9, 20:39]. Just as Ibrahim (Abraham) had been physically thrown in the fire and yet God's care brought him out of it physically safe and spiritually enriched and prevailing [21:69-70, 37:97-98], now Moses was thrown in the river and raised from it amid the enemies to survive and grow physically, spiritually and intellectually: *"And when he was fully grown and reached maturity; We bestowed upon him [the ability of] proper judgement and knowledge"* [28:14].

Some forceful occasion had to make Moses emerge from the shell or cocoon in which he was living. This occurred when he saw two men fighting; one was of his own people and the other was related to their oppressors. As the Israelite cried out for help, Moses rushed to his support, which ended in unintentionally killing the Egyptian. His excessive reaction was about to be repeated, when he was this time reminded by the Egyptian in that conflict about his excessive reaction the day before and so he stopped. It seems that he could not easily resist instinctive collective emotions towards his oppressed people. However, he was also afterwards warned that his action on the previous day had become known and that he would be killed in retribution for the man whom he had slain. It seems from the Quranic texts that Moses' strength and excessive action led to what he had not intended, and what the Egyptian assaulter did not deserve and the Israelite sufferer did not expect. Moses realized that he had acted excessively and emotionally and he prayed for God's forgiveness [28:15-16, 20:40]. Moreover, he became almost sure that the Israelite was a trouble-maker when he saw him fighting another Egyptian the next day [28:18]. Oppressed individuals and people need a great deal of self-control to avoid becoming oppressors when they have a chance for power, and Moses had to undergo God's tests [20:40] and experience Satan's traps [28:15] and know that they should be resisted [28:15-16]. The incident, nevertheless, seems to have been an eye-opener for Moses. He had realized his identity as an Israelite despite living in Pharaoh's palace for many years, and he was touched by his people's oppression, but he knew that exceeding the legitimate

limits might turn the defender into an assaulter, and the initial assaulter into a victim.

That enlightenment about his Israelite identity, and about the fine line between reasonable and legitimate defense and in overstepping authority, was essential in preparing Moses for his future message and mission as the deliverer of the Israelites in Egypt. He had to leave the city in Egypt *"looking fearfully around"* [28:21], but meanwhile decided firmly never to support the evildoer regardless of the party to which he/she belongs [28:17]. In Madyan [Midian], he had the chance to live the life of a common man, and to use his force in helping those who needed help and in earning his living. He helped the daughters of the righteous man of Midian to draw water without being delayed. The Quran does not explicitly indicate that the man was Shu'ayb. It says in other verses that Shu 'ayb was the conveyor of God's message to Midian [e.g. 7:85, 11:84, 29:36], but was he the contemporary of Moses whom the latter met and worked for and whose daughter he married? No clear evidence about this is in the Quran; the Bible gave the name of Moses' father-in-law as "Jethro" and also "Reu-el" [Exodus II:18] and the last means "faithful to God."

Moses now lived far from the palace, farming or pasturing and caring about his family. His at least eight-year stay in Midian [28:27-29] represented a divine plan to allow him to mature in his judgement and knowledge of human beings, and to benefit from the experience of the righteous man. It seems that Moses wished to go back to Egypt when he fulfilled his term of work for the righteous man, as is indicated by his stop at Mount Sinai "*al-Tur*". Was that return motivated by Moses' human emotions towards his people and the land in which he had spent most of his life until that time, or was he directed to that return by God's guidance? In either case, it was in that return journey that Moses received God's revelation at Mount Sinai, and it is significantly stated, *"And then you did sojourn for years among the people of Midian, and now you have come [here] as is decided [by Me] O Moses ..."* [20:40].

The early revelation to Moses at Mount Sinai condenses the faith in the One God and in the accountability of the human being and requital in the life to come [20:14-16], and indicates the specific message of Moses to Pharaoh [28:31-35; 20:42-47]. It is a message of deliverance for the Israelites in Egypt from the tyranny of Pharaoh: *"So go you both to Pharaoh and say, 'We are the conveyors of your Lord's message; let, then, the children of Israel go with us and do not stop their suffering. We have brought you a sign from your Lord; and peace be upon one who follows His guidance' "* [20:47; also 26:16-17]. God granted Moses certain miraculous signs to be presented before Pharaoh as a proof of his truthfulness: turning his staff into a snake, and turning his hand to shining white as he gathered it to his armpit [28:31-32; 20:17-24].

It was natural that Moses, who had known the tyranny of Pharaoh well, feared that he might act excessively or tyrannically against him [20:45], and thus he prayed to God to open his heart and make his task easy and loosen the knot of his tongue so that Pharaoh and the leading persons around him would understand the message [20:25-28]. Besides this, Moses asked God to allow his brother Harun (Aaron) to help him in his task [28:34-35; 20:29-37]. How comfortable and even daring was Moses in such a situation of hearing God speaking to Him when he asked for the appointment of his brother to share with him his heavy responsibility, and how gracious was God in accepting his request! God's

guidance further enlightened Moses as to how to address the tyrant and deal with him: "*But speak mildly to him; he himself might bethink or perchance fear [God when he sees His signs presented by Moses]*" [20:44]. Moreover, the All-mighty would be present with the conveyors of His message: "*surely I shall be with you, hearing and seeing [all]*" [20:46], and He assured Moses, "*By virtue of Our messages, you two and whoever follows you shall prevail*" [28:35]. It was to be a real challenge between a tyrannical oppressor who believed only in himself and the deliverer of the oppressed supported by the All-mighty!

Musa (Moses) in Egypt again: the Message to Pharaoh

(103) *And [after the early conveyors of Our messages] We sent Musa (Moses) with Our signs and messages to Pharaoh and the leading persons around him, but they acted wrongfully and stubbornly towards them, and see how was the end of the spreaders of corruption.* (104) *And Moses said, "O Pharaoh! I am the conveyor of message from the Lord of all being,* (105) *worthy to say nothing about God but the truth. I have now come with clear evidence from your Lord; let, then, the children of Israel go with me!"* (106) *Said [Pharaoh], "If you have come with a sign, bring it out, if you are a man of truth!"* (107) *Thereupon [Moses] cast his staff, and it was a snake, plainly visible;* (108) *and he drew forth his hand, and it appeared [shining] white to those who watched.* (109) *The leading persons around Pharaoh said "Surely, this is indeed a sorcerer of great knowledge and skill,* (110) *who wants to drive you out of your land; so what do you decide?"*
(111) *Some answered, "Let him and his brother wait a while, and send to all cities heralds* (112) *to gather to you every sorcerer of distinguished knowledge and skill."* (113) *And the sorcerers came to Pharaoh [and] said, "We surely have a great reward, if it is we who prevail."*
(114) *Answered [Pharaoh,] "Yes, indeed, and you shall be among those who are drawn near to me."*

ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَا
مِنۢ بَعْدِهِم مُّوسَىٰ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَآ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ
وَمَلَإِيْهِۦ فَظَلَمُوا۟ بِهَا ۖ فَٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ
كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿١٠٣﴾ وَقَالَ
مُوسَىٰ يَٰفِرْعَوْنُ إِنِّى رَسُولٌ مِّن رَّبِّ
ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٠٤﴾ حَقِيقٌ عَلَىٰٓ أَن لَّآ
أَقُولَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ إِلَّا ٱلْحَقَّ ۚ قَدْ جِئْتُكُم
بِبَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ فَأَرْسِلْ مَعِىَ بَنِىٓ
إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ ﴿١٠٥﴾ قَالَ إِن كُنتَ جِئْتَ
بِـَٔايَةٍ فَأْتِ بِهَآ إِن كُنتَ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ
﴿١٠٦﴾ فَأَلْقَىٰ عَصَاهُ فَإِذَا هِىَ ثُعْبَانٌ
مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٠٧﴾ وَنَزَعَ يَدَهُۥ فَإِذَا هِىَ بَيْضَآءُ
لِلنَّٰظِرِينَ ﴿١٠٨﴾ قَالَ ٱلْمَلَأُ مِن قَوْمِ
فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَسَٰحِرٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٠٩﴾ يُرِيدُ
أَن يُخْرِجَكُم مِّنْ أَرْضِكُمْ ۖ فَمَاذَا
تَأْمُرُونَ ﴿١١٠﴾ قَالُوٓا۟ أَرْجِهْ وَأَخَاهُ
وَأَرْسِلْ فِى ٱلْمَدَآئِنِ حَٰشِرِينَ ۖ ﴿١١١﴾
يَأْتُوكَ بِكُلِّ سَحَّارٍ عَلِيمٍ ﴿١١٢﴾ وَجَآءَ
ٱلسَّحَرَةُ فِرْعَوْنَ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّ لَنَا لَأَجْرًا
إِن كُنَّا نَحْنُ ٱلْغَٰلِبِينَ ﴿١١٣﴾ قَالَ نَعَمْ
وَإِنَّكُمْ لَمِنَ ٱلْمُقَرَّبِينَ ﴿١١٤﴾ قَالُوا۟

(115) *They said, "O Moses! Either you shall cast [your staff first], or we shall be those who cast."*
(116) *He answered, "You cast."*
And when they cast [their staffs], they were able to delude the people's eyes, and caused them to feel scared, and worked out mighty sorcery. (117) *And [then] We revealed to Moses, "Cast your staff!" And it forthwith swallowed up their forged deceptions.*
(118) *Thus the truth was established, and what they had been doing was proved false.*
(119) *And they were beaten there and they became utterly humiliated.* (120) *And down the sorcerers fell, prostrating themselves* (121) *and saying, "We believe in the Lord of all beings,* (122) *the Lord of Moses and Aaron."*
(123) *Said Pharaoh, "You have believed in him before I allow you. Surely, this is a plot you have cunningly devised in the city to drive its people out! You shall soon find out;* (124) *assuredly, I shall cut off your hands and your feet on opposite sides and I shall crucify you all."*
(125) *They said, "Unto our Lord, we are turning;* (126) *your hostility is just aroused against us only because we have believed in our Lord's signs and messages when they came to us. O our Lord! Pour out upon us patience, and gather us to You in full submission to You."*
(127) *And the leading persons around Pharaoh said [to him], "Will you allow Moses and his people to spread corruption on earth, and [cause others to] forsake you and your gods?". Said he, "We shall slay their sons and spare [only] their women; and surely we hold sway on them."*
(128) *[And] Moses said to his people, "Turn to God for support, and patiently persevere. Surely, all the earth belongs to God; He causes such as He wills of His servants to inherit it; and the future belongs to the God-conscious."*
(129) *[The children of Israel] said, "We have suffered before you came to us and after you*

يَٰمُوسَىٰٓ إِمَّآ أَن تُلۡقِيَ وَ إِمَّآ أَن نَّكُونَ
نَحۡنُ ٱلۡمُلۡقِينَ ﴿١١٥﴾ قَالَ أَلۡقُواْۖ فَلَمَّآ
أَلۡقَوۡاْ سَحَرُوٓاْ أَعۡيُنَ ٱلنَّاسِ
وَٱسۡتَرۡهَبُوهُمۡ وَ جَآءُو بِسِحۡرٍ عَظِيمٖ ﴿١١٦﴾
۞ وَ أَوۡحَيۡنَآ إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰٓ أَنۡ أَلۡقِ
عَصَاكَۖ فَإِذَا هِيَ تَلۡقَفُ مَا يَأۡفِكُونَ
﴿١١٧﴾ فَوَقَعَ ٱلۡحَقُّ وَ بَطَلَ مَا كَانُواْ
يَعۡمَلُونَ ﴿١١٨﴾ فَغُلِبُواْ هُنَالِكَ وَ ٱنقَلَبُواْ
صَٰغِرِينَ ﴿١١٩﴾ وَ أُلۡقِيَ ٱلسَّحَرَةُ
سَٰجِدِينَ ﴿١٢٠﴾ قَالُوٓاْ ءَامَنَّا بِرَبِّ
ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٢١﴾ رَبِّ مُوسَىٰ وَ هَٰرُونَ
﴿١٢٢﴾ قَالَ فِرۡعَوۡنُ ءَامَنتُم بِهِۦ قَبۡلَ أَنۡ
ءَاذَنَ لَكُمۡۖ إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَمَكۡرٞ مَّكَرۡتُمُوهُ فِي
ٱلۡمَدِينَةِ لِتُخۡرِجُواْ مِنۡهَآ أَهۡلَهَاۖ
فَسَوۡفَ تَعۡلَمُونَ ﴿١٢٣﴾ لَأُقَطِّعَنَّ أَيۡدِيَكُمۡ
وَ أَرۡجُلَكُم مِّنۡ خِلَٰفٖ ثُمَّ لَأُصَلِّبَنَّكُمۡ
أَجۡمَعِينَ ﴿١٢٤﴾ قَالُوٓاْ إِنَّآ إِلَىٰ رَبِّنَا
مُنقَلِبُونَ ﴿١٢٥﴾ وَ مَا تَنقِمُ مِنَّآ إِلَّآ أَنۡ
ءَامَنَّا بِـَٔايَٰتِ رَبِّنَا لَمَّا جَآءَتۡنَاۚ رَبَّنَآ
أَفۡرِغۡ عَلَيۡنَا صَبۡرٗا وَ تَوَفَّنَا مُسۡلِمِينَ
﴿١٢٦﴾ وَ قَالَ ٱلۡمَلَأُ مِن قَوۡمِ فِرۡعَوۡنَ
أَتَذَرُ مُوسَىٰ وَ قَوۡمَهُۥ لِيُفۡسِدُواْ فِي
ٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَ يَذَرَكَ وَ ءَالِهَتَكَۚ قَالَ سَنُقَتِّلُ
أَبۡنَآءَهُمۡ وَ نَسۡتَحۡيِۦ نِسَآءَهُمۡ وَ إِنَّا
فَوۡقَهُمۡ قَٰهِرُونَ ﴿١٢٧﴾ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوۡمِهِ
ٱسۡتَعِينُواْ بِٱللَّهِ وَ ٱصۡبِرُوٓاْۖ إِنَّ
ٱلۡأَرۡضَ لِلَّهِ يُورِثُهَا مَن يَشَآءُ مِنۡ
عِبَادِهِۦۖ وَ ٱلۡعَٰقِبَةُ لِلۡمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٢٨﴾
قَالُوٓاْ أُوذِينَا مِن قَبۡلِ أَن تَأۡتِيَنَا وَ مِنۢ
بَعۡدِ مَا جِئۡتَنَاۚ قَالَ عَسَىٰ رَبُّكُمۡ أَن

came to us. [Moses] replied, "It may well be that your Lord will destroy your enemy and make you inherit power in the land, and then he will see how you will act."
(130) *Then We seized Pharaoh's people with hard years of drought and scarcity of [land] produce, so that they may bethink.*
(131) *But whenever something good came to them they would say "This is [but] our due," and whenever affliction befell them they would blame Moses and those with him for bringing them ill fortune. Surely, their fortune [whether good or bad] is [in its source] with God, but most of them know not.*
(132) *And they said [to Moses,] "Whatever sign you may bring to us to cast a spell upon us, we shall never believe in you."*
(133) *Thereupon We let loose upon them floods, and [plagues of] locusts, and lice and frogs and [We caused water to turn to] blood, distinct signs; but they were haughty and were lost in evil-doing.*
(134)And whenever they were struck by the plague, they would say, "O Moses, pray for us to your Lord by what [favor] He had for you, if you release the plague from us, we will truly believe in you and will send forth with you the children of Israel."
(135) *But when We released them from the plague for a certain time that they would reach [to test them about their promise], they broke their word.* (136) *And so We inflicted Our retribution on them, and caused them to drown in the sea, because they had denounced as lies Our signs and messages and had been persistently heedless to them.* (137) *And the people who [in the past] had been deemed utterly low and oppressed, We let them inherit the eastern and western parts of the land that We bless. And [thus] your Lord's best word for the children of Israel was fulfilled as a result of their patient steadfastness; and We utterly destroyed what Pharaoh and his people had worked up and what they had set up.* [7:103-137]

يُهْلِكَ عَدُوَّكُمْ وَ يَسْتَخْلِفَكُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ
فَيَنظُرَ كَيْفَ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٢٩﴾ وَ لَقَدْ أَخَذْنَآ
ءَالَ فِرْعَوْنَ بِٱلسِّنِينَ وَ نَقْصٍ مِّنَ
ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُونَ ﴿١٣٠﴾ فَإِذَا
جَآءَتْهُمُ ٱلْحَسَنَةُ قَالُوا۟ لَنَا هَٰذِهِۦ ۖ
وَإِن تُصِبْهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَطَّيَّرُوا۟ بِمُوسَىٰ وَ مَن
مَّعَهُۥٓ ۗ أَلَآ إِنَّمَا طَٰٓئِرُهُمْ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ
وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٣١﴾ وَ قَالُوا۟
مَهْمَا تَأْتِنَا بِهِۦ مِنْ ءَايَةٍ لِّتَسْحَرَنَا بِهَا
فَمَا نَحْنُ لَكَ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٣٢﴾ فَأَرْسَلْنَا
عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلطُّوفَانَ وَ ٱلْجَرَادَ وَ ٱلْقُمَّلَ
وَ ٱلضَّفَادِعَ وَ ٱلدَّمَ ءَايَٰتٍ مُّفَصَّلَٰتٍ
فَٱسْتَكْبَرُوا۟ وَ كَانُوا۟ قَوْمًا مُّجْرِمِينَ
﴿١٣٣﴾ وَ لَمَّا وَقَعَ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلرِّجْزُ قَالُوا۟
يَٰمُوسَى ٱدْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ بِمَا عَهِدَ عِندَكَ ۖ
لَئِن كَشَفْتَ عَنَّا ٱلرِّجْزَ لَنُؤْمِنَنَّ لَكَ
وَلَنُرْسِلَنَّ مَعَكَ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ ﴿١٣٤﴾ فَلَمَّا
كَشَفْنَا عَنْهُمُ ٱلرِّجْزَ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ هُم
بَٰلِغُوهُ إِذَا هُمْ يَنكُثُونَ ﴿١٣٥﴾ فَٱنتَقَمْنَا
مِنْهُمْ فَأَغْرَقْنَٰهُمْ فِى ٱلْيَمِّ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَذَّبُوا۟
بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا وَ كَانُوا۟ عَنْهَا غَٰفِلِينَ ﴿١٣٦﴾
وَأَوْرَثْنَا ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَانُوا۟ يُسْتَضْعَفُونَ
مَشَٰرِقَ ٱلْأَرْضِ وَ مَغَٰرِبَهَا ٱلَّتِى بَٰرَكْنَا
فِيهَا ۖ وَ تَمَّتْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ
عَلَىٰ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ بِمَا صَبَرُوا۟ ۖ
وَدَمَّرْنَا مَا كَانَ يَصْنَعُ فِرْعَوْنُ وَ قَوْمُهُۥ
وَمَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْرِشُونَ ﴿١٣٧﴾

ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَا مِنۢ بَعْدِهِم مُّوسَىٰ وَهَٰرُونَ إِلَىٰ
فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَإِيْهِۦ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا فَٱسْتَكْبَرُوا۟
وَكَانُوا۟ قَوْمًا مُّجْرِمِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾ فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُمُ
ٱلْحَقُّ مِنْ عِندِنَا قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَسِحْرٌ
مُّبِينٌ ﴿٧٦﴾ قَالَ مُوسَىٰٓ أَتَقُولُونَ لِلْحَقِّ
لَمَّا جَآءَكُمْ ۖ أَسِحْرٌ هَٰذَا وَلَا يُفْلِحُ
ٱلسَّٰحِرُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾ قَالُوٓا۟ أَجِئْتَنَا لِتَلْفِتَنَا
عَمَّا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ ءَابَآءَنَا وَتَكُونَ لَكُمَا
ٱلْكِبْرِيَآءُ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا نَحْنُ لَكُمَا
بِمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٧٨﴾ وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ ٱئْتُونِى
بِكُلِّ سَٰحِرٍ عَلِيمٍ ﴿٧٩﴾ فَلَمَّا جَآءَ
ٱلسَّحَرَةُ قَالَ لَهُم مُّوسَىٰٓ أَلْقُوا۟ مَآ أَنتُم
مُّلْقُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾ فَلَمَّآ أَلْقَوْا۟ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ مَا
جِئْتُم بِهِ ٱلسِّحْرُ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَيُبْطِلُهُۥٓ ۖ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُصْلِحُ عَمَلَ ٱلْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٨١﴾
وَيُحِقُّ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْحَقَّ بِكَلِمَٰتِهِۦ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ
ٱلْمُجْرِمُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾ فَمَآ ءَامَنَ لِمُوسَىٰٓ
إِلَّا ذُرِّيَّةٌ مِّن قَوْمِهِۦ عَلَىٰ خَوْفٍ مِّن
فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَإِيْهِمْ أَن يَفْتِنَهُمْ ۚ وَإِنَّ
فِرْعَوْنَ لَعَالٍ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَإِنَّهُۥ لَمِنَ
ٱلْمُسْرِفِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾ وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ يَٰقَوْمِ
إِن كُنتُمْ ءَامَنتُم بِٱللَّهِ فَعَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلُوٓا۟ إِن
كُنتُم مُّسْلِمِينَ ﴿٨٤﴾ فَقَالُوا۟ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ
تَوَكَّلْنَا رَبَّنَا لَا تَجْعَلْنَا فِتْنَةً لِّلْقَوْمِ
ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾ وَنَجِّنَا بِرَحْمَتِكَ مِنَ

(75) *Then We sent forth [after the earlier prophets] Musa (Moses) and Harun (Aaron) with Our signs and messages to Pharaoh and the leading persons around him, but they were haughty and lost in evil-doing.* (76) *So, when the truth came to them from Us, they said, "This is clearly mere sorcery!"*
(77) *Said Moses, "Do you speak in this way about the truth when it has been brought to you? Can this be sorcery? Sorcerers can never come to success!"*
(78) *They said, "Have you come to turn us from the way we found our forefathers following, so that you two might gain power and superiority in this land? However, we will never believe [in what you are saying] and never be following you."*
(79) *And Pharaoh said, "Bring me every sorcerer of knowledge and skill."*
(80) *Then, when the sorcerers come, Moses said to them, "Cast what you may [wish to] cast."* (81) *And when they cast [their staffs] Moses said, "What you have brought is merely sorcery; God will assuredly bring it to naught! God does not let the work of the spreaders of corruption prosper or seem rightful.* (82) *And God assures the truth by His words, however hateful this may be to those who are lost in evil-doing."*
(83) *But none save some of the offspring of his people, dared to believe in [the message of] Moses, feeling yet that the apprehension of being persecuted by Pharaoh and the leading persons around him was overwhelming; surely, Pharaoh was haughty on earth; and was one of those who exceed all limits in their actions.*
(84) And *Moses said, "O my people! Having believed in God, you have to place your trust in Him, if you have really submitted your whole selves to Him."*
(85) *They said, "In God we have placed our trust. Our Lord, let us not be for the evil-doing a temptation for persecution,* (86) *and*

save us by your grace from the people who stubbornly deny the truth."

(87)*And We inspired Moses and his brother; "Settle for your people in Egypt some houses, and let these [houses] be places of worship [for you], and keep up the prayer; and give you [O Moses] the good tidings [of God's support] to the believers."*

(88)*And Moses prayed, "O our Lord! You have given Pharaoh and the leading persons around him splendor and wealth in this world's life, with the result - Our Lord - that they are leading people astray from your way. Our Lord! Let their wealth be harmful, not useful, for them, and harden their hearts, so that they may not attain to faith till they experience the grievous suffering."* (89) *Said He, "Your prayer is answered; go on, then, both of you, steadfastly on the right way, and follow not the way of those who know not."*

(90) *And We brought the children of Israel across the sea; and thereupon Pharaoh and his hosts pursued them in fierce evil and aggression; and when the drowning overtook him, he said, "I believe that there is no god but He in whom the children of Israel believe, and I am of those who submit themselves unto Him!"*

(91) *[Said He], "Now, and you have been before [always] rebelling [against Us], and have been among those who spread corruption!* (92) *Today We save only your body, so that you may be a sign for those who are behind you and who will come after you. Surely, many people are heedless of Our signs and messages."*

(93) *And [then] We assigned to the children of Israel a settlement established on [a] strong basis of truth, and we provided them with sustenance out of the good things of life; but it happened that they developed their divergence after they had had knowledge. Surely, your Lord will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection regarding all that on which they were wont to differ.* [10:75-93]

ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٨٦﴾ وَ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰ
مُوسَىٰ وَ أَخِيهِ أَن تَبَوَّءَا لِقَوْمِكُمَا
بِمِصْرَ بُيُوتًا وَ ٱجْعَلُوا۟ بُيُوتَكُمْ قِبْلَةً
وَأَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ ۗ وَ بَشِّرِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ
﴿٨٧﴾ وَ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ رَبَّنَآ إِنَّكَ ءَاتَيْتَ
فِرْعَوْنَ وَ مَلَأَهُۥ زِينَةً وَ أَمْوَٰلًا فِى
ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۙ رَبَّنَا لِيُضِلُّوا۟ عَن
سَبِيلِكَ ۖ رَبَّنَا ٱطْمِسْ عَلَىٰٓ أَمْوَٰلِهِمْ
وَ ٱشْدُدْ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُوا۟ حَتَّىٰ
يَرَوُا۟ ٱلْعَذَابَ ٱلْأَلِيمَ ﴿٨٨﴾ قَالَ قَدْ
أُجِيبَت دَّعْوَتُكُمَا فَٱسْتَقِيمَا وَ لَا
تَتَّبِعَآنِّ سَبِيلَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٩﴾
وَ جَٰوَزْنَا بِبَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ ٱلْبَحْرَ
فَأَتْبَعَهُمْ فِرْعَوْنُ وَ جُنُودُهُۥ بَغْيًا
وَعَدْوًا ۖ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَآ أَدْرَكَهُ ٱلْغَرَقُ قَالَ
ءَامَنتُ أَنَّهُۥ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِىٓ ءَامَنَتْ
بِهِۦ بَنُوٓا۟ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ وَ أَنَا۠ مِنَ ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ
﴿٩٠﴾ ءَآلْـَٰٔنَ وَ قَدْ عَصَيْتَ قَبْلُ وَ كُنتَ مِنَ
ٱلْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٩١﴾ فَٱلْيَوْمَ نُنَجِّيكَ بِبَدَنِكَ
لِتَكُونَ لِمَنْ خَلْفَكَ ءَايَةً ۚ وَ إِنَّ كَثِيرًا
مِّنَ ٱلنَّاسِ عَنْ ءَايَٰتِنَا لَغَٰفِلُونَ ﴿٩٢﴾
وَلَقَدْ بَوَّأْنَا بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ مُبَوَّأَ صِدْقٍ
وَرَزَقْنَٰهُم مِّنَ ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ ۖ فَمَا ٱخْتَلَفُوا۟
حَتَّىٰ جَآءَهُمُ ٱلْعِلْمُ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَقْضِى
بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ فِيمَا كَانُوا۟ فِيهِ
يَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾

(46) *Said He [God], "Fear not. Surely, I shall be with you both [Moses and Aaron], hearing and seeing [all that may happen].* (47) *So go you both to Pharoah and say, "We are the conveyors of your Lord's message; let, then, the children of Israel go with us, and do stop their sufferings. We have brought you a sign from your Lord, and peace be upon one who follows His guidance.* (48) *It has been revealed to us that suffering shall befall all who denounce the truth as lie and turn away from it."*
(49) *[Pharaoh] said, "O Moses, who is this Lord of you [and your brother] both?"*
(50) *He said, "Our Lord is He who has created everything [that exists] with its particularities, and has directed it [to its purpose]."*
(51) *Said [Pharaoh], "And what of the past generations?"*
(52) *[Moses] said, "Knowledge thereof rests with my Lord in His records; my Lord does not err, nor does He forget".*
(53) *It is He who has made the earth a cradle for you , and has opened for you ways thereon, and [it is He] who sends down waters from the sky, and therewith We bring forth various kinds of plants, in each there are male and female [organs].* (54) *Eat [of this produce] and pasture your livestock [thereon]. In all this, there are signs and messages for those who are endowed with reason.* (55) *Out of this [earth] have We created you, and into it shall We return you, and out of it shall We bring you forth once again.* (56) *So We showed Pharaoh all Our signs and messages, but he denounced them as lies, and rejected them.* (57) *He said, "Have you come to drive us out of our land by your sorcery, O Moses?* (58) *We shall assuredly bring you sorcery of its like! Appoint, then, a tryst between us and you, which we shall not fail to keep, nor you, at a suitable place.* (59) *Moses said, "Your tryst shall be the day of their adornment [and rejoicing on the festival], and let the people be assembled when the sun*

قَالَ لَا تَخَافَآ ۖ
إِنَّنِى مَعَكُمَآ أَسْمَعُ وَ أَرَىٰ ﴿٤٦﴾ فَأْتِيَاهُ
فَقُولَآ إِنَّا رَسُولَا رَبِّكَ فَأَرْسِلْ مَعَنَا بَنِىٓ
إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ وَ لَا تُعَذِّبْهُمْ ۖ قَدْ جِئْنَٰكَ
بِـَٔايَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكَ ۖ وَ ٱلسَّلَٰمُ عَلَىٰ مَنِ ٱتَّبَعَ
ٱلْهُدَىٰٓ ﴿٤٧﴾ إِنَّا قَدْ أُوحِىَ إِلَيْنَآ أَنَّ
ٱلْعَذَابَ عَلَىٰ مَن كَذَّبَ وَ تَوَلَّىٰ ﴿٤٨﴾
قَالَ فَمَن رَّبُّكُمَا يَٰمُوسَىٰ ﴿٤٩﴾ قَالَ
رَبُّنَا ٱلَّذِىٓ أَعْطَىٰ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ خَلْقَهُۥ ثُمَّ
هَدَىٰ ﴿٥٠﴾ قَالَ فَمَا بَالُ ٱلْقُرُونِ
ٱلْأُولَىٰ ﴿٥١﴾ قَالَ عِلْمُهَا عِندَ رَبِّى فِى
كِتَٰبٍ ۖ لَّا يَضِلُّ رَبِّى وَ لَا يَنسَى ﴿٥٢﴾
ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلْأَرْضَ مَهْدًا وَ سَلَكَ
لَكُمْ فِيهَا سُبُلًا وَ أَنزَلَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً
فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِۦٓ أَزْوَٰجًا مِّن نَّبَاتٍ شَتَّىٰ
﴿٥٣﴾ كُلُوا۟ وَ ٱرْعَوْا۟ أَنْعَٰمَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ فِى
ذَٰلِكَ لَـَٔايَٰتٍ لِّأُو۟لِى ٱلنُّهَىٰ ﴿٥٤﴾ ۞ مِنْهَا
خَلَقْنَٰكُمْ وَ فِيهَا نُعِيدُكُمْ وَ مِنْهَا نُخْرِجُكُمْ
تَارَةً أُخْرَىٰ ﴿٥٥﴾ وَ لَقَدْ أَرَيْنَٰهُ ءَايَٰتِنَا
كُلَّهَا فَكَذَّبَ وَ أَبَىٰ ﴿٥٦﴾ قَالَ أَجِئْتَنَا
لِتُخْرِجَنَا مِنْ أَرْضِنَا بِسِحْرِكَ يَٰمُوسَىٰ
﴿٥٧﴾ فَلَنَأْتِيَنَّكَ بِسِحْرٍ مِّثْلِهِۦ فَٱجْعَلْ
بَيْنَنَا وَ بَيْنَكَ مَوْعِدًا لَّا نُخْلِفُهُۥ نَحْنُ
وَلَآ أَنتَ مَكَانًا سُوًى ﴿٥٨﴾ قَالَ مَوْعِدُكُمْ
يَوْمُ ٱلزِّينَةِ وَ أَن يُحْشَرَ ٱلنَّاسُ ضُحًى ﴿٥٩﴾

is seen high."

(60) *Thereupon Pharaoh went back, and laid up his guile, and then he came again.*

(61) *Said Moses to them, "Woe unto you! Do not forge lies about God, lest He afflicts you with suffering; and whoever forges [such] lies has ever failed."*

(62) *And they argued among themselves about their matter, and kept their argument secret,*

(63) *saying to one another, "These two are surely sorcerers who want to drive you out of your land by their sorcery and extirpate your best way [of belief and life].* (64) *So gather your guile, then come together in one line; whoever today gains the upper hand shall surely prosper."*

(65) *Said [the sorcerers,] "O Moses, either you cast [your staff first,] or we shall be the first to cast ours."*

(66) *He said, "Rather you cast [first.] Then it seemed to him, by their sorcery, that their ropes and staffs were moving;* (67) *and he felt scared within himself.*

(68) *We said unto Him, "Fear not! It is you who shall surely prevail!* (69) *Throw that [staff] which is in your right hand, it shall swallow up all that they have produced, what they have produced is only a sorcerer's artifice, and the sorcerer can never [in the end] come to success, wherever he goes."*

(70) *And [as soon as this exactly happened], the sorcerers quite motivated fell down prostrating themselves and said, "We believe in the Lord of Harun (Aaron) and Moses."*

(71) *Pharaoh said, "Have you believed in [Moses] before I allow you? It is your master who has taught you who must be accountable for that. I shall assuredly cut off your hands and feet on opposite sides, and I shall crucify you upon the trunks of palm-trees, and you shall certainly know which of [the two of] us can inflict a torment that is more severe and lasts longer."*

(72) *They said, "Never shall we prefer you to*

فَتَوَلَّىٰ فِرْعَوْنُ فَجَمَعَ كَيْدَهُۥ ثُمَّ
أَتَىٰ ﴿٦٠﴾ قَالَ لَهُم مُّوسَىٰ وَيْلَكُمْ لَا
تَفْتَرُوا۟ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ كَذِبًا فَيُسْحِتَكُم
بِعَذَابٍ ۖ وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنِ ٱفْتَرَىٰ ﴿٦١﴾
فَتَنَٰزَعُوٓا۟ أَمْرَهُم بَيْنَهُمْ وَأَسَرُّوا۟
ٱلنَّجْوَىٰ ﴿٦٢﴾ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنْ هَٰذَٰنِ
لَسَٰحِرَٰنِ يُرِيدَانِ أَن يُخْرِجَاكُم مِّنْ
أَرْضِكُم بِسِحْرِهِمَا وَيَذْهَبَا بِطَرِيقَتِكُمُ
ٱلْمُثْلَىٰ ﴿٦٣﴾ فَأَجْمِعُوا۟ كَيْدَكُمْ ثُمَّ
ٱئْتُوا۟ صَفًّا ۚ وَقَدْ أَفْلَحَ ٱلْيَوْمَ مَنِ
ٱسْتَعْلَىٰ ﴿٦٤﴾ قَالُوا۟ يَٰمُوسَىٰٓ إِمَّآ أَن
تُلْقِىَ وَإِمَّآ أَن نَّكُونَ أَوَّلَ مَنْ أَلْقَىٰ
﴿٦٥﴾ قَالَ بَلْ أَلْقُوا۟ ۖ فَإِذَا حِبَالُهُمْ
وَعِصِيُّهُمْ يُخَيَّلُ إِلَيْهِ مِن سِحْرِهِمْ أَنَّهَا
تَسْعَىٰ ﴿٦٦﴾ فَأَوْجَسَ فِى نَفْسِهِۦ خِيفَةً
مُّوسَىٰ ﴿٦٧﴾ قُلْنَا لَا تَخَفْ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ
ٱلْأَعْلَىٰ ﴿٦٨﴾ وَأَلْقِ مَا فِى يَمِينِكَ
تَلْقَفْ مَا صَنَعُوٓا۟ ۖ إِنَّمَا صَنَعُوا۟ كَيْدُ
سَٰحِرٍ ۖ وَلَا يُفْلِحُ ٱلسَّاحِرُ حَيْثُ أَتَىٰ
﴿٦٩﴾ فَأُلْقِىَ ٱلسَّحَرَةُ سُجَّدًا قَالُوٓا۟
ءَامَنَّا بِرَبِّ هَٰرُونَ وَمُوسَىٰ ﴿٧٠﴾ قَالَ
ءَامَنتُمْ لَهُۥ قَبْلَ أَنْ ءَاذَنَ لَكُمْ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ
لَكَبِيرُكُمُ ٱلَّذِى عَلَّمَكُمُ ٱلسِّحْرَ ۖ
فَلَأُقَطِّعَنَّ أَيْدِيَكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُم مِّنْ خِلَٰفٍ
وَلَأُصَلِّبَنَّكُمْ فِى جُذُوعِ ٱلنَّخْلِ وَلَتَعْلَمُنَّ
أَيُّنَآ أَشَدُّ عَذَابًا وَأَبْقَىٰ ﴿٧١﴾ قَالُوا۟ لَن
نُّؤْثِرَكَ عَلَىٰ مَا جَآءَنَا مِنَ ٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ

all the evidence of the truth that has come to us nor prefer you to Him who has brought us into being! Decide, then, whatever you may decide; you can only decide in relation to this present world's life! (73) *We believe in our Lord, [hoping] that He may forgive us our wrongdoing and that sorcery which you have forced us to practice; and God is the best [to look for His acceptance], and the One who is truly abiding."*
(74) *Whoever comes unto his Lord lost in evil-doing, hell awaits him [/her]: he will neither die therein [and lose the feeling of suffering,] nor live [an enjoyable life].*
(75) *And whoever comes unto Him as a believer and has done righteous deeds - it is such [as] that who shall have the highest ranks:* (76) *gardens of perpetual bliss, through which rivers flow, therein to abide, and that is the recompense of those who attain to purity.*
(77) *And We [afterwards] revealed to Moses, "Go forth with My worshippers by night, and strike out for them a dry path through the sea; fearing not of being overtaken, and dreading not any [other] danger."*
(78) *And Pharaoh pursued them with his hosts, and they were overwhelmed by the overwhelming waters of the sea,* (79) *and so Pharaoh had led his people astray and had not guided them aright.* [20:46-79]

وَٱلَّذِى فَطَرَنَا فَٱقْضِ مَآ أَنتَ قَاضٍ ۖ
إِنَّمَا تَقْضِى هَٰذِهِ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَآ ﴿٧٢﴾
إِنَّآ ءَامَنَّا بِرَبِّنَا لِيَغْفِرَ لَنَا خَطَٰيَٰنَا وَمَآ
أَكْرَهْتَنَا عَلَيْهِ مِنَ ٱلسِّحْرِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ خَيْرٌ
وَأَبْقَىٰٓ ﴿٧٣﴾ إِنَّهُۥ مَن يَأْتِ رَبَّهُۥ
مُجْرِمًا فَإِنَّ لَهُۥ جَهَنَّمَ لَا يَمُوتُ فِيهَا
وَلَا يَحْيَىٰ ﴿٧٤﴾ وَمَن يَأْتِهِۦ مُؤْمِنًا قَدْ
عَمِلَ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمُ ٱلدَّرَجَٰتُ
ٱلْعُلَىٰ ﴿٧٥﴾ جَنَّٰتُ عَدْنٍ تَجْرِى مِن
تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ
جَزَٰٓؤُا۟ مَن تَزَكَّىٰ ﴿٧٦﴾ وَلَقَدْ أَوْحَيْنَآ
إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰٓ أَنْ أَسْرِ بِعِبَادِى فَٱضْرِبْ
لَهُمْ طَرِيقًا فِى ٱلْبَحْرِ يَبَسًا لَّا تَخَٰفُ
دَرَكًا وَلَا تَخْشَىٰ ﴿٧٧﴾ فَأَتْبَعَهُمْ فِرْعَوْنُ
بِجُنُودِهِۦ فَغَشِيَهُم مِّنَ ٱلْيَمِّ مَا غَشِيَهُمْ ﴿٧٨﴾
وَأَضَلَّ فِرْعَوْنُ قَوْمَهُۥ وَمَا هَدَىٰ ﴿٧٩﴾

(16) *"And go both of you [God said to Musa (Moses) and Harun (Aaron)] to Pharoah and say, "We are conveyors of the message of the Lord of all being;*(17) *let the children of Israel go with us."* (18) *[Pharaoh] said, "Did we not raise you up among us when you were a child? And did you not spend among us years of your life [afterwards]?* (19) *And yet you did commit your [outrageous] deed, showing that you are really ungrateful?"* (20) *Said he, "Indeed I committed it and I admit going astray when I did that;* (21) *so I fled from you, fearing you.*

فَأْتِيَا فِرْعَوْنَ فَقُولَآ
إِنَّا رَسُولُ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٦﴾ أَنْ
أَرْسِلْ مَعَنَا بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ ﴿١٧﴾ قَالَ
أَلَمْ نُرَبِّكَ فِينَا وَلِيدًا وَلَبِثْتَ فِينَا مِنْ
عُمُرِكَ سِنِينَ ﴿١٨﴾ وَفَعَلْتَ فَعْلَتَكَ ٱلَّتِى
فَعَلْتَ وَأَنتَ مِنَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿١٩﴾ قَالَ
فَعَلْتُهَآ إِذًا وَأَنَا۠ مِنَ ٱلضَّآلِّينَ ﴿٢٠﴾

But then my Lord has endowed me with [the ability of proper] judgement and has made me one of the conveyors of His message. (22) *And is that a favor to which you are boastfully reminding me of, that you have enslaved the children of Israel?"*
(23) *Said Pharaoh, "And what is the Lord of all beings?"*
(24) *He [Moses] said, "The Lord of the heavens and the earth, and that which is between them, if you would have a solid faith to believe in with certainty."*
(25) *Said Pharaoh unto those around him, "Do you not hear?"*
(26) *He [Moses] said, "Your Lord and the Lord of your ancient forefathers as well."* (27) *He [Pharaoh] said, "The conveyor of the message who has been sent to you is really insane!"* (28) *Said Moses, "The Lord of the east and the west and of all that is between them, if you but use your minds!"*
(29) *Said Pharaoh, "If you take a god other than me, I shall surely throw you into prison"*
(30) *Said Moses, "Even if I bring you something that clearly shows the truth?"*
(31) *Said Pharaoh, "Bring it then, if you are a man of truth."*
(32) *Thereupon [Moses] cast his staff, and it was a snake, plainly visible,* (33) *and he drew forth his hand [out of his armpit] and it appeared [shining] white to those who were watching!*
(34) *Said [Pharaoh] to the leading persons around him, "This is indeed a sorcerer of great knowledge and skill,* (35) *who wants to drive you out of your land by his sorcery. What is your decision?"*
(36) *They said, "Let him and his brother wait a while, and send unto all cities heralds* (37) *who gather to you all the sorcerers of great knowledge and skill."*
(38) *And the sorcerers were invited at an appointed time on a certain day,* (39) *and the people were told: "Would you be all present,*

فَفَرَرْتُ مِنكُمْ لَمَّا خِفْتُكُمْ فَوَهَبَ لِي رَبِّي
حُكْمًا وَ جَعَلَنِي مِنَ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٢١﴾
وَتِلْكَ نِعْمَةٌ تَمُنُّهَا عَلَيَّ أَنْ عَبَّدتَّ بَنِيٓ
إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ ﴿٢٢﴾ قَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ وَ مَا رَبُّ
ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾ قَالَ رَبُّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ وَ مَا بَيْنَهُمَآ ۖ إِن كُنتُم مُّوقِنِينَ
﴿٢٤﴾ قَالَ لِمَنْ حَوْلَهُۥٓ أَلَا تَسْتَمِعُونَ
﴿٢٥﴾ قَالَ رَبُّكُمْ وَ رَبُّ ءَابَآئِكُمُ
ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٢٦﴾ قَالَ إِنَّ رَسُولَكُمُ ٱلَّذِيٓ
أُرْسِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ لَمَجْنُونٌ ﴿٢٧﴾ قَالَ رَبُّ
ٱلْمَشْرِقِ وَ ٱلْمَغْرِبِ وَ مَا بَيْنَهُمَآ ۖ إِن
كُنتُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾ قَالَ لَئِنِ ٱتَّخَذْتَ
إِلَٰهًا غَيْرِي لَأَجْعَلَنَّكَ مِنَ ٱلْمَسْجُونِينَ
﴿٢٩﴾ قَالَ أَوَ لَوْ جِئْتُكَ بِشَيْءٍ مُّبِينٍ
﴿٣٠﴾ قَالَ فَأْتِ بِهِۦٓ إِن كُنتَ مِنَ
ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ ﴿٣١﴾ فَأَلْقَىٰ عَصَاهُ فَإِذَا هِيَ
ثُعْبَانٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٣٢﴾ وَ نَزَعَ يَدَهُۥ فَإِذَا هِيَ
بَيْضَآءُ لِلنَّٰظِرِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾ قَالَ لِلْمَلَإِ
حَوْلَهُۥٓ إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَسَٰحِرٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٣٤﴾ يُرِيدُ
أَن يُخْرِجَكُم مِّنْ أَرْضِكُم بِسِحْرِهِۦ فَمَاذَا
تَأْمُرُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾ قَالُوٓا۟ أَرْجِهْ وَ أَخَاهُ
وَ ٱبْعَثْ فِي ٱلْمَدَآئِنِ حَٰشِرِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾
يَأْتُوكَ بِكُلِّ سَحَّارٍ عَلِيمٍ ﴿٣٧﴾ فَجُمِعَ
ٱلسَّحَرَةُ لِمِيقَٰتِ يَوْمٍ مَّعْلُومٍ ﴿٣٨﴾
وَقِيلَ لِلنَّاسِ هَلْ أَنتُم مُّجْتَمِعُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

(40) *so that we might follow the sorcerers if it is they who prevail?"* (41) *Then, when the sorcerers came, they said to Pharaoh, "Shall we be rewarded if we prevail?"* (42) *He said, "Yes, and you shall be among those who are drawn near me."*
(43) *Moses said [to the sorcerers], "Cast whatever you may cast."*
(44) *So they cast their ropes and their staffs and said, "By Pharaoh's might, we will surely prevail."*
(45) *Then Moses cast his staff, and it swallowed up all their deceptions.* (46) *And [feeling overwhelmed], the sorcerers fell down, prostrating themselves,* (47) *and said, "We believe in the Lord of all beings;* (48) *the Lord of Moses and Aaron!"*
(49) *Said [Pharaoh], "Have you believed in him before I allow you? It is your master who taught you sorcery [who should be accountable for this]. But in time you shall know [your punishment], I shall assuredly cut off your hands and feet on opposite sides, and I shall crucify you all together."*
(50) *They said, "No [permanent] and real harm [can you do to us]; unto our Lord we shall return.* (51) *We eagerly hope that our Lord forgive us our faults as we have been the first to believe [among Pharaoh's people]."*
(52) *And then We revealed to Moses, "Go with My worshippers by night, for you will be pursued."* (53) *So Pharaoh sent heralds unto all cities [to mobilize his troops, saying,]* (54) *"These [Israelites] are but a meager band,* (55) *but they are enraging us,* (56) *and we are all on guard."*
(57) *And thus We have driven them out of gardens and springs* (58) *and treasures and their high state of life,* (59) *and We [afterwards] let the children of Israel inherit these gifts [of wealth and power].*
(60) *And so [Pharaoh and his hosts] pursued them towards the east [or at sunrise],* (61) *and as soon as the two hosts sighted each other, the*

لَعَلَّنَا نَتَّبِعُ ٱلسَّحَرَةَ إِن كَانُوا۟ هُمُ
ٱلْغَٰلِبِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾ فَلَمَّا جَآءَ ٱلسَّحَرَةُ
قَالُوا۟ لِفِرْعَوْنَ أَئِنَّ لَنَا لَأَجْرًا إِن كُنَّا
نَحْنُ ٱلْغَٰلِبِينَ ﴿٤١﴾ قَالَ نَعَمْ وَإِنَّكُمْ إِذًا
لَّمِنَ ٱلْمُقَرَّبِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾ قَالَ لَهُم مُّوسَىٰٓ
أَلْقُوا۟ مَآ أَنتُم مُّلْقُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾ فَأَلْقَوْا۟
حِبَالَهُمْ وَعِصِيَّهُمْ وَقَالُوا۟ بِعِزَّةِ فِرْعَوْنَ
إِنَّا لَنَحْنُ ٱلْغَٰلِبُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾ فَأَلْقَىٰ
مُوسَىٰ عَصَاهُ فَإِذَا هِىَ تَلْقَفُ مَا
يَأْفِكُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾ فَأُلْقِىَ ٱلسَّحَرَةُ سَٰجِدِينَ
﴿٤٦﴾ قَالُوٓا۟ ءَامَنَّا بِرَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾
رَبِّ مُوسَىٰ وَهَٰرُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾ قَالَ ءَامَنتُمْ
لَهُۥ قَبْلَ أَنْ ءَاذَنَ لَكُمْ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ لَكَبِيرُكُمُ
ٱلَّذِى عَلَّمَكُمُ ٱلسِّحْرَ ۚ فَلَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ۚ
لَأُقَطِّعَنَّ أَيْدِيَكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُم مِّنْ خِلَٰفٍ
وَلَأُصَلِّبَنَّكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾ قَالُوا۟ لَا
ضَيْرَ ۖ إِنَّآ إِلَىٰ رَبِّنَا مُنقَلِبُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾ إِنَّا
نَطْمَعُ أَن يَغْفِرَ لَنَا رَبُّنَا خَطَٰيَٰنَآ أَن كُنَّآ
أَوَّلَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٥١﴾ ۞ وَأَوْحَيْنَآ
إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰٓ أَنْ أَسْرِ بِعِبَادِىٓ إِنَّكُم
مُّتَّبَعُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾ فَأَرْسَلَ فِرْعَوْنُ فِى
ٱلْمَدَآئِنِ حَٰشِرِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾ إِنَّ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ
لَشِرْذِمَةٌ قَلِيلُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَنَا
لَغَآئِظُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾ وَإِنَّا لَجَمِيعٌ حَٰذِرُونَ
﴿٥٦﴾ فَأَخْرَجْنَٰهُم مِّن جَنَّٰتٍ وَعُيُونٍ
﴿٥٧﴾ وَكُنُوزٍ وَمَقَامٍ كَرِيمٍ ﴿٥٨﴾ كَذَٰلِكَ
وَأَوْرَثْنَٰهَا بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ ﴿٥٩﴾
فَأَتْبَعُوهُم مُّشْرِقِينَ ﴿٦٠﴾ فَلَمَّا تَرَٰٓءَا
ٱلْجَمْعَانِ قَالَ أَصْحَٰبُ مُوسَىٰٓ إِنَّا

لَمُدْرَكُونَ ﴿٦١﴾ قَالَ كَلَّآ ۖ إِنَّ مَعِيَ رَبِّي
سَيَهْدِينِ ﴿٦٢﴾ فَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰٓ
أَنِ ٱضْرِب بِّعَصَاكَ ٱلْبَحْرَ ۖ فَٱنفَلَقَ
فَكَانَ كُلُّ فِرْقٍ كَٱلطَّوْدِ ٱلْعَظِيمِ ﴿٦٣﴾
وَأَزْلَفْنَا ثَمَّ ٱلْءَاخَرِينَ ﴿٦٤﴾ وَأَنجَيْنَا
مُوسَىٰ وَمَن مَّعَهُۥٓ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٦٥﴾
ثُمَّ أَغْرَقْنَا ٱلْءَاخَرِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ
لَءَايَةً ۖ وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾
وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٦٨﴾

followers of Moses said, "We are about to be overtaken."
(62) Said he, "No indeed; verily my Lord is with me; He will guide me."
(63) Thereupon We revealed to Moses, "Strike with your staff the sea;" and it became two parts, each appeared like a great mountain.
(64) And there We caused the others [the pursuers] to draw near unto that place; (65) and We saved Moses and all who were with him all together, (66) and We caused the others to be drowned. (67) In this, there is a sign and message [to all people], even though most of them may not believe. (68) And yet, your Lord - alone - is the All- mighty, the Most Gracious. [26:16-68]

فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُم مُّوسَىٰ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا بَيِّنَٰتٍ
قَالُوا۟ مَا هَٰذَآ إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّفْتَرًى وَمَا
سَمِعْنَا بِهَٰذَا فِي ءَابَآئِنَا ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ
﴿٣٦﴾ وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ رَبِّيٓ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن جَآءَ
بِٱلْهُدَىٰ مِنْ عِندِهِۦ وَمَن تَكُونُ لَهُۥ عَٰقِبَةُ
ٱلدَّارِ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُفْلِحُ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾
وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْمَلَأُ مَا عَلِمْتُ
لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرِي فَأَوْقِدْ لِي يَٰهَٰمَٰنُ
عَلَى ٱلطِّينِ فَٱجْعَل لِّي صَرْحًا لَّعَلِّيٓ
أَطَّلِعُ إِلَىٰٓ إِلَٰهِ مُوسَىٰ وَإِنِّي لَأَظُنُّهُۥ
مِنَ ٱلْكَٰذِبِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَٱسْتَكْبَرَ هُوَ
وَجُنُودُهُۥ فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ ٱلْحَقِّ وَظَنُّوٓا۟
أَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا يُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾ فَأَخَذْنَٰهُ
وَجُنُودَهُۥ فَنَبَذْنَٰهُمْ فِي ٱلْيَمِّ ۖ فَٱنظُرْ
كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾
وَجَعَلْنَٰهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَدْعُونَ إِلَى ٱلنَّارِ ۖ
وَيَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ لَا يُنصَرُونَ ﴿٤١﴾
وَأَتْبَعْنَٰهُمْ فِي هَٰذِهِ ٱلدُّنْيَا لَعْنَةً ۖ وَيَوْمَ

(36) And when Musa (Moses) came to them with Our clear signs and messages [Pharaoh and the leading persons around him] said, "This is but a forged illusion, and we have never heard of this since our earliest forefathers."
(37) And Moses said, "My Lord knows best who comes with the guidance from Him, and to whom the [happiness of the] ultimate abode belongs; surely the evildoers will not attain to success."
(38) And Pharaoh said, "O you leading persons! I know not any god for you but me. O Haman! Kindle me a fire for [making bricks of] clay, and build me a hefty tower, that haply I may have a look at the god of Moses, although I think that he is one of the liars." (39) Thus haughtily, without the least rightfulness did he and his hosts act on earth, thinking that they would never come back to Us. (40) And so We seized him and his hosts and cast them into the sea; see, then what was the end of the evildoers. (41) And We set them as [examples of evil] and leaders to the fire [of hell], and on the Day of Resurrection they will have no support. (42) And We have let a curse follow them in this world, and on the Day of Resurrection they

will find themselves among the spurned [by their own actions that caused them to lose God's grace]. [28:36-42]

(23) *And We did also send Musa (Moses) with Our signs and messages and with a manifested power [from Us],* (24) *unto Pharaoh and Haman and Qarun but they said, "A sorcerer and a liar!"*
(25) *And when he brought them the truth from Us, they said, "Slay the sons of those who share his beliefs and spare their women" - but the guile of the stubborn deniers of the truth could be but failure.*
(26) *And Pharaoh said, "Let me slay Moses, and let him call to his Lord. I fear lest he should cause you to change your faith, or should cause corruption to prevail in the land."*
(27) *But Moses said, "I seek refuge with My Lord and yours from every haughty [person] who does not believe in the Day of Reckoning."*
(28) *Then said a believing man of Pharaoh's family who had concealed his faith, "Would you slay a man because he says, 'God is my Lord' - seeing that he has brought you clear evidence of truth form your Lord? If he is a liar, his lie will fall back on him; but if he is a man of truth, something [of the punishment] whereof he warns you shall befall you; surely, God would not grace with His guidance one who has wasted his own self, and has lied [about Him].* (29) *O my people! Today you have mighty dominion, and most eminent are you on earth; but who will support us against God's punishment once it befalls us?"*
Said Pharaoh, "I but want to make you see what I see myself, and I only guide you to the way of rectitude."
(30) *Then said he who had attained to faith, "O my people! Truly, I fear for you the like of what once befell those others who conjoined together [against God's truth]* (31) *the like of*

ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ هُم مِّنَ ٱلْمَقْبُوحِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا
مُوسَىٰ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا وَسُلْطَٰنٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٢٣﴾
إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَٰمَٰنَ وَقَٰرُونَ فَقَالُوا۟
سَٰحِرٌ كَذَّابٌ ﴿٢٤﴾ فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُم بِٱلْحَقِّ
مِنْ عِندِنَا قَالُوا۟ ٱقْتُلُوٓا۟ أَبْنَآءَ ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا۟ مَعَهُۥ وَٱسْتَحْيُوا۟ نِسَآءَهُمْ ۚ وَمَا
كَيْدُ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ إِلَّا فِى ضَلَٰلٍ ﴿٢٥﴾ وَقَالَ
فِرْعَوْنُ ذَرُونِىٓ أَقْتُلْ مُوسَىٰ وَلْيَدْعُ
رَبَّهُۥٓ ۖ إِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ أَن يُبَدِّلَ دِينَكُمْ أَوْ
أَن يُظْهِرَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ٱلْفَسَادَ ﴿٢٦﴾
وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰٓ إِنِّى عُذْتُ بِرَبِّى وَرَبِّكُم مِّن
كُلِّ مُتَكَبِّرٍ لَّا يُؤْمِنُ بِيَوْمِ ٱلْحِسَابِ ﴿٢٧﴾
وَقَالَ رَجُلٌ مُّؤْمِنٌ مِّنْ ءَالِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَكْتُمُ
إِيمَٰنَهُۥٓ أَتَقْتُلُونَ رَجُلًا أَن يَقُولَ رَبِّىَ
ٱللَّهُ وَقَدْ جَآءَكُم بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ مِن رَّبِّكُمْ ۖ
وَإِن يَكُ كَٰذِبًا فَعَلَيْهِ كَذِبُهُۥ ۖ وَإِن يَكُ
صَادِقًا يُصِبْكُم بَعْضُ ٱلَّذِى يَعِدُكُمْ ۖ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِى مَنْ هُوَ مُسْرِفٌ كَذَّابٌ ﴿٢٨﴾
يَٰقَوْمِ لَكُمُ ٱلْمُلْكُ ٱلْيَوْمَ ظَٰهِرِينَ فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ فَمَن يَنصُرُنَا مِنۢ بَأْسِ ٱللَّهِ إِن
جَآءَنَا ۚ قَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ مَآ أُرِيكُمْ إِلَّا مَآ
أَرَىٰ وَمَآ أَهْدِيكُمْ إِلَّا سَبِيلَ ٱلرَّشَادِ
﴿٢٩﴾ وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِىٓ ءَامَنَ يَٰقَوْمِ إِنِّىٓ
أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُم مِّثْلَ يَوْمِ ٱلْأَحْزَابِ ﴿٣٠﴾

what happened to Nuh's (Noah's) people and to 'Ad and Thamud and those who came after them; and God does not will any wrong for His creatures.

(32) *"And, O my people, I fear for you [the coming of] that Day of [Judgement] when you will be [hopelessly] calling on one another;* (33) *the Day when you will [try to] turn your backs and flee; none can protect you from God; and one whom God lets go astray can never find any guide."*

(34) *"And it was to you that Yusuf (Joseph) came aforetime with all evidence of the truth, but you never ceased to throw doubt on what he brought you, until when he died you said, 'Never will God send a conveyor [of His message] after him', in this way God lets go astray one who wastes his [/her] own self and throws suspicion [about the clear evidence of truth].* (35) *Those who dispute God's messages without having any authority or evidence, [a behavior] that is tremendously hateful in the sight of God and of those who have attained to faith; in this way God sets a seal on the heart of every arrogant, self- exalting [person] from within [by his/her own arrogance.]"*

(36) *And Pharaoh said, "O Haman! Build for me a tower, so that haply I may reach means of access,* (37) *access to the heavens, and [thus] I may have a look at the god of Moses; [although] I think that he is a liar." So the evil of his deeds seemed attractive to Pharaoh, and thus he was barred from the [right] way; and Pharaoh's guile did only lead to ruin.*

(38) *And the man who had attained to faith said,"O My people! Follow me and I will guide you to the way of rectitude.* (39) *O my people! Surely, this present world's life is but a passing enjoyment; it is the life to come that is surely the home for abiding.* (40) *Whomever does an evil deed will not be requited but by the like of it, but whosoever - male or female- does righteous deeds and is a believer withal, all such shall enter paradise, wherein they shall*

مِثْلَ دَأْبِ قَوْمِ نُوحٍ وَعَادٍ وَثَمُودَ
وَٱلَّذِينَ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِمْ ۚ وَمَا ٱللَّهُ يُرِيدُ ظُلْمًا
لِّلْعِبَادِ ﴿٣١﴾ وَيَٰقَوْمِ إِنِّيٓ أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ
يَوْمَ ٱلتَّنَادِ ﴿٣٢﴾ يَوْمَ تُوَلُّونَ مُدْبِرِينَ مَا
لَكُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ مِنْ عَاصِمٍ ۗ وَمَن يُضْلِلِ
ٱللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُۥ مِنْ هَادٍ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَلَقَدْ جَآءَكُمْ
يُوسُفُ مِن قَبْلُ بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ فَمَا زِلْتُمْ فِى
شَكٍّ مِّمَّا جَآءَكُم بِهِۦ ۖ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا هَلَكَ
قُلْتُمْ لَن يَبْعَثَ ٱللَّهُ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ رَسُولًا ۚ
كَذَٰلِكَ يُضِلُّ ٱللَّهُ مَنْ هُوَ مُسْرِفٌ مُّرْتَابٌ
﴿٣٤﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يُجَٰدِلُونَ فِىٓ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ
بِغَيْرِ سُلْطَٰنٍ أَتَىٰهُمْ ۖ كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ
وَعِندَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يَطْبَعُ ٱللَّهُ
عَلَىٰ كُلِّ قَلْبِ مُتَكَبِّرٍ جَبَّارٍ ﴿٣٥﴾ وَقَالَ
فِرْعَوْنُ يَٰهَٰمَٰنُ ٱبْنِ لِى صَرْحًا لَّعَلِّىٓ
أَبْلُغُ ٱلْأَسْبَٰبَ ﴿٣٦﴾ أَسْبَٰبَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
فَأَطَّلِعَ إِلَىٰٓ إِلَٰهِ مُوسَىٰ وَإِنِّى لَأَظُنُّهُۥ
كَٰذِبًا ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ زُيِّنَ لِفِرْعَوْنَ سُوٓءُ
عَمَلِهِۦ وَصُدَّ عَنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ ۚ وَمَا كَيْدُ
فِرْعَوْنَ إِلَّا فِى تَبَابٍ ﴿٣٧﴾ وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِىٓ
ءَامَنَ يَٰقَوْمِ ٱتَّبِعُونِ أَهْدِكُمْ سَبِيلَ
ٱلرَّشَادِ ﴿٣٨﴾ يَٰقَوْمِ إِنَّمَا هَٰذِهِ ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ
ٱلدُّنْيَا مَتَٰعٌ وَإِنَّ ٱلْءَاخِرَةَ هِىَ دَارُ
ٱلْقَرَارِ ﴿٣٩﴾ مَنْ عَمِلَ سَيِّئَةً فَلَا يُجْزَىٰٓ
إِلَّا مِثْلَهَا ۖ وَمَنْ عَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ
أَوْ أُنثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ

be blessed with good beyond reckoning.
(41) *"And O my people! How is it that I call you to be saved, while you call me to the fire!*
(42) *"You do call me to deny [the One] God, and to associate with Him others of whom I have no knowledge [for they have no reality], while I call you to the All-mighty, the All- forgiving.*
(43) *"No doubt that what you do call me to [worship] has no way of being called upon, in this world's life or in the life to come; and in the end the return of all of us is to God, and those who have wasted their own selves will find themselves in the fire.*
(44) *"And [at that time] you will remember what I am telling you [now], and I entrust God with the whole matter of mine; surely God [ever] sees all [that] His servants [do]."*
(45) *So God guarded him against the evil of their plotting, whereas vile suffering was to encompass Pharaoh's folk;* (46) *the fire [of hell], to which they shall be exposed morning and evening; and on the Day when the Last Hour comes [it will be said], "Make Pharaoh's folk enter to the suffering most severe."*
[40:23-46]

ٱلْجَنَّةَ يُرْزَقُونَ فِيهَا بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿٤٠﴾
۞ وَ يَٰقَوْمِ مَا لِيٓ أَدْعُوكُمْ إِلَى ٱلنَّجَوٰةِ
وَ تَدْعُونَنِيٓ إِلَى ٱلنَّارِ ﴿٤١﴾ تَدْعُونَنِي
لِأَكْفُرَ بِٱللَّهِ وَ أُشْرِكَ بِهِۦ مَا لَيْسَ لِي
بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ وَ أَنَا۠ أَدْعُوكُمْ إِلَى ٱلْعَزِيزِ
ٱلْغَفَّٰرِ ﴿٤٢﴾ لَا جَرَمَ أَنَّمَا تَدْعُونَنِيٓ
إِلَيْهِ لَيْسَ لَهُۥ دَعْوَةٌ فِي ٱلدُّنْيَا وَ لَا فِي
ٱلْأٓخِرَةِ وَ أَنَّ مَرَدَّنَآ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَ أَنَّ
ٱلْمُسْرِفِينَ هُمْ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿٤٣﴾
فَسَتَذْكُرُونَ مَآ أَقُولُ لَكُمْ ۚ وَ أُفَوِّضُ
أَمْرِيٓ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بَصِيرٌۢ بِٱلْعِبَادِ
﴿٤٤﴾ فَوَقَىٰهُ ٱللَّهُ سَيِّـَٔاتِ مَا مَكَرُوا۟
وَ حَاقَ بِـَٔالِ فِرْعَوْنَ سُوٓءُ ٱلْعَذَابِ ﴿٤٥﴾
ٱلنَّارُ يُعْرَضُونَ عَلَيْهَا غُدُوًّا وَ عَشِيًّا
وَ يَوْمَ تَقُومُ ٱلسَّاعَةُ أَدْخِلُوٓا۟ ءَالَ
فِرْعَوْنَ أَشَدَّ ٱلْعَذَابِ ﴿٤٦﴾

And Pharaoh called to his people: "O my people! Is not the sovereignty over Egypt mine, and all these rivers that flow under me? Can you not, then, see [my power]?
"Am I not better than this contemptible man who can hardly make clear what he wants to say? And then why have gold amulets not been bestowed on him, or angels come together with him."

He treated his people as weightless, yet they obeyed him; they were such an iniquitous folk!

But when they continued to challenge Us, We inflicted Our retribution on them, and drowned them all. And so

وَ نَادَىٰ
فِرْعَوْنُ فِي قَوْمِهِۦ قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ أَلَيْسَ لِي
مُلْكُ مِصْرَ وَ هَٰذِهِ ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ تَجْرِي مِن
تَحْتِيٓ ۖ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ أَمْ أَنَا۠
خَيْرٌ مِّنْ هَٰذَا ٱلَّذِي هُوَ مَهِينٌ وَ لَا يَكَادُ
يُبِينُ ﴿٥٢﴾ فَلَوْلَآ أُلْقِيَ عَلَيْهِ أَسْوِرَةٌ مِّن
ذَهَبٍ أَوْ جَآءَ مَعَهُ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ مُقْتَرِنِينَ
﴿٥٣﴾ فَٱسْتَخَفَّ قَوْمَهُۥ فَأَطَاعُوهُ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ
كَانُوا۟ قَوْمًا فَٰسِقِينَ ﴿٥٤﴾ فَلَمَّآ
ءَاسَفُونَا ٱنتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ فَأَغْرَقْنَٰهُمْ

أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾ فَجَعَلْنَٰهُمْ سَلَفًا وَ مَثَلًا
لِّلْءَاخِرِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾

We made them an [educational] precedent and an example to those who might come after them. [43:51-56]

وَ لَقَدْ فَتَنَّا قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمَ فِرْعَوْنَ
وَجَآءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿١٧﴾ أَنْ أَدُّوٓاْ إِلَىَّ
عِبَادَ ٱللَّهِ ۖ إِنِّى لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ ﴿١٨﴾
وَ أَن لَّا تَعْلُواْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۖ إِنِّىٓ ءَاتِيكُم
بِسُلْطَٰنٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿١٩﴾ وَ إِنِّى عُذْتُ بِرَبِّى
وَرَبِّكُمْ أَن تَرْجُمُونِ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَ إِن لَّمْ
تُؤْمِنُواْ لِى فَٱعْتَزِلُونِ ﴿٢١﴾ فَدَعَا رَبَّهُۥٓ
أَنَّ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ قَوْمٌ مُّجْرِمُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾ فَأَسْرِ
بِعِبَادِى لَيْلًا إِنَّكُم مُّتَّبَعُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ وَ ٱتْرُكِ
ٱلْبَحْرَ رَهْوًا ۖ إِنَّهُمْ جُندٌ مُّغْرَقُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾
كَمْ تَرَكُواْ مِن جَنَّٰتٍ وَ عُيُونٍ ﴿٢٥﴾
وَزُرُوعٍ وَ مَقَامٍ كَرِيمٍ ﴿٢٦﴾ وَ نَعْمَةٍ كَانُواْ
فِيهَا فَٰكِهِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾ كَذَٰلِكَ ۖ وَ أَوْرَثْنَٰهَا
قَوْمًا ءَاخَرِينَ ﴿٢٨﴾ فَمَا بَكَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ
ٱلسَّمَآءُ وَ ٱلْأَرْضُ وَ مَا كَانُواْ مُنظَرِينَ
﴿٢٩﴾ وَ لَقَدْ نَجَّيْنَا بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ مِنَ
ٱلْعَذَابِ ٱلْمُهِينِ ﴿٣٠﴾ مِن فِرْعَوْنَ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ
كَانَ عَالِيًا مِّنَ ٱلْمُسْرِفِينَ ﴿٣١﴾ وَ لَقَدِ
ٱخْتَرْنَٰهُمْ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ عَلَى ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾
وَ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُم مِّنَ ٱلْأَيَٰتِ مَا فِيهِ بَلَٰٓؤٌاْ
مُّبِينٌ ﴿٣٣﴾

(17) *And before them We tried Pharaoh's people, and a good-hearted conveyor of [God's] message came to them,* (18) *[and he said to them], "Give in unto me, God's servants! Surely, I am a conveyor of [God's] message [sent] to you, honest and worthy of trust.* (19) *And exalt not yourselves against God; surely, I come to you with a clear power [from Him].* (20) *And I seek refuge with my and your Lord against any attempt of yours to stone me.* (21) *And if be so that you believe me not, stand away from me."* (22) *Then [when they continued in their enmity] Musa (Moses) called out to his Lord: "These are [indeed] people lost in evil-doing."* (23) *And [God said,] "Go you forth, then, with My servants by night, for you will surely be pursued;* (24) *and leave the sea becalmed, [and they would try to follow you, but] they are a host destined to be drowned."*
(25) *How many gardens did they leave behind, and water sources* (26) *and fields and high state* (27) *and prosperity in which they had for a long time rejoiced.* (28) *Thus it was, but We made another people heirs [to what they had left],* (29) *and neither sky nor earth shed tears over them, nor were they given a respite.* (30) *And indeed We delivered the children of Israel from the humiliating suffering,* (31) *from Pharaoh who was extremely haughty and exceeded all limits.* (32) *And We chose them knowingly above all other people, (33) and gave them such signs [of Our grace] wherein there was an evident and revealing test.* [44:17-33; see also 2:49- 50; 11:96- 99; 23:45- 48; 29:39; 37:115- 122; 43:46- 50; 73:15- 16; 85:17- 18]

And for those who have attained to faith God has given the example of Pharoah's wife who prayed, "My Lord! Build for me a home in Your paradise, and save me from the Pharoah and his doing, and save me from all the evil-doing folk." [66:11]

وَضَرَبَ ٱللَّهُ مَثَلًا لِّلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا
ٱمْرَأَتَ فِرْعَوْنَ إِذْ قَالَتْ رَبِّ ٱبْنِ لِى
عِندَكَ بَيْتًا فِى ٱلْجَنَّةِ وَنَجِّنِى مِن
فِرْعَوْنَ وَعَمَلِهِۦ وَنَجِّنِى مِنَ ٱلْقَوْمِ
ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١١﴾

It was a critical matter for both Moses, who had been raised in Pharaoh's palace and who had killed an Egyptian in defending an Israelite,and for Pharaoh himself, when the former came to confront the latter about his tyranny through talking to him about God and asking him to let the Israelites leave Egypt. The characteristics of each personality became clear in the Quranic presentation of that confrontation. The Quran indicated Pharaoh by his title not his name, since moral education, not historical details, is the goal of the Quranic information. It has been generally supposed in modern studies that he was related to the 18th or 19th reigning dynasties of ancient Egypt. Many scholars identify that Pharaoh as Ramses II [c. 1279-1213 B.C.E.], as a text from the reign of Ramses II mentions a group called "Apiru" or a word meaning people who had no country or property of their own 'Khabire' (in Babylonian) moving stone for a royal building in Memphis, and these Apiru may have included the Israelites [*The Lion Encyclopedia of the Bible*, ed. Pat Alexander]. However, the "Pharaoh of oppression" under whom the oppression of the Israelites culminated probably ruled before Moses and thus may be a different person than the"Pharaoh of the Exodus"who was a contemporary of Moses [*Smith's Bible Dictionary*].

Pharaoh's tyranny as represented in the Quran was not limited only to the Israelites, but it was rather a general characteristic of his rule, especially in reacting to anyone who might challenge his deified authority. As soon as the sorcerers believed in Moses, Pharaoh became furious that they did so without obtaining his permission, and he announced that he would cut off their hands and feet on opposite sides and would crucify them on the trunks of palm trees [7:124; 20:71; 26:49]. He was, after all, the god incarnate for the Egyptians: *"I know not any god for you but me"* [28:38]. He was one of the haughty who do not believe in his accountability on the Day of Judgement, and thus Moses said, "*Seek refuge with my and your Lord from every haughty [person] who does not believe in the Day of Reckoning"* [40:27].

Pharaoh had a group of leading persons around him. As beneficiaries of the Pharaonic rule, and a part of it, they were always supporting Pharaoh and their suggestions came only to defend his interests and to defeat his enemies: *"The leading persons around Pharaoh said "Surely, this is indeed a sorcerer of great knowledge and skill, who wants to drive you out of your land; so what do you decide?" Some answered, 'Let him and his brother wait a while, and send to all cities heralds to gather to you every sorcerer of distinguished knowledge and skill.' "* [7:109-112], *"And the leading persons around Pharaoh said, 'Will you allow Moses and his people to spread corruption on earth and [cause others to] forsake you and your gods ...'"* [7:127]. However, these leading persons

were still not allowed to hold any other opinion beside Pharaoh's: *"And We sent Moses with Our signs and messages and manifest power [authorized by Us] unto Pharaoh and the leading persons around him; as these followed [only] Pharaoh's direction, and Pharaoh's direction was by no means right"* [11:96-97], *"Said Pharaoh, 'But I want to make you see what I see myself, and I only guide you to the way of rectitude!'"* [40:29], *"And Pharaoh said, 'O leading persons! I know not any god for you but me'"* [28:38]. However, this tyrant tried - as do all tyrants - to assure them of his care about his people: *"I fear lest he should cause you to change your faith, or he should cause corruption to prevail in the land"* [40:26], *"Surely this is a plot which you have cunningly devised in this city to drive its people out"* [7:110, 123].

According to the Quran, Haman seems to have been so close to Pharaoh that he was the one who received his most important instructions, and he was linked with Pharaoh both in being addressed by the message of Moses, and in being condemned by God [28:6,8, 38; 29:39; 40:24, 36]. Apparently, he was a different person from the Biblical Persian Haman [Book of Esther III ff.] who was the chief minister or vizier of King Ahasuerus and who attempted, but failed, to cut off all the Jews in the Persian empire [Smith, Bible Dictionary]. Muhammad Asad has suggested that Haman in the Quran is not a proper name but a title in an Arabicized form for [H '-Amen] which was "given to every high priest of the Egyptian god Amon and held a rank second to the reigning Pharaoh" at the time when the worship of Amon dominated. Asad goes on: "The assumption that the person spoken of in the Quran as Haman was indeed the high priest of the cult of Amon is strengthened by Pharaoh's demand.. (mentioned in 28:38, 40:36-37) that Haman would erect for him 'a lofty tower' from which he could 'have a look at' [or' ascend to'] the god of Moses': which may be, among other things, an allusion to the hieratic purpose of the great pyramids of Egypt and to the function of the high priest as their chief architect ...(that demand) is also a derisory, contemptuous reference to Moses' concept of God as an all-embracing Power, inconceivably high above all that exists" [*The Message of the Quran*, notes no. 6 on the verse 28:6, and 37 on the verse 28:38].

When facing Pharaoh and arguing with him, Moses seems to have been a capable and impressive debater, in spite of his speech problem [28:34; 26:13; 20:27] according to the Quranic presentation. When Pharaoh reminded him that he had been raised under the Pharaonic care, Moses responded, *"And is that a favor of which you are boastingly reminding me of, that you have enslaved the children of Israel!"* [26:22]. Then, as soon as Pharaoh asked, *"And what is the Lord of all beings?"*, the explanation flowed from the mouth of Moses in a way that did not allow his opponent to breathe. *"Said Moses, 'The Lord of the heavens and the earth and that which is between them, if you would have a solid faith to believe in with certainty.' Said Pharaoh unto those around him, 'Do you not hear?' He said, 'Your Lord and the Lord of your ancient forefathers as well.'"* To understand such a witty statement by Moses one has to bear in mind that it had always been the typical excuse of many that they were following their forefathers in their beliefs, and the forefathers were especially revered in ancient Egypt. When Pharaoh told those around him what Moses had said about God and exclaimed that *"the conveyor of the message who has been sent to you is really insane,"* Moses was quick "to kick the ball into his opponent's court," saying, "*The Lord of the east and west and all between them if you but use*

your minds" [26:23-28]. Moses condensed his message of deliverance of the Israelites from Pharoah's tyranny in a few impressive words: *"So let the children of Israel go with me, and do stop their suffering"* [20:47; also 7:105], and *"Give in unto me God's servants"* [44:18]. It is significant that God's message as conveyed by Moses did not only stress the faith in the One God, but also the liberation of God's worshippers from oppression.

In this whole argument, we do not see the participation of Aaron, whose help Moses had requested from God because he was the more eloquent of the two [i.e. 26:13, 28:34].Yet, in the Moses' argument reported in the Quran, he seems witty and eloquent, in spite of his admission of his shortcomings in this respect, and despite Pharaoh's description of him as one who is *"contemptible"* and can hardly *"make his meaning clear"* [43:52]. Did Aaron participate and have his words been reported under the pronoun "he" which is supposed to refer to Moses according to the context? Or has the Quran presented the joint argument of both, as the purpose of the presentation is to provide the argument of the conveyors of God's message on the one side and Pharoah on the other as a whole, as opposed to distinguishing who said what? Or did Aaron not participate in that encounter? Or are have Aaron's words not reported been in the Quran at all?

Moses, with the guidance of God, led his people very capably under the Pharaonic oppression in Egypt. He guided them to continue their faith and values and not to be dissolved and absorbed in the overwhelming majority of those whom Pharaoh *"treated as weightless, yet they obeyed him; they were such an iniquitous folk!"* [43:54]. God's guidance to the believers who lived under horrible persecution and were unable to escape from it, was very educational to all believers who may live under the same circumstances: *"Set aside for your people some houses in the city and turn your houses into places of worship, and keep up prayer, and give [you, O Moses] the good tidings to those who have attained to faith."* [10:87]. Moses' leadership became more obvious in Sinai, when his people had been delivered, and they were faced with the risks of freedom after living for a long time under the tyranny of bondage. Also, Aaron then had more of a chance to assist Moses and to sometimes be in charge when Moses went to communicate with God.

The Quran stated that only some young persons believed in the message of Moses, fearing Pharaoh's persecution [10:83]. It is most likely that these were not Egyptians, but the Israelites who committed themselves to the message of Moses and were his followers. However, the Bible mentioned that many Egyptians joined the Israelites in their exodus from Egypt [Exodus XII:38]. The sorcerers who believed in God's message were certainly Egyptians, but would they, or at least some of them, have been able to survive Pharaoh's punishment? Did this punishment or threat have its effect among Egyptians?

On the Israeli side, many Israelites expected fast results when Moses came to them, but they saw the persecution continuing, and Moses responded to them very firmly and educationally; *"[And] Moses said to his people, 'Turn to God for support, and patiently persevere. Surely, all the earth belongs to God; He causes such as He wills of His servants to inherit it, and the future belongs to the God-conscious'. They said, 'We have suffered before you came to us and after you came to us.' [Moses] replied, 'It may well be that your Lord will destroy your enemy and make you inherit power in the land, and then he will see how you will act' "* [7:128-129].

With regard to Moses' miracles that prevailed over those of the most knowledgeable and skillful sorcerers of Egypt, we see the Quran sharply denouncing sorcery as a mere illusion that only casts a spell upon the people's eyes [7:116, also 20:66] and as a devised guile, not a change of the natural reality [20:69]. It states that sorcerers cannot reach success in the long term [10:77; 20:69], and that sorcery would be annulled and overcome by God [10:81]. Even the Egyptian sorcerers indicated this when they were defeated by Moses and believed in his message, and they have been represented in the Quran as merely looking for profit [7:113, 26:41]. Sorcery is condemned in another place in the Quran as a practice taught by satans, causing harm to people, and destroying the spousal relation and harmony [2:102].

If sorcery is repeatedly condemned in the Quran, then why did Moses' miracles appear as sorcery, and why were he and his brother described as sorcerers by Pharaoh and the leading persons around him [e.g. 7:109; 20:63; 26:34; 40:24; 43:49]? Moses' miracles should not be viewed separately from his statements about the faith in God and in the life to come; he presented those miracles to prove the power with which he was sent to present God's message. He did not use them to gain any personal benefit; on the contrary, the oppression of Moses and his people increased after he had prevailed over the sorcerers. Thus, the goal of Moses' miracles was to address the Egyptians with what was most interesting and impressive to them, and he really just proved the failure of sorcery, and did not contribute to its influence. However, it seems that the miracles had their effect mainly on the sorcerers rather that on Pharaoh and his entourage. We cannot know naturally what the masses or at least some of them felt when they went home after seeing Moses prevail over the sorcerers. However, the Pharaonic tyranny would not allow people to follow Moses, especially in any considerable number [10:83].

In the end, the Quran presents a relatively long impressive account of a believer in the One God from the family or the folk of Pharaoh [40:28-34, 38-45]. The man seems knowledgeable of the previous message of Joseph in Egypt [40:34] and even the early messages of Noah and the later ones of Hud and Salih in Arabia [40:30-31]. Was he one who was knowledgeable about history and religion in the royal family, or in the royal court if we understand the Quranic term " *'Al Fir'awn*" to mean pharaoh's folk and not his family? Or was he an Arabian who was able to join the Pharaonic court being one of the clergy who combined many branches of knowledge?

The Quran also tells of a woman from the Pharaonic family who believed: *"And for those who have attained to faith God has given the example of Pharaoh's wife who prayed, 'My Lord! Build for me a home in Your paradise, and save me from Pharaoh and his doing, and save me from all the evil-doing folk'"* [66:11]. Was she the same woman who suggested sparing the life of the baby Moses, as *"he may well be of benefit to us or we may take him for a son"* [28:9]? Did she also become a believer in Moses' messages and not just a foster-mother? Or do the two verses refer to two different women? Since the Quran presents stories for moral lessons not for historical recording or information, we may always ask such questions about the historical events that we cannot answer according to the available account in the Quran, although the moral significance of the stories is always there.

The oppressors were struck by successive hardships and plagues: drought and

scarcity of produce, flood, locusts, lice and water turning into blood [7:130, 133]. It may be argued, as Ibrahim (Abraham) did in relation to the punishment of the people to whom his nephew Lut (Lot) was sent [11:74]: what was the responsibility of the innocent masses who were hit by the punishment with the evildoers? We may recall here the individual responsibility towards the society, and the fact that passivity and egoism do not provide the society with any chance of auto-criticism and self-correction, and thus the resulting social evils and deterioration would affect the whole society, including the passive non-evil individuals: "*And beware of that you may be tested with [through this life], as the consequences [of actions] do not befall in particular the evildoers from among you to the exclusion of others; and know that God is severe in retribution*" [8:25], "*And do not incline towards, [nor rely upon] those who are bent on evil-doing lest the fire touch you all, and you have none to support you from God, nor would you ever find supporters*" [11:113]. That is why enjoining the doing of what is right and forbidding the doing of what is wrong is essential in God's message [e.g. 3:104, 110], and those who neglected that collective responsibility were severely condemned in the Quran [5:78-80].

Despite the plagues inflicted on the people of Egypt, it did not seem that God's signs could stop the tyrants from tyranny "*but they were haughty and they were people lost in evil-doing.*" [7:133] They promised Moses to believe in his message and send with him the Israelites if he prayed to God to remove the plague, "*but when We released them from the plague for a certain time that they would reach [to test them about their promise], they broke their word*" [7:134-135]. In earlier divine messages, God's punishment came in this life to those who stubbornly denied the truth and threatened to kill the conveyors of God's messages or expel them and their followers from their land: "*And every [community] of those [that stubbornly rejected the message] did we seize for their evil-doing: upon some We let loose a deadly storm, and some were overtaken by a [sudden] blast, and some of them We caused to be swallowed by the earth, and some of them We caused to drown. And it was not God who wronged them, but it was they who had wronged their own selves*" [29:40]. In later times,however, conveyors of God's messages might be denounced as liars and attacked morally and/or physically, but no direct punishment in this life happened to the attackers. This was obvious with regard to the rejectors of the messages of Abraham, Jesus and Muhammad. Such a direct intervention of God on the side of the conveyors of His message was described in the Quran as "*the experienced wont of earlier communities*" [8:38; 15:13; 18:55; 35:43], "*God's way with those who preceded aforetime*" [33:38, 62], "*the way of God that preceded in His creatures*" [40:85]. Later, God in general either requites people for their evil-doing through the natural laws of this world's life and the moral and physical ills that evil-doing naturally brings to the individual and the society, or He requites them in the life to come. The Quran is clear that these natural laws would apply to the Muslims in their struggle against the enemies of truth and justice, "*If some harm touches you, a similar harm has touched the others as well; and such days [of happiness and distress] We deal in turn among people, and [this] to the end that God might [test and] mark out those who have [truly] attained to faith and chooses from among you such as [with their lives] bear witness to the truth; and God does not love the evildoers*" [3:140], "*And [know that] had God so willed, He could certainly have inflicted defeat on them [Himself]; but [He wills you to struggle] so as to test you [all] by one another*" [47:4].

(49) *And [bear in mind] when We delivered you from the folk of Pharaoh, who afflicted you with horrible suffering, slaughtering your sons and sparing your women, and in that was an awesome trial from your Lord.* (50) *And when We split the sea apart before you, and thus We delivered you and caused Pharaoh's folk to drown while you were looking on.* (51) *And when We appointed for Moses forty nights [in Sinai], and in his absence you took to worshipping the [golden] calf, and in this you were truly evildoers.*
(52) *Yet, We forgave you after that, so that you might be grateful.* (53) *And [bear in mind] when We gave to Moses the Book and the standard by which to discern what is right from what is wrong, so that you might be guided aright.*
(54) *And when Moses said to his people, "O my people! Surely, you have wronged yourselves by worshipping the calf; turn then in repentance to your Maker and kill yourselves [in defending His cause, or mortify your own guilty selves]; this will be better for you in your Maker's sight. And thereupon He accepted your repentance; and He alone is the Acceptor of the Repentance, the Most Gracious.*
(55) *And when you said, "O Moses! Indeed we shall not believe you till we see God, face to face," and then the thunderbolts caught you while you were [all] looking on.* (56) *But We raised you up after you had been [as] dead, so that you might be grateful.*
(57) *And We caused the clouds to spread out to shade you, and sent down to you manna and quails: "Eat of the good things which We have provided you with as sustenance". And [by all their wrongdoing] they did not harm Us, but it was their own selves that they harmed.*

وَ إِذْ نَجَّيْنَٰكُم مِّنْ ءَالِ
فِرْعَوْنَ يَسُومُونَكُمْ سُوٓءَ ٱلْعَذَابِ
يُذَبِّحُونَ أَبْنَآءَكُمْ وَ يَسْتَحْيُونَ نِسَآءَكُمْ ۚ
وَ فِى ذَٰلِكُم بَلَآءٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٤٩﴾
وَ إِذْ فَرَقْنَا بِكُمُ ٱلْبَحْرَ فَأَنجَيْنَٰكُمْ
وَ أَغْرَقْنَآ ءَالَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَ أَنتُمْ تَنظُرُونَ
﴿٥٠﴾ وَ إِذْ وَٰعَدْنَا مُوسَىٰٓ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً
ثُمَّ ٱتَّخَذْتُمُ ٱلْعِجْلَ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ وَ أَنتُمْ
ظَٰلِمُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ ثُمَّ عَفَوْنَا عَنكُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ
ذَٰلِكَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾ وَ إِذْ ءَاتَيْنَا
مُوسَى ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَ ٱلْفُرْقَانَ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾ وَ إِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِۦ
يَٰقَوْمِ إِنَّكُمْ ظَلَمْتُمْ أَنفُسَكُم بِٱتِّخَاذِكُمُ
ٱلْعِجْلَ فَتُوبُوٓاْ إِلَىٰ بَارِئِكُمْ فَٱقْتُلُوٓاْ
أَنفُسَكُمْ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ عِندَ بَارِئِكُمْ
فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلتَّوَّابُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ
﴿٥٤﴾ وَ إِذْ قُلْتُمْ يَٰمُوسَىٰ لَن نُّؤْمِنَ لَكَ
حَتَّىٰ نَرَى ٱللَّهَ جَهْرَةً فَأَخَذَتْكُمُ
ٱلصَّٰعِقَةُ وَ أَنتُمْ تَنظُرُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾ ثُمَّ
بَعَثْنَٰكُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ مَوْتِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ
﴿٥٦﴾ وَ ظَلَّلْنَا عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْغَمَامَ وَ أَنزَلْنَا
عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْمَنَّ وَ ٱلسَّلْوَىٰ ۖ كُلُوا۟ مِن
طَيِّبَٰتِ مَا رَزَقْنَٰكُمْ ۚ وَ مَا ظَلَمُونَا
وَلَٰكِن كَانُوٓاْ أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾ وَ إِذْ

(58) *And [bear also in mind] when We said: "Enter this town, and eat easefully of it wherever you will, but enter the gate humbly prostrating yourselves and say, 'Remove You [Lord] from us the burden of our wrong doing;' thus We shall forgive you your wrongdoing, and We shall reward more and more the doers of good."*

(59) *But those who were bent on evil-doing substituted another saying for that which they had been told to say, and so We sent down upon those evildoers a plague from heaven in requital for their iniquity.*

(60) *And [bear in Mind] when Moses sought water for his people and We said [to him,] "Strike with your staff the rock," and there gushed forth from it twelve springs, [and thus] every people knew then whence to drink; eat and drink of what God has provided as sustenance, and do not viciously spread corruption on earth.*

(61) *And when you said, "O Moses! We will never endure one kind of food; pray to your Lord that He may bring forth for us of what grows from the earth - of its beans, its cucumbers, its grain, its lentils and its onions."*

[Moses] said, "Would you like to have what is lesser in exchange for what is much better? Get down to an [agricultural] area [where settled people live, farming the land] so that you may have what you are asking for." And they were beaten down with humiliation and helplessness, and they earned the burden of God's condemnation, since they stubbornly rejected the signs and messages of God and killed the prophets against all right; and since they persistently disobeyed [God] and transgressed all bounds of what is right.

(62) *Surely, those who have attained to faith [in this message], as well as those who followed the Jewish faith and the Christians and those who might leave the dominant beliefs [in their community for what they sincerely believe to be the truth] - all who believe in God*

قُلْنَا ٱدْخُلُوا۟ هَٰذِهِ ٱلْقَرْيَةَ فَكُلُوا۟ مِنْهَا
حَيْثُ شِئْتُمْ رَغَدًا وَٱدْخُلُوا۟ ٱلْبَابَ
سُجَّدًا وَقُولُوا۟ حِطَّةٌ نَّغْفِرْ لَكُمْ
خَطَٰيَٰكُمْ ۚ وَسَنَزِيدُ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾
فَبَدَّلَ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ قَوْلًا غَيْرَ ٱلَّذِى قِيلَ
لَهُمْ فَأَنزَلْنَا عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ رِجْزًا
مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَفْسُقُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾ ۝
وَإِذِ ٱسْتَسْقَىٰ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِۦ فَقُلْنَا
ٱضْرِب بِّعَصَاكَ ٱلْحَجَرَ ۖ فَٱنفَجَرَتْ مِنْهُ
ٱثْنَتَا عَشْرَةَ عَيْنًا ۖ قَدْ عَلِمَ كُلُّ أُنَاسٍ
مَّشْرَبَهُمْ ۖ كُلُوا۟ وَٱشْرَبُوا۟ مِن رِّزْقِ ٱللَّهِ
وَلَا تَعْثَوْا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٦٠﴾
وَإِذْ قُلْتُمْ يَٰمُوسَىٰ لَن نَّصْبِرَ عَلَىٰ طَعَامٍ
وَٰحِدٍ فَٱدْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُخْرِجْ لَنَا مِمَّا
تُنۢبِتُ ٱلْأَرْضُ مِنۢ بَقْلِهَا وَقِثَّآئِهَا
وَفُومِهَا وَعَدَسِهَا وَبَصَلِهَا ۖ قَالَ
أَتَسْتَبْدِلُونَ ٱلَّذِى هُوَ أَدْنَىٰ بِٱلَّذِى هُوَ
خَيْرٌ ۚ ٱهْبِطُوا۟ مِصْرًا فَإِنَّ لَكُم مَّا
سَأَلْتُمْ ۗ وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلذِّلَّةُ
وَٱلْمَسْكَنَةُ وَبَآءُو بِغَضَبٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ
بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟ يَكْفُرُونَ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ
وَيَقْتُلُونَ ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ بِغَيْرِ ٱلْحَقِّ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ بِمَا
عَصَوا۟ وَّكَانُوا۟ يَعْتَدُونَ ﴿٦١﴾ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا۟ وَٱلَّذِينَ هَادُوا۟ وَٱلنَّصَٰرَىٰ
وَٱلصَّٰبِـِٔينَ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ

and the Last Day and do righteous deeds, shall have their reward with their Lord, and no fear need they have neither shall they grieve.

(63) *And [also bear in mind] when We accepted your solemn pledge, raising [Mount] Tur [in Sinai] high above you: "Hold firmly to what We have brought you, and bear in mind all that is therein, so that you might remain conscious of God."* (64) *Then you turned away thereafter. And had it not been for God's favor upon you and His grace, you would surely have been among the lost.*

(65) *And you are well aware of those among you who transgressed the Sabbath, whereupon We said unto them, "Be [as] apes, despicable and driven away,"* (66) *and thus We made it as a deterring example for their time and for all times to come, as well as an admonition to all who are conscious of God.*

(67) *And when Moses said to his people, "God commands you to sacrifice a cow," they said, "Do you mock at us?"*

He said, "I seek refuge with God against being one of the ignorant."

(68) *Said they, "Pray to your Lord for us that He may make clear to us what she is to be like."*

[Moses] said, "He says it is to be a cow, neither worn out nor a heifer, but of an age in between. Do, then, what you have been ordered to do."

(69) *Said they, "Pray to your Lord for us that He may make clear to us what her color should be."*

He said, "He says it is to be a yellow cow, bright in her color, pleasing to those who look at her."

(70) *Said they, "Pray to your Lord for us that He may make clear to us what she is to be like, for to us, cows are much alike; and if God wills, we shall follow the right way."*

(71) *[Moses] said, "He says it is to be a cow not broken-in to plough the earth or to water the tillage, free of defect or blemish."*

ٱلْأَخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِندَ
رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ
﴿٦٢﴾ وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَٰقَكُمْ وَرَفَعْنَا
فَوْقَكُمُ ٱلطُّورَ خُذُوا۟ مَآ ءَاتَيْنَٰكُم بِقُوَّةٍ
وَٱذْكُرُوا۟ مَا فِيهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾ ثُمَّ
تَوَلَّيْتُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ ۖ فَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ ٱللَّهِ
عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُۥ لَكُنتُم مِّنَ ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ
﴿٦٤﴾ وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱعْتَدَوْا۟ مِنكُمْ
فِى ٱلسَّبْتِ فَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ كُونُوا۟ قِرَدَةً
خَٰسِـِٔينَ ﴿٦٥﴾ فَجَعَلْنَٰهَا نَكَٰلًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ
يَدَيْهَا وَمَا خَلْفَهَا وَمَوْعِظَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ
﴿٦٦﴾ وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِۦٓ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَن تَذْبَحُوا۟ بَقَرَةً ۖ قَالُوٓا۟
أَتَتَّخِذُنَا هُزُوًا ۖ قَالَ أَعُوذُ بِٱللَّهِ أَنْ
أَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْجَٰهِلِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾ قَالُوا۟ ٱدْعُ لَنَا
رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّن لَّنَا مَا هِىَ ۚ قَالَ إِنَّهُۥ يَقُولُ
إِنَّهَا بَقَرَةٌ لَّا فَارِضٌ وَلَا بِكْرٌ عَوَانٌۢ بَيْنَ
ذَٰلِكَ ۖ فَٱفْعَلُوا۟ مَا تُؤْمَرُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾
قَالُوا۟ ٱدْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّن لَّنَا مَا لَوْنُهَا ۚ
قَالَ إِنَّهُۥ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقَرَةٌ صَفْرَآءُ فَاقِعٌ
لَّوْنُهَا تَسُرُّ ٱلنَّٰظِرِينَ ﴿٦٩﴾ قَالُوا۟ ٱدْعُ
لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّن لَّنَا مَا هِىَ إِنَّ ٱلْبَقَرَ
تَشَٰبَهَ عَلَيْنَا وَإِنَّآ إِن شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ
لَمُهْتَدُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾ قَالَ إِنَّهُۥ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا
بَقَرَةٌ لَّا ذَلُولٌ تُثِيرُ ٱلْأَرْضَ وَلَا تَسْقِى
ٱلْحَرْثَ مُسَلَّمَةٌ لَّا شِيَةَ فِيهَا ۚ قَالُوا۟

Said they, "Now you have brought out the truth," and thereupon they sacrificed her, after they had almost refrained to do so.
(72) *And when you killed a human being, and disputed thereon accusing one another, and God would bring forth what you had been hiding.* (73) *We said then, "Approach the case with [what can be known about] the victim's life [and circumstances] and [whatever accusation or denial that may emerge through the investigation, until you reach the truth]; thus God brings [light to the case of] the dead person [as if] he[/she] can come back to life, and shows you His signs, so that you might know how to use your minds."*
(74) *[And yet] after all this, your hearts hardened and became like rocks or even harder, since there are rocks from which streams gush forth; and there are some from which water comes out when they are split; and there are some that fall down [out] of awe of God. And God is never unmindful of what you do.* [2:49-74; see also 7:160-162]

آلْـَٰٔنَ جِئْتَ بِٱلْحَقِّ ۚ فَذَبَحُوهَا وَمَا
كَادُوا۟ يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٧١﴾ وَإِذْ قَتَلْتُمْ نَفْسًا
فَٱدَّٰرَـْٔتُمْ فِيهَا ۖ وَٱللَّهُ مُخْرِجٌ مَّا كُنتُمْ
تَكْتُمُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾ فَقُلْنَا ٱضْرِبُوهُ بِبَعْضِهَا ۚ
كَذَٰلِكَ يُحْىِ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ وَيُرِيكُمْ
ءَايَـٰتِهِۦ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٧٣﴾ ثُمَّ قَسَتْ
قُلُوبُكُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ فَهِىَ كَٱلْحِجَارَةِ أَوْ
أَشَدُّ قَسْوَةً ۚ وَإِنَّ مِنَ ٱلْحِجَارَةِ لَمَا
يَتَفَجَّرُ مِنْهُ ٱلْأَنْهَـٰرُ ۚ وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا
يَشَّقَّقُ فَيَخْرُجُ مِنْهُ ٱلْمَآءُ ۚ وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا
لَمَا يَهْبِطُ مِنْ خَشْيَةِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَمَا ٱللَّهُ
بِغَـٰفِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾

And there came unto you Moses with all evidence of truth, and thereupon in his absence, you took to worshipping the [golden] calf, and you were, in that, evildoers.
And [bear in mind] when We accepted your solemn pledge, raising [Mount] Tur [in Sinai] high above you: "Hold firmly to what We have brought you and listen."
They said, "We have heard but we will not follow;" and they absorbed in their hearts [the adoration of the material as was reflected in worshipping] the calf because of their stubborn denial of the truth. Say, "Vile is what your [claimed] belief enjoins upon you; if indeed you are believers." [2:92-93]

وَلَقَدْ جَآءَكُم مُّوسَىٰ
بِٱلْبَيِّنَـٰتِ ثُمَّ ٱتَّخَذْتُمُ ٱلْعِجْلَ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ
وَأَنتُمْ ظَـٰلِمُونَ ﴿٩٢﴾ وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَـٰقَكُمْ
وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَكُمُ ٱلطُّورَ خُذُوا۟ مَآ
ءَاتَيْنَـٰكُم بِقُوَّةٍ وَٱسْمَعُوا۟ ۖ قَالُوا۟
سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا وَأُشْرِبُوا۟ فِى قُلُوبِهِمُ
ٱلْعِجْلَ بِكُفْرِهِمْ ۚ قُلْ بِئْسَمَا يَأْمُرُكُم بِهِۦٓ
إِيمَـٰنُكُمْ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٩٣﴾

And indeed God accepted a solemn pledge from the children of Israel, and

وَلَقَدْ أَخَذَ ٱللَّهُ مِيثَـٰقَ بَنِىٓ

إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ وَبَعَثْنَا مِنْهُمُ ٱثْنَىْ عَشَرَ
نَقِيبًا ۖ وَقَالَ ٱللَّهُ إِنِّى مَعَكُمْ ۖ لَئِنْ
أَقَمْتُمُ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَيْتُمُ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ
وَءَامَنتُم بِرُسُلِى وَعَزَّرْتُمُوهُمْ وَأَقْرَضْتُمُ
ٱللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا لَّأُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنكُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمْ
وَلَأُدْخِلَنَّكُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا
ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ ۚ فَمَن كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ مِنكُمْ فَقَدْ
ضَلَّ سَوَآءَ ٱلسَّبِيلِ ﴿١٢﴾ فَبِمَا نَقْضِهِم
مِّيثَٰقَهُمْ لَعَنَّٰهُمْ وَجَعَلْنَا قُلُوبَهُمْ
قَٰسِيَةً ۖ يُحَرِّفُونَ ٱلْكَلِمَ عَن مَّوَاضِعِهِۦ
وَنَسُوا۟ حَظًّا مِّمَّا ذُكِّرُوا۟ بِهِۦ ۚ وَلَا تَزَالُ
تَطَّلِعُ عَلَىٰ خَآئِنَةٍ مِّنْهُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّنْهُمْ ۚ
فَٱعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَٱصْفَحْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ
ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٣﴾

We caused twelve leaders from among them to be sent for a task, and God said, "I am [always] with you; [and] if you keep up prayer and spend the charity dues [on the needy], and you believe in the conveyors of My messages and support them and offer up unto God a goodly loan, I will surely acquit you of your wrongdoing and bring you into gardens underneath which rivers flow. But any from among you who after this stubbornly denies the truth will indeed be straying from the right way."
Then, for having broken their solemn pledge, We condemned them and caused their hearts to harden; they distort the meaning of the [revealed] words, taking them out of their context and their real meaning; and they have forgotten much of what they had been told to bear in mind; and you from time to time experience some treachery on their part, except a few of them. Yet pardon them and forbear; surely, God loves the doers of good. [5:12-13]

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِۦ
يَٰقَوْمِ ٱذْكُرُوا۟ نِعْمَةَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ جَعَلَ
فِيكُمْ أَنۢبِيَآءَ وَجَعَلَكُم مُّلُوكًا وَءَاتَىٰكُم
مَّا لَمْ يُؤْتِ أَحَدًا مِّنَ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾
يَٰقَوْمِ ٱدْخُلُوا۟ ٱلْأَرْضَ ٱلْمُقَدَّسَةَ ٱلَّتِى
كَتَبَ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا تَرْتَدُّوا۟ عَلَىٰٓ
أَدْبَٰرِكُمْ فَتَنقَلِبُوا۟ خَٰسِرِينَ ﴿٢١﴾ قَالُوا۟
يَٰمُوسَىٰٓ إِنَّ فِيهَا قَوْمًا جَبَّارِينَ وَإِنَّا
لَن نَّدْخُلَهَا حَتَّىٰ يَخْرُجُوا۟ مِنْهَا ۖ فَإِن
يَخْرُجُوا۟ مِنْهَا فَإِنَّا دَٰخِلُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾ قَالَ
رَجُلَانِ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ أَنْعَمَ ٱللَّهُ
عَلَيْهِمَا ٱدْخُلُوا۟ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْبَابَ ۖ فَإِذَا
دَخَلْتُمُوهُ فَإِنَّكُمْ غَٰلِبُونَ ۚ وَعَلَى ٱللَّهِ
فَتَوَكَّلُوٓا۟ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾ قَالُوا۟

(20) *And when Moses said to his people, "O my people! Remember the blessings that God bestowed upon you, as He raised up among you prophets, and made you your own masters [and will make you kings], and granted you [favors] such as He had not granted to anyone else in this world.*
(21) *"O my people! Enter the holy land which God has promised you; and turn not back [on your faith], or thus you will be lost."*
(22) *They said, "O Moses! There are fierce people in it; and we will never enter it until they depart thereupon; and if they depart therefrom, then we will enter it."*
(23) *[Whereupon] two men from among those who feared [God] whom God had blessed said, "Enter upon them through the gate. Once you have entered it, you shall prevail. And in God you should place your trust, if you are [truly] believers."*
(24) *They said, "O Moses! We will never enter*

it so long as these others are in it. Go forth, you and your Lord and fight; We shall be staying here."
(25) *He [Moses] said, "O my Lord! I have no control except for myself and my brother; distinguished, then, between us and these iniquitous folk."*
(26) *Said He, "Then this land shall be forbidden to them; for forty years they will be wandering around the earth bewildered, so sorrow you not over the iniquitous folk."* [5:20-26]

يَٰمُوسَىٰٓ إِنَّا لَن نَّدۡخُلَهَآ أَبَدٗا مَّا
دَامُواْ فِيهَا ۖ فَٱذۡهَبۡ أَنتَ وَرَبُّكَ
فَقَٰتِلَآ إِنَّا هَٰهُنَا قَٰعِدُونَ ٢٤ قَالَ رَبِّ
إِنِّي لَآ أَمۡلِكُ إِلَّا نَفۡسِي وَأَخِي
فَٱفۡرُقۡ بَيۡنَنَا وَبَيۡنَ ٱلۡقَوۡمِ ٱلۡفَٰسِقِينَ
٢٥ قَالَ فَإِنَّهَا مُحَرَّمَةٌ عَلَيۡهِمۡ أَرۡبَعِينَ
سَنَةٗۚ يَتِيهُونَ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِۗ فَلَا تَأۡسَ
عَلَى ٱلۡقَوۡمِ ٱلۡفَٰسِقِينَ ٢٦

(138) *And We brought the children of Israel across the sea, and thereupon they came upon a people cleaving to the worship of some idols they had. Said [the children of Israel], "O Moses, set up for us a god as they have gods!"*
Said he, "You are surely a people who know nothing. (139) *These people's way is bound to lead to destruction, and worthless is all that they have ever been doing."*
(140) *[And he said], "Am I to seek for you a god other than the One God, who has favored you above all people?"* (141) *And [bear in mind, O children of Israel] when We delivered you from the folk of Pharaoh who afflicted you with horrible suffering, slaying your sons and sparing your women - and in this was a very hard trial from your Lord.*
(142) *And when We appointed for Moses thirty nights, and added to them ten, and so the term of forty nights set by his Lord was fulfilled. And Moses said to his brother Harun (Aaron), "Take you my place among my people, and do always what is right, and do not follow the way of those who work corruption."*
(143) *And when Moses came at Our appointed time, and his Lord spoke unto him, he said, "O my Lord! Grant me [the favor of] showing [yourself] unto me, so that I might*

وَجَٰوَزۡنَا
بِبَنِيٓ إِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ ٱلۡبَحۡرَ فَأَتَوۡاْ عَلَىٰ قَوۡمٖ
يَعۡكُفُونَ عَلَىٰٓ أَصۡنَامٖ لَّهُمۡۚ قَالُواْ
يَٰمُوسَى ٱجۡعَل لَّنَآ إِلَٰهٗا كَمَا لَهُمۡ
ءَالِهَةٞۚ قَالَ إِنَّكُمۡ قَوۡمٞ تَجۡهَلُونَ ١٣٨
إِنَّ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ مُتَبَّرٞ مَّا هُمۡ فِيهِ وَبَٰطِلٞ مَّا
كَانُواْ يَعۡمَلُونَ ١٣٩ قَالَ أَغَيۡرَ ٱللَّهِ
أَبۡغِيكُمۡ إِلَٰهٗا وَهُوَ فَضَّلَكُمۡ عَلَى ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ
١٤٠ وَإِذۡ أَنجَيۡنَٰكُم مِّنۡ ءَالِ فِرۡعَوۡنَ
يَسُومُونَكُمۡ سُوٓءَ ٱلۡعَذَابِ ۖ يُقَتِّلُونَ
أَبۡنَآءَكُمۡ وَيَسۡتَحۡيُونَ نِسَآءَكُمۡۚ وَفِي
ذَٰلِكُم بَلَآءٞ مِّن رَّبِّكُمۡ عَظِيمٞ ١٤١ ۞
وَوَٰعَدۡنَا مُوسَىٰ ثَلَٰثِينَ لَيۡلَةٗ وَأَتۡمَمۡنَٰهَا
بِعَشۡرٖ فَتَمَّ مِيقَٰتُ رَبِّهِۦٓ أَرۡبَعِينَ لَيۡلَةٗۚ
وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِأَخِيهِ هَٰرُونَ ٱخۡلُفۡنِي فِي
قَوۡمِي وَأَصۡلِحۡ وَلَا تَتَّبِعۡ سَبِيلَ
ٱلۡمُفۡسِدِينَ ١٤٢ وَلَمَّا جَآءَ مُوسَىٰ
لِمِيقَٰتِنَا وَكَلَّمَهُۥ رَبُّهُۥ قَالَ رَبِّ أَرِنِيٓ

look at you!"
Said He [God], "Never can you see Me; but look to the mountain - if it remains stable in its place, then you shall see Me." And as soon as his Lord revealed his glory to the mountain, He caused it to crumble to pieces, and Moses fell down swooning. And when he came to consciousness he said, "Limitless are You in Your glory! Unto You do I turn in repentance; and I am [always] the foremost among the believers."
(144) *Said He, "O Moses! I have chosen you above all people for My messages and My speaking [unto you]; hold fast, then, unto what I have granted you, and be among the grateful."*
(145) *And We ordained for him [Moses] in the tablets in all matters: exhorting and spelling out all things, and saying, "Hold fast to them firmly, and command your people to hold fast to their most goodly rules. I shall show you the way the iniquitous shall go."* (146) *From My messages shall I cause to turn away [as a result of their own behavior that they freely chose] all those who behave haughtily on earth without any right, and if they may see every sign [of the truth] they do not believe in it, and if they may see the way of rectitude they do not take it for a way, whereas if they see the way of error they take it for a way; this because they have denounced Our signs and messages as lies and have been definitely heedless of them.*
(147) *And those who denounce as lies Our messages, and the [truth of the] life to come, their doings shall end in failure; shall they, then, be recompensed except for what they have actually done?*
(148) *And in his absence, the people of Moses took of their ornaments, [for worshipping] a calf, a mere [lifeless] body that gave forth a lowing sound. Did they not see that it could neither speak to them nor guide them in any way? They took it [for worshipping], and they were evildoers.*

أَنظُرْ إِلَيْكَ ۚ قَالَ لَن تَرَىٰنِي وَلَٰكِنِ
ٱنظُرْ إِلَى ٱلْجَبَلِ فَإِنِ ٱسْتَقَرَّ مَكَانَهُۥ
فَسَوْفَ تَرَىٰنِي ۚ فَلَمَّا تَجَلَّىٰ رَبُّهُۥ
لِلْجَبَلِ جَعَلَهُۥ دَكًّا وَخَرَّ مُوسَىٰ صَعِقًا ۚ
فَلَمَّآ أَفَاقَ قَالَ سُبْحَٰنَكَ تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ
وَأَنَا۠ أَوَّلُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٤٣﴾ قَالَ
يَٰمُوسَىٰٓ إِنِّى ٱصْطَفَيْتُكَ عَلَى ٱلنَّاسِ
بِرِسَٰلَٰتِى وَبِكَلَٰمِى فَخُذْ مَآ ءَاتَيْتُكَ
وَكُن مِّنَ ٱلشَّٰكِرِينَ ﴿١٤٤﴾ وَكَتَبْنَا لَهُۥ فِى
ٱلْأَلْوَاحِ مِن كُلِّ شَىْءٍ مَّوْعِظَةً وَتَفْصِيلًا
لِّكُلِّ شَىْءٍ فَخُذُوهَا بِقُوَّةٍ وَأْمُرْ قَوْمَكَ
يَأْخُذُوا۟ بِأَحْسَنِهَا ۚ سَأُورِيكُمْ دَارَ
ٱلْفَٰسِقِينَ ﴿١٤٥﴾ سَأَصْرِفُ عَنْ ءَايَٰتِىَ
ٱلَّذِينَ يَتَكَبَّرُونَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ ٱلْحَقِّ
وَإِن يَرَوْا۟ كُلَّ ءَايَةٍ لَّا يُؤْمِنُوا۟ بِهَا وَإِن
يَرَوْا۟ سَبِيلَ ٱلرُّشْدِ لَا يَتَّخِذُوهُ سَبِيلًا
وَإِن يَرَوْا۟ سَبِيلَ ٱلْغَىِّ يَتَّخِذُوهُ سَبِيلًا ۚ
ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا وَكَانُوا۟ عَنْهَا
غَٰفِلِينَ ﴿١٤٦﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا
وَلِقَآءِ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَٰلُهُمْ ۚ هَلْ
يُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٤٧﴾
وَٱتَّخَذَ قَوْمُ مُوسَىٰ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ مِنْ حُلِيِّهِمْ
عِجْلًا جَسَدًا لَّهُۥ خُوَارٌ ۚ أَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ أَنَّهُۥ
لَا يُكَلِّمُهُمْ وَلَا يَهْدِيهِمْ سَبِيلًا ۘ ٱتَّخَذُوهُ

(149) *And when they felt remorse as they recognized the truth of the matter and realized that they had gone astray, they said, "Unless Our Lord may have mercy on us and grant us forgiveness, surely we shall be among the lost."*
(150) *And when Moses returned to his people, very furious and sorrowful, he said, "How vile have you behaved in my absence! Have you so hastily ignored your Lord's commandments?" And he threw down the tablets, and seized his brother's head, dragging him towards himself. [Aaron] said, "O my mother's son, the folk felt their power over me and were about to kill me; so let not the enemies rejoice at my humiliation, and put me not among the evil-doing folk."*
(151) *Said [Moses,] "O my Lord! Forgive me and my brother, and admit us unto Your grace, and You are the Most Merciful of the merciful."*
(152) *Surely, those who took to themselves the [golden] calf [for worshipping], their Lord's wrath shall overtake them, and [they shall suffer] humiliation in the present world's life; so We requite all who forge falsehood.*
(153) *But as for those who do bad deeds and afterwards repent and [truly] attain to faith, surely thereafter your Lord is All-forgiving, Most Gracious.*
(154) *And when Moses' wrath subsided, he took up the tablets, in which there was guidance and grace in its writ for those who stood in awe of their Lord.*
(155) *And Moses chose of his people seventy men for Our appointed time [to pray for forgiveness]; and when the forceful trembling seized them, he prayed, "O my Lord! Had You so willed, You would have destroyed them before, and me. Will you destroy us for what the weak-minded among us have done? It is but a trial from you, whereby you let go astray whom you will [as he/she has freely chosen], and guide aright whom You will [as he/she has chosen]. You are the One who cares about us*

وَكَانُوا۟ ظَٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٤٨﴾ وَلَمَّا سُقِطَ فِىٓ
أَيْدِيهِمْ وَرَأَوْا۟ أَنَّهُمْ قَدْ ضَلُّوا۟ قَالُوا۟
لَئِن لَّمْ يَرْحَمْنَا رَبُّنَا وَيَغْفِرْ لَنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ
مِنَ ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ ﴿١٤٩﴾ وَلَمَّا رَجَعَ
مُوسَىٰٓ إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِۦ غَضْبَٰنَ أَسِفًا قَالَ
بِئْسَمَا خَلَفْتُمُونِى مِنۢ بَعْدِىٓ ۖ أَعَجِلْتُمْ
أَمْرَ رَبِّكُمْ ۖ وَأَلْقَى ٱلْأَلْوَاحَ وَأَخَذَ
بِرَأْسِ أَخِيهِ يَجُرُّهُۥٓ إِلَيْهِ ۚ قَالَ ٱبْنَ أُمَّ
إِنَّ ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱسْتَضْعَفُونِى وَكَادُوا۟
يَقْتُلُونَنِى فَلَا تُشْمِتْ بِىَ ٱلْأَعْدَآءَ وَلَا
تَجْعَلْنِى مَعَ ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٥٠﴾ قَالَ
رَبِّ ٱغْفِرْ لِى وَلِأَخِى وَأَدْخِلْنَا فِى
رَحْمَتِكَ ۖ وَأَنتَ أَرْحَمُ ٱلرَّٰحِمِينَ
﴿١٥١﴾ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّخَذُوا۟ ٱلْعِجْلَ
سَيَنَالُهُمْ غَضَبٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَذِلَّةٌ فِى
ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِى
ٱلْمُفْتَرِينَ ﴿١٥٢﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ عَمِلُوا۟
ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ ثُمَّ تَابُوا۟ مِنۢ بَعْدِهَا وَءَامَنُوٓا۟
إِنَّ رَبَّكَ مِنۢ بَعْدِهَا لَغَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٥٣﴾
وَلَمَّا سَكَتَ عَن مُّوسَى ٱلْغَضَبُ أَخَذَ
ٱلْأَلْوَاحَ ۖ وَفِى نُسْخَتِهَا هُدًى
وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلَّذِينَ هُمْ لِرَبِّهِمْ يَرْهَبُونَ ﴿١٥٤﴾
وَٱخْتَارَ مُوسَىٰ قَوْمَهُۥ سَبْعِينَ رَجُلًا
لِّمِيقَٰتِنَا ۖ فَلَمَّآ أَخَذَتْهُمُ ٱلرَّجْفَةُ قَالَ
رَبِّ لَوْ شِئْتَ أَهْلَكْتَهُم مِّن قَبْلُ وَإِيَّىَ ۖ
أَتُهْلِكُنَا بِمَا فَعَلَ ٱلسُّفَهَآءُ مِنَّا ۖ إِنْ
هِىَ إِلَّا فِتْنَتُكَ تُضِلُّ بِهَا مَن تَشَآءُ

and supports us; grant us, then, forgiveness and have mercy on us, and You are the best of all those who forgive. (156) *And ordain You for us what is good in this world and in the life to come as well; unto You have we turned in repentance."*
Answered He [God], "With my chastisement do I afflict whom I will [according to what one has freely chosen] and My grace embraces everything, and I shall confer it on those who are conscious of Me and spend in due charity and who [truly] believe in Our signs and messages." [7:138-156]

وَتَهْدِى مَن تَشَآءُ ۖ أَنتَ وَلِيُّنَا فَٱغْفِرْ لَنَا
وَٱرْحَمْنَا ۖ وَأَنتَ خَيْرُ ٱلْغَٰفِرِينَ
(١٥٥) ۞ وَٱكْتُبْ لَنَا فِى هَٰذِهِ ٱلدُّنْيَا
حَسَنَةً وَفِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ إِنَّا هُدْنَآ إِلَيْكَ ۚ
قَالَ عَذَابِىٓ أُصِيبُ بِهِۦ مَنْ أَشَآءُ ۖ
وَرَحْمَتِى وَسِعَتْ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ ۚ فَسَأَكْتُبُهَا
لِلَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَ وَيُؤْتُونَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَٱلَّذِينَ
هُم بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا يُؤْمِنُونَ (١٥٦)

And ask them about that town which stood by the sea, how its people violated the Sabbath, when their fish came to them breaking the water's surface, on a day on which they ought to have kept the Sabbath, but on other than the Sabbath day, they came not unto them; in this way did We try them through their iniquitous doings. And when some people among them said, "Why do you preach to people whom God would destroy or [at least] chastise with suffering severe?," the [pious] ones said, "So as to be free from blame before your Lord, and haply these might become conscious of Him." And when those [evildoers] had forgotten all that they had been reminded of, We saved those who had tried to forbid the doing of evil; and We seized the evildoers with severe suffering for all their iniquity.
And then, when they turned persistently in disdain doing what they had been forbidden to do, We said unto them: "Be [as] apes, miserably despicable and driven away." [7:163-166]

وَسْـَٔلْهُمْ عَنِ ٱلْقَرْيَةِ
ٱلَّتِى كَانَتْ حَاضِرَةَ ٱلْبَحْرِ ۘ إِذْ يَعْدُونَ
فِى ٱلسَّبْتِ إِذْ تَأْتِيهِمْ حِيتَانُهُمْ يَوْمَ
سَبْتِهِمْ شُرَّعًا ۖ وَيَوْمَ لَا يَسْبِتُونَ ۙ لَا
تَأْتِيهِمْ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ نَبْلُوهُم بِمَا كَانُوا۟
يَفْسُقُونَ (١٦٣) وَإِذْ قَالَتْ أُمَّةٌ مِّنْهُمْ لِمَ
تَعِظُونَ قَوْمًا ۙ ٱللَّهُ مُهْلِكُهُمْ أَوْ مُعَذِّبُهُمْ
عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا ۖ قَالُوا۟ مَعْذِرَةً إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ
وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ (١٦٤) فَلَمَّا نَسُوا۟ مَا
ذُكِّرُوا۟ بِهِۦٓ أَنجَيْنَا ٱلَّذِينَ يَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ
ٱلسُّوٓءِ وَأَخَذْنَا ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ بِعَذَابٍۭ
بَـِٔيسٍۭ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَفْسُقُونَ (١٦٥) فَلَمَّا
عَتَوْا۟ عَن مَّا نُهُوا۟ عَنْهُ قُلْنَا لَهُمْ كُونُوا۟
قِرَدَةً خَٰسِـِٔينَ (١٦٦)

And when we caused the Mount [Tur in Sinai] to be lifted above them as if it were an awning, and they thought that it would fall upon them: "Hold fast with

وَإِذْ نَتَقْنَا
ٱلْجَبَلَ فَوْقَهُمْ كَأَنَّهُۥ ظُلَّةٌ وَظَنُّوٓا۟ أَنَّهُۥ

[all your] strength that We have given you, and remember all that is therein, so that you might [always] be conscious of God." [7:171]

وَإِذْ نَتَقْنَا الْجَبَلَ فَوْقَهُمْ كَأَنَّهُ ظُلَّةٌ وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُ وَاقِعٌ بِهِمْ خُذُوا مَا آتَيْنَاكُم بِقُوَّةٍ وَاذْكُرُوا مَا فِيهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٧١﴾

(80) *"O children of Israel! We saved you from your enemy; and We appointed for you the right side of the Mount Tur [in Sinai], and sent down manna and quails unto you.* (81) *Eat of the good things wherewith We have provided for you as sustenance; but do not transgress what is right, lest My condemnation fall upon you; for one upon whom My condemnation falls has indeed thrown himself[/herself] deeply into utter ruin.*

(82) *Yet, I surely forgive all the evil-doing unto whoever repents and attains to faith and does righteous deeds, and thereafter keeps to the right path."*

(83) *[And God said,] "Now what has caused you, O Musa(Moses), to leave your people behind you in such haste?"* (84) *[Moses] said, "They are close there upon my tracks, while I have hastened unto You, O my Lord, so that You might be well-pleased [with me]."*

(85) *Said He, "We have put your people to test in your absence, and the Samiri has led them astray."*

(86) *Then Moses returned to his people furious and sorrowful, [and] said, "My people! Did not your Lord hold out [many] a goodly promise to you? Did, then, [the fulfillment of] this promise seem too long to you? Or did you want your Lord's condemnation to fall upon you, and so you broke your promise to me?"*

(87) *They said, "We did not break our promise to you of our own accord; but we were loaded with the burdens of the [Egyptian] people's ornaments, and so we threw them [in the fire], as the Samiri had said and done."*

(88) *Then he [the Samiri] produced for them [out of the molten gold] a calf-like body that*

يَٰبَنِيٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ قَدْ أَنجَيْنَٰكُم مِّنْ عَدُوِّكُمْ وَوَٰعَدْنَٰكُمْ جَانِبَ ٱلطُّورِ ٱلْأَيْمَنَ وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْمَنَّ وَٱلسَّلْوَىٰ ﴿٨٠﴾ كُلُوا مِن طَيِّبَٰتِ مَا رَزَقْنَٰكُمْ وَلَا تَطْغَوْا فِيهِ فَيَحِلَّ عَلَيْكُمْ غَضَبِى ۖ وَمَن يَحْلِلْ عَلَيْهِ غَضَبِى فَقَدْ هَوَىٰ ﴿٨١﴾ وَإِنِّى لَغَفَّارٌ لِّمَن تَابَ وَءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا ثُمَّ ٱهْتَدَىٰ ﴿٨٢﴾ ۞ وَمَآ أَعْجَلَكَ عَن قَوْمِكَ يَٰمُوسَىٰ ﴿٨٣﴾ قَالَ هُمْ أُولَآءِ عَلَىٰٓ أَثَرِى وَعَجِلْتُ إِلَيْكَ رَبِّ لِتَرْضَىٰ ﴿٨٤﴾ قَالَ فَإِنَّا قَدْ فَتَنَّا قَوْمَكَ مِنۢ بَعْدِكَ وَأَضَلَّهُمُ ٱلسَّامِرِىُّ ﴿٨٥﴾ فَرَجَعَ مُوسَىٰٓ إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِۦ غَضْبَٰنَ أَسِفًا ۚ قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ أَلَمْ يَعِدْكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ وَعْدًا حَسَنًا ۚ أَفَطَالَ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْعَهْدُ أَمْ أَرَدتُّمْ أَن يَحِلَّ عَلَيْكُمْ غَضَبٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ فَأَخْلَفْتُم مَّوْعِدِى ﴿٨٦﴾ قَالُوا مَآ أَخْلَفْنَا مَوْعِدَكَ بِمَلْكِنَا وَلَٰكِنَّا حُمِّلْنَآ أَوْزَارًا مِّن زِينَةِ ٱلْقَوْمِ فَقَذَفْنَٰهَا فَكَذَٰلِكَ أَلْقَى ٱلسَّامِرِىُّ ﴿٨٧﴾ فَأَخْرَجَ لَهُمْ عِجْلًا جَسَدًا لَّهُۥ خُوَارٌ

made a lowing sound, and they said, "This is your god, and the god of Moses, but he has forgotten!"

(89) *Did they not see that it could not give them any response and could not cause them harm or benefit?* (90) *And Harun (Aaron) had said to them before [the return of Moses], "O my folk! You are but being tempted to evil by this [idol], and your [only] Lord is the All-merciful. Would you follow me then and keep my bidding."*

(91) *They said, "We shall keep worshipping it until Moses comes back to us."*

(92) *And [Moses] said, "O Aaron! What prevented you when you saw that they had gone astray* (93) *from sticking to my bidding [and persistently calling them to the right way]? Did you disobey my order?"*

(94) *[Aaron] said, "O my mother's son! Seize me not by my beard, nor by my head! I was afraid lest you should say, 'You have caused a split among the children of Israel and have not observed my word [to keep them always united].' "*

(95) *Said [Moses,] "And what was the matter with you, O Samiri?"*

(96) *He said, "I beheld what they beheld not, and so I seized a handful of dust from the track of the conveyor of [God's] message, and cast it [into what I made], and so my self enticed me to do."*

(97) *Said he [Moses,] "Be gone, then! During your whole life [in this present world] you have to cry, "[I am the] untouchable", and thereafter you shall face the destiny that is appointed to you and you cannot escape it. And see your god that you were cleaving to, we shall certainly burn it, and scatter [whatever ashes remain of] it into the sea!* (98) *Your God is only the One God; there is no God but He alone, who embraces everything within His knowledge."*

(99) *Thus do We relate to you some of what happened before, and We have [always] been*

فَقَالُوا۟ هَٰذَآ إِلَٰهُكُمْ وَإِلَٰهُ مُوسَىٰ
فَنَسِىَ ﴿٨٨﴾ أَفَلَا يَرَوْنَ أَلَّا يَرْجِعُ إِلَيْهِمْ
قَوْلًا وَلَا يَمْلِكُ لَهُمْ ضَرًّا وَلَا نَفْعًا
﴿٨٩﴾ وَلَقَدْ قَالَ لَهُمْ هَٰرُونُ مِن قَبْلُ
يَٰقَوْمِ إِنَّمَا فُتِنتُم بِهِۦ ۖ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ
ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ فَٱتَّبِعُونِى وَأَطِيعُوٓا۟ أَمْرِى
﴿٩٠﴾ قَالُوا۟ لَن نَّبْرَحَ عَلَيْهِ عَٰكِفِينَ حَتَّىٰ
يَرْجِعَ إِلَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ ﴿٩١﴾ قَالَ يَٰهَٰرُونُ
مَا مَنَعَكَ إِذْ رَأَيْتَهُمْ ضَلُّوٓا۟ ﴿٩٢﴾ أَلَّا
تَتَّبِعَنِ ۖ أَفَعَصَيْتَ أَمْرِى ﴿٩٣﴾ قَالَ
يَبْنَؤُمَّ لَا تَأْخُذْ بِلِحْيَتِى وَلَا بِرَأْسِىٓ ۖ
إِنِّى خَشِيتُ أَن تَقُولَ فَرَّقْتَ بَيْنَ بَنِىٓ
إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ وَلَمْ تَرْقُبْ قَوْلِى ﴿٩٤﴾ قَالَ
فَمَا خَطْبُكَ يَٰسَٰمِرِىُّ ﴿٩٥﴾ قَالَ بَصُرْتُ
بِمَا لَمْ يَبْصُرُوا۟ بِهِۦ فَقَبَضْتُ قَبْضَةً مِّنْ
أَثَرِ ٱلرَّسُولِ فَنَبَذْتُهَا وَكَذَٰلِكَ سَوَّلَتْ
لِى نَفْسِى ﴿٩٦﴾ قَالَ فَٱذْهَبْ فَإِنَّ لَكَ فِى
ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ أَن تَقُولَ لَا مِسَاسَ ۖ وَإِنَّ لَكَ
مَوْعِدًا لَّن تُخْلَفَهُۥ ۖ وَٱنظُرْ إِلَىٰٓ
إِلَٰهِكَ ٱلَّذِى ظَلْتَ عَلَيْهِ عَاكِفًا ۖ
لَّنُحَرِّقَنَّهُۥ ثُمَّ لَنَنسِفَنَّهُۥ فِى ٱلْيَمِّ نَسْفًا
﴿٩٧﴾ إِنَّمَآ إِلَٰهُكُمُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا
هُوَ ۚ وَسِعَ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ عِلْمًا ﴿٩٨﴾ كَذَٰلِكَ
نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ أَنۢبَآءِ مَا قَدْ سَبَقَ ۚ وَقَدْ

giving you some account of the past [and bear this in mind]. [20:80-99]

ءَاتَيْنَٰكَ مِن لَّدُنَّا ذِكْرًا ﴿٩٩﴾

And after We had caused earlier generations to come to their end, We gave Musa (Moses) the Book as an enlightenment to people and as a guidance and grace, so that they might be mindful. And you [O Muhammad] were not present on the western side [of Mount Tur in Sinai] when We had decided the matter with Moses, nor were you among those who witnessed.
But We brought out [successive] generations [after that time], and long their lives continued. And neither did you dwell among the people of Madyan (Midian), conveying Our messages unto them; nay but We have [always] been sending conveyors [of Our messages to human beings].
And neither were you present on the side of the [Mount] Tur [in Sinai] when We called out [to Moses]; but [it was] an act of your Lord's grace to warn people to whom no warner has come before you, so that they might be mindful. [28:43-46]

وَلَقَدْ
ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى ٱلْكِتَٰبَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَآ أَهْلَكْنَا
ٱلْقُرُونَ ٱلْأُولَىٰ بَصَآئِرَ لِلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى
وَرَحْمَةً لَّعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾ وَمَا
كُنتَ بِجَانِبِ ٱلْغَرْبِيِّ إِذْ قَضَيْنَآ إِلَىٰ
مُوسَى ٱلْأَمْرَ وَمَا كُنتَ مِنَ ٱلشَّٰهِدِينَ
﴿٤٤﴾ وَلَٰكِنَّآ أَنشَأْنَا قُرُونًا فَتَطَاوَلَ
عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْعُمُرُ ۚ وَمَا كُنتَ ثَاوِيًا فِىٓ أَهْلِ
مَدْيَنَ تَتْلُوا۟ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَٰتِنَا وَلَٰكِنَّا كُنَّا
مُرْسِلِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾ وَمَا كُنتَ بِجَانِبِ ٱلطُّورِ
إِذْ نَادَيْنَا وَلَٰكِن رَّحْمَةً مِّن رَّبِّكَ لِتُنذِرَ
قَوْمًا مَّآ أَتَىٰهُم مِّن نَّذِيرٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾

O you have attained to faith! Be not like those who hurt Musa (Moses), but God declared him quit of what they said against him, and he was of high honor in the sight of God. [33:69]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا
تَكُونُوا۟ كَٱلَّذِينَ ءَاذَوْا۟ مُوسَىٰ فَبَرَّأَهُ
ٱللَّهُ مِمَّا قَالُوا۟ ۚ وَكَانَ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ
وَجِيهًا ﴿٦٩﴾

And [recall to mind] when Musa (Moses) said to his people, "O my people! Why do you hurt me while you know that I am the conveyor of [God's] message to you?" And when they swerved from the right way, God let their hearts swerve [from the truth]; and God does not guide [against their will] the iniquitous folk. [61:5]

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ
لِقَوْمِهِۦ يَٰقَوْمِ لِمَ تُؤْذُونَنِى وَقَد تَّعْلَمُونَ
أَنِّى رَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ ۖ فَلَمَّا زَاغُوٓا۟
أَزَاغَ ٱللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِى
ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلْفَٰسِقِينَ ﴿٥﴾

The children of Israel underwent a unique training and trial in Sinai to free themselves from the psychological bondage which for a long time had been developed within them generation after generation, and to prepare them for taking their destiny into their own hands, owning their land, and even later establishing a state. During their forty-year stay in Sinai they were exposed to the physical pressures and isolation of the desert, to God's guidance, tests and punishments and to His blessings, bounties and miracles. They had to face their human weaknesses as well as Satan's temptation, and all these experiences helped them become more purified and crystallized.

The Israelites were delivered from the Pharaonic tyranny, were made to feel secure from its reach, and were granted shade, food, "manna and quails," and drink: *"and there gushed forth twelve springs [and thus] every people then knew whence to drink"* [2:57, 60; 7:160]. They encountered God's miracles and received His guidance: *"And [bear in mind] when We accepted your solemn pledge, raising [Mount] Tur [in Sinai] high above you: 'Hold firmly to what We have brought you, and bear in mind all that is therein'"* [2:63, also 7:171]. Despite all of this, the children of Israel did not always show gratefulness for God's blessings nor obedience to His guidance. In fact,after crossing the sea, as soon as they came upon people who had been worshipping idols, they looked for a physically visible god like the one that those people were worshipping, a desire that shocked Moses and which he angrily and reproachingly ridiculed [7:138-140].

The children of Israel were ordered to slaughter a cow as a sacrifice but they seemed very reluctant to do so, raising instead one question after another so as to find an excuse to disobey [2:64-71]. When they had a person murdered, no one wanted to admit to committing the crime, and so they were guided by God to deal with the case in the light of what was known about the victim's life and circumstances, as well as from the attempts of different individuals to distance themselves from or to accuse others of the crime. In this way they could find out who committed the crime and thus they could secure life and assure its sanctity by punishing the murderer [2:72-73].

The children of Israel transgressed all the limits when they stipulated that they should "see God face to face" before they could totally commit themselves to follow Moses; as a result they were overtaken by thunderbolt, and then raised again by God [2:55-56]. Although they enjoyed secure food in the desert, "manna and quails", they asked for a variety of land produce which can never be found in a desert [2:61]. It is remarkable to note here that whenever the Israelites told Moses to ask God for something for them, the Quran reports that they talked to Moses about "your Lord" not "our Lord" [e.g. 2:61, 68-70; 5:24; 7:134].

The most serious defiance to God's commands conveyed to them by Moses was their extreme reluctance to enter the holy land which they were promised when they were ordered to go into it. The majority bluntly rejected the order, saying that they would never be able to expel the ferocious people who lived there, and they boldly told Moses, *"Go forth, you and your Lord and fight; we shall stay here"* [5:24]. Only two men seemed ready to obey and these tried to urge the others to carry out what Moses ordered them to do. Moses was so helpless that he broken-heartedly said to God that he only had control over himself and his brother, and asked God to *"distinguish then between us and the iniquitous folk!"* God's command that was conveyed to Moses was that *"then this land shall*

be forbidden to them; for forty years they will be wandering around the earth, bewildered" [5:20-26].

The Quran tells of two more incidents of violation which probably occurred after the death of Moses. On one occasion, the Israelites did not exactly follow the command given to them about entering a certain town to enjoy its abundant food. They were told to humbly enter through the gate and pray to God to remove from them the burden of their evildoers, so that they would be forgiven and they would receive greater reward, but they did not do this, and instead changed the words they were ordered to say, and they were punished for their arrogance [2:58-59, 7:161-162]. On another occasion, the Israelites saw fish breaking the water's surface on the Sabbath, when they were not supposed to work. Since the fish had not appeared on the other days when they were allowed to work, they were tested to resist the temptation of taking the fish on the Sabbath thus violating their laws [7:163]. Valuable advice has been presented by the Quran in such circumstances. Righteous people have to be persistent in offering guidance to wrongdoers and never giving up, since a person has to initially fulfill his/her responsibility towards God by offering such guidance whatever the consequences may be, and then he/she should never lose hope in reforming the individuals and the society [7:164]. The experience of Moses with his people has also been relevant to Muslims, since the human psychological weaknesses are always there. The Quran warned against hurting Muhammad in the same way that Moses was hurt [33:69; 61:5].

Another serious communication occurred during Moses' forty night communication with God. Moses daringly, asked God to show Himself to him, and God's answer was: *"'Never can you see Me; but look to the mountain - if it remains stable in its place, then you shall see Me.'" And as soon as his Lord revealed His glory to the mountain, He caused it to crumble to pieces, and Moses fell down swooning. And when he came to consciousness he said, 'Limitless are You in Your glory! Unto You do I turn in repentance'"* [7:143].

During this time, Moses had left his people hastily for his communication with God, full of eagerness for the occasion and for getting His goodly acceptance. It seems from the Quranic reporting that such behavior was at the expense of the due awareness of Moses' responsibility towards his people who - after his departure - were *" put to a test in your absence and the Samiri has led them astray"* [20:85]. Since the Samaritans as a sect did not yet exist at the time of Moses but emerged in later times, could the Arabic word "Samiri" be here related to the Hebrew root (Shomeron) from which the words "Samarion" and "Samaritans" were later formed, as reported in *Smith's Bible Dictionary?* The Dictionary indicates that "the word *'Shomeron'* etymologically means 'pertaining to a watch'." *The New Banterm-Megiddo Hebrew and English Dictionary* indicates the meaning of "*Shomer*" as "guard, watchman, keeper." Was the man undertaking such a role in the Israelite community in Sinai, and did this role allow him to be known in the community and thus enjoy some influence on it? Or could the word Samiri be related to the ancient Egyptian word "*shemer*" meaning foreigner or stranger? If so, then could the Samiri have been an Egyptian follower of Moses, as Ibn Abbas stated according to what the prominent commentator on the Quran, al-Razi, reported? And if this is the case then was the title "stranger" given to him by his fellow Egyptians when he followed Moses, since the Israelites were considered strangers, or was he called "a stranger" by the Israelites

who might have used the ancient Egyptian language? Muhammad Asad said in his note 70 on the verse 20:85 that this latter interpretation of "Samari" is strengthened by the introduction of the worship of the golden calf, undoubtedly an echo of the Egyptian cult of Apis, the sacred bull at Memphis, which the (ancient) Egyptians believed to be an incarnation of the god Ptah ... The lowing sound (*khowar)* which the golden calf emitted was probably produced by wind effects, as was the case with some of the hollow Egyptian temple effigies" [Note no. 113 on the verse 7:148].

The Israelites' argument for making the golden calf was that they had been "*loaded with the burdens of the [Egyptian] people's ornaments*", and so they threw them in the fire to make the golden calf according to the Samari's idea and instructions [20:87]. According to the Bible [Exodus XII:35], the Israelites, just before their departure from Egypt, "borrowed of the Egyptian jewels of silver and jewels of gold" "and they spoiled the Egyptians" [Exodus XII:36]. Muhammad Asad comments: "While it is noteworthy that the Old Testament,..... does not condemn this behavior, its inequity seems to have gradually dawned upon the Israelites and so they decided to get rid of those sinfully acquired ornaments (Baghawi, Zamakhshari, and in one of his alternative interpretations Razi)" [note 73 on the verse 20:87]. This Samiri, who confused the Israelites about their monotheistic faith for which they had suffered for generations in Egypt, claimed that he did so because he enjoyed insight and he could see what the others were unable to see, and thus his own self had tempted and prompted him [20:95-96]. He was punished by becoming "untouchable" either physically as a result of a disease, or morally by being isolated and avoided by the community, or both. His golden calf was burnt and its ashes were thrown in the sea [20:97].

The children of Israel were forgiven after their repentance. [2:52; 7:149]. Seventy people were chosen to pray for forgiveness at an appointed time "*and when the forceful trembling seized them, he [Moses] prayed, 'O My Lord! Had you so willed, You would have destroyed them before and me. Will you destroy us for what the weak-minded among us have done? This is but a trial from You...'*"[7;155]. In order to gain God's acceptance of their repentance and His forgiveness, Moses asked the children of Israel to kill themselves. The metaphorical interpretation of verse 2:54 as viewed by Abd al-Jabbar al-Razi, as opposed to the the Biblical account [Exodus XXXII:26-28] of killing one another which has influenced some Muslim commentators, although this contradicted the Quranic statement that the Israelites received God's forgiveness, after that serious deviation, when they repented and God accepted their repentance [2:52; 4:153; 7:149, 153]. The metaphorical interpretation that the "killing of oneself" in the verse is referring to killing the evil and guilty inclinations of oneself, or that "mortifying oneself" means suppressing and subduing or deadening the bodily appetites and whims, especially by abstinence or spiritual exercises which may not be physically comfortable or easygoing [for the story of the golden calf see 2:51-52; 7:148-152; 20:83-99].

During this mass deviation which occurred as soon as Moses left his community to communicate with God for an appointed time, Moses seemed firm although sometimes intense and harsh in his fury, even against his own brother [e.g. 7:150; 20:94]. Although the Quran did not state that Aaron had been involved in the Samiri case, but on the contrary, unlike in the Biblical account [Exodus XXII;1-5], he had done his best to warn the

people [20:90], he seems to have lacked the leadership, firmness and decisiveness of his brother. However, after treating Aaron harshly, Moses prayed to God to forgive both himself and his brother [7:142, 150-151; 20:90-94].

The Quran states that because of their successive cases of disobedience and evil-doing, God said to the Israelites: "*Be [as] apes, despicable and driven away*" [2:65; 5:60; 7:166]. The word "as" here has been inserted in the text between parentheses to indicate what the companions' successor Mujahid indicated: that it was "their hearts that were transformed" not their bodies, and thus it was a psychological and not a physical change, like the simile of "the book carrying donkey " [62:5; see the commentary on 2:65 by al-Tabari, Ibn Kathir, and in Tafsir al-Manar]. The ape was looked upon in classical Arabic as one not restraining its gross desires and whims. The verse 5:60 added "the swine " to "the apes", and was understood also in a metaphorical way, indicating a psychological deformation, not a physical one; the swine was also looked upon as a pursuer of lusts [see Tafsir al-Manar in its commentary on the verse 5:60].

QARUN: 28:76-84; see also 29:39; 40:24
See "**The Eternal Life to Come**" in Chapter 3: "**The Faith II**"

THE TORAH: THE MORAL AND LEGAL RULES

وَ إِذْ
أَخَذْنَا مِيثَٰقَ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ لَا تَعْبُدُونَ
إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ وَ بِٱلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَ ذِى
ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ وَ ٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰ وَ ٱلْمَسَٰكِينِ
وَقُولُوا۟ لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا وَ أَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ
وَ ءَاتُوا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا
مِّنكُمْ وَ أَنتُم مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿٨٣﴾ وَ إِذْ أَخَذْنَا
مِيثَٰقَكُمْ لَا تَسْفِكُونَ دِمَآءَكُمْ وَ لَا
تُخْرِجُونَ أَنفُسَكُم مِّن دِيَٰرِكُمْ ثُمَّ أَقْرَرْتُمْ
وَ أَنتُمْ تَشْهَدُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾ ثُمَّ أَنتُمْ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ
تَقْتُلُونَ أَنفُسَكُمْ وَ تُخْرِجُونَ فَرِيقًا مِّنكُم
مِّن دِيَٰرِهِمْ تَظَٰهَرُونَ عَلَيْهِم بِٱلْإِثْمِ
وَ ٱلْعُدْوَٰنِ وَ إِن يَأْتُوكُمْ أُسَٰرَىٰ تُفَٰدُوهُمْ
وَ هُوَ مُحَرَّمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ إِخْرَاجُهُمْ
أَفَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِبَعْضِ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَ تَكْفُرُونَ

And [remember] when We took this solemn pledge from the Children of Israel: "Worship none but God alone, and be good to your parents and kin, and the orphans and the needy, and speak good to people and keep up prayer, and render the purifying [welfare] dues (zakat);" then did you turn away, save a few among you, swerving aside. And We accepted your solemn pledge that you would not shed the blood of one another, and would not drive one another from your homes; and you acknowledged that, and yourselves bore witness to it. Then there you are, killing one another and driving some of you out of their homes, aiding one another against them in evil-doing and aggression; but if they come to you as captives you ransom them, while the very [act of] driving them away has been forbidden to you [in the first place]. Do you, then, believe in some of the Book and disbelieve in the other? Then what shall be the

requital of those of you who do so but disgrace in the present life of this world, and on the Day of Resurrection they will be brought to what is the most severe suffering? And God is ever unmindful of what you do.
Those are [people] who have purchased [the pleasures of] the present world's life at the price of the life to come; their suffering shall not be lightened, nor shall they get any support. [2:83-86]

بِبَعْضٍ ۚ فَمَا جَزَآءُ مَن يَفْعَلُ ذَٰلِكَ مِنكُمْ
إِلَّا خِزْيٌ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَيَوْمَ
ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ يُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰٓ أَشَدِّ ٱلْعَذَابِ ۗ
وَمَا ٱللَّهُ بِغَٰفِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾
أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱشْتَرَوُا۟ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا
بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۖ فَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ
وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾

It is He who has sent down upon you the Book setting forth the truth which confirms what was before it, and He sent down the Torah and the Gospel aforetime as guidance to the people, and it is He who has sent down [unto the human being] the standard by which one discerns the right from the wrong. ....[3:3-4]

نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ بِٱلْحَقِّ
مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ ۖ وَأَنزَلَ
ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةَ وَٱلْإِنجِيلَ ﴿٣﴾ مِن قَبْلُ هُدًى
لِّلنَّاسِ ۖ وَأَنزَلَ ٱلْفُرْقَانَ ۗ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ ۗ
وَٱللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ ذُو ٱنتِقَامٍ ﴿٤﴾

It was for the evil-doing of those who followed the Jewish faith that We have forbidden them certain good things that had been [before] allowed to them, and for their barring from God's way many. [4:160]

فَبِظُلْمٍ مِّنَ
ٱلَّذِينَ هَادُوا۟ حَرَّمْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ طَيِّبَٰتٍ
أُحِلَّتْ لَهُمْ وَبِصَدِّهِمْ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ
كَثِيرًا ﴿١٦٠﴾

But how is it that they ask you to be their judge, seeing that they have the Torah that contains God's rules, then thereafter they turn their backs [to it]?
Verily, We sent down the Torah, wherein there is guidance and light, thereby the Prophets who submitted themselves to God judge among the Jewish people, and so did the people who were truly devoted to God [rabbis] and the distinctive persons, in as much as what of God's writ had been entrusted to them and they were witnesses to. Therefore, [O children

وَكَيْفَ
يُحَكِّمُونَكَ وَعِندَهُمُ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةُ فِيهَا حُكْمُ
ٱللَّهِ ثُمَّ يَتَوَلَّوْنَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ ۚ وَمَآ
أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ بِٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾ إِنَّآ أَنزَلْنَا
ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةَ فِيهَا هُدًى وَنُورٌ ۖ يَحْكُمُ بِهَا
ٱلنَّبِيُّونَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَسْلَمُوا۟ لِلَّذِينَ هَادُوا۟
وَٱلرَّبَّٰنِيُّونَ وَٱلْأَحْبَارُ بِمَا ٱسْتُحْفِظُوا۟
مِن كِتَٰبِ ٱللَّهِ وَكَانُوا۟ عَلَيْهِ شُهَدَآءَ ۚ فَلَا

of Israel] fear not people, but fear you only Me; and sell not My messages for a trifling gain; and whoever judges not according to what God has sent down, they are the stubborn deniers of the truth.
And therein [in the Torah] We ordained for them a life for a life, and an eye for an eye, and a nose for a nose, and an ear for an ear, and a tooth for a tooth; and a [similar] retribution for wounds; but whosoever forgoes [this] out of generosity and magnanimity, that shall be for him[/her] an expiation [for some past wrongdoing]. And whoever does not rule according to what God has sent down - they are the evildoers. [5:43-45]

تَخْشَوُا۟ ٱلنَّاسَ وَٱخْشَوْنِ ۖ وَلَا
تَشْتَرُوا۟ بِـَٔايَـٰتِى ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۚ وَمَن لَّمْ
يَحْكُم بِمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ فَأُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ هُمُ
ٱلْكَـٰفِرُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾ وَكَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ فِيهَآ أَنَّ
ٱلنَّفْسَ بِٱلنَّفْسِ وَٱلْعَيْنَ بِٱلْعَيْنِ
وَٱلْأَنفَ بِٱلْأَنفِ وَٱلْأُذُنَ بِٱلْأُذُنِ وَٱلسِّنَّ
بِٱلسِّنِّ وَٱلْجُرُوحَ قِصَاصٌ ۚ فَمَن تَصَدَّقَ
بِهِۦ فَهُوَ كَفَّارَةٌ لَّهُۥ ۚ وَمَن لَّمْ يَحْكُم بِمَآ
أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ فَأُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلظَّـٰلِمُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

And if they would but truly observe the Torah and the Gospel and what was sent down to them from their Lord, they would eat of the blessings of what is above them and what is underneath them. Some of them do reasonably behave but many of them do indeed what is wrong. [5:66]

وَلَوْ
أَنَّهُمْ أَقَامُوا۟ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةَ وَٱلْإِنجِيلَ وَمَآ
أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِم مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ لَأَكَلُوا۟ مِن فَوْقِهِمْ
وَمِن تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِهِم ۚ مِّنْهُمْ أُمَّةٌ مُّقْتَصِدَةٌ ۖ
وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ سَآءَ مَا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾

Say: "O people of the Book! You have no valid ground unless you [truly] apply the Torah and the Gospel and all that was sent to you by your Lord." Yet, what has been sent to you by your Lord makes many of them react with more arrogant aggression and stubborn rejection of the truth; but you should not feel any sorrow for those who stubbornly deny the truth. [5:68]

قُلْ يَـٰٓأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَـٰبِ لَسْتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَىْءٍ
حَتَّىٰ تُقِيمُوا۟ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةَ وَٱلْإِنجِيلَ وَمَآ
أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُم مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ ۗ وَلَيَزِيدَنَّ كَثِيرًا
مِّنْهُم مَّآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَّبِّكَ طُغْيَـٰنًا
وَكُفْرًا ۚ فَلَا تَأْسَ عَلَى ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلْكَـٰفِرِينَ ﴿٦٨﴾

And no true understanding of God [and His constant Grace and guidance] have they when they say, "Never has God sent down anything [namely: revelation] to a human being." Say, "Who sent down the Book to Musa (Moses) brought unto men as a light and a guidance, which you treat

وَمَا قَدَرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ
حَقَّ قَدْرِهِۦٓ إِذْ قَالُوا۟ مَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ
بَشَرٍ مِّن شَىْءٍ ۗ قُلْ مَنْ أَنزَلَ ٱلْكِتَـٰبَ
ٱلَّذِى جَآءَ بِهِۦ مُوسَىٰ نُورًا وَهُدًى

as [mere] sheets of paper, revealing them but much you hide [in practice]; and you have been taught [by it] what neither you nor your forefathers had ever known". Say, "It is God [who sent down His books]", and leave them playing their game of plunging in vain talk. [6:91]

لِلنَّاسِ ۖ تَجْعَلُونَهُۥ قَرَاطِيسَ تُبْدُونَهَا
وَتُخْفُونَ كَثِيرًا ۖ وَعُلِّمْتُم مَّا لَمْ
تَعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنتُمْ وَلَآ ءَابَآؤُكُمْ ۖ قُلِ ٱللَّهُ ۖ
ثُمَّ ذَرْهُمْ فِى خَوْضِهِمْ يَلْعَبُونَ ﴿٩١﴾

And to those who followed the Jewish faith did We forbid all beasts that have claws, and We did forbid unto them the fat of both oxen and sheep, except what is in their backs or entrails or that is mingled with bone; thus did We requite them for their evil-doing; surely We speak truly. [6:146]

وَعَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ هَادُوا۟
حَرَّمْنَا كُلَّ ذِى ظُفُرٍ ۖ وَمِنَ ٱلْبَقَرِ
وَٱلْغَنَمِ حَرَّمْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ شُحُومَهُمَآ إِلَّا مَا
حَمَلَتْ ظُهُورُهُمَآ أَوِ ٱلْحَوَايَآ أَوْ مَا
ٱخْتَلَطَ بِعَظْمٍ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ جَزَيْنَٰهُم بِبَغْيِهِمْ ۖ
وَإِنَّا لَصَٰدِقُونَ ﴿١٤٦﴾

And We gave Musa (Moses) the Book in fulfillment of [Our Message of] doing righteousness, and clearly spelling out all things in detail, and [thus providing] guidance and grace, so that they might have faith in their [final] meeting with their Lord. [6:154]

ثُمَّ
ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى ٱلْكِتَٰبَ تَمَامًا عَلَى ٱلَّذِىٓ
أَحْسَنَ وَتَفْصِيلًا لِّكُلِّ شَىْءٍ وَهُدًى
وَرَحْمَةً لَّعَلَّهُم بِلِقَآءِ رَبِّهِمْ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٥٤﴾

And We ordained for him [Moses] in the tablets in all matters: exhorting and spelling out all things, and saying: 'Hold fast to them firmly, and command your people to hold fast to their most goodly rules..." [7:145]

وَكَتَبْنَا لَهُۥ فِى
ٱلْأَلْوَاحِ مِن كُلِّ شَىْءٍ مَّوْعِظَةً وَتَفْصِيلًا
لِّكُلِّ شَىْءٍ فَخُذْهَا بِقُوَّةٍ وَأْمُرْ قَوْمَكَ
يَأْخُذُوا۟ بِأَحْسَنِهَا ۚ سَأُورِيكُمْ دَارَ
ٱلْفَٰسِقِينَ ﴿١٤٥﴾

And is not [rightful] one who takes his[/her] stand on clear evidence from his Lord, and supported from Him by what had been conveyed through a witness [of God's truth], and there was before the Book of Musa (Moses) a guide and grace [from God to the human being]. They [who understand] believe in it, and any of those who, leagued together [in common hostility without trying

أَفَمَن كَانَ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦ وَيَتْلُوهُ
شَاهِدٌ مِّنْهُ وَمِن قَبْلِهِۦ كِتَٰبُ مُوسَىٰٓ
إِمَامًا وَرَحْمَةً ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِۦ ۚ
وَمَن يَكْفُرْ بِهِۦ مِنَ ٱلْأَحْزَابِ فَٱلنَّارُ

to understand], stubbornly denies the truth, the fire shall be his [/her] appointed place [in the life to come]. So be you not in doubt of it; it is the truth from your Lord, but most people do not believe. [11:17; see also 46:12]

مَوْعِدُهُۥ ۚ فَلَا تَكُ فِى مِرْيَةٍ مِّنْهُ ۚ إِنَّهُ
ٱلْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّكَ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ
لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

And unto the Jewish people did We forbid what We have mentioned before to you; and We did them no wrong, but it was they who persistently wronged their own selves. [16:118]

وَعَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ هَادُوا۟ حَرَّمْنَا مَا
قَصَصْنَا عَلَيْكَ مِن قَبْلُ ۖ وَمَا ظَلَمْنَٰهُمْ
وَلَٰكِن كَانُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿١١٨﴾

And We gave Musa (Moses) the Book, and made it a guidance to the children of Israel: "Take not unto yourselves any guardian apart from me." [17:2]

وَءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى ٱلْكِتَٰبَ
وَجَعَلْنَٰهُ هُدًى لِّبَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ
أَلَّا تَتَّخِذُوا۟ مِن دُونِى وَكِيلًا ﴿٢﴾

And We gave Musa (Moses) and Harun (Aaron) [through Our revelation] the standard by which to discern the right from the wrong, and a [guiding] light, and a reminding indication for those who are conscious of God, who stand in awe of their Lord even if He is beyond the reach of human perception, and feel pity for themselves at the thought of the Last Hour. [21:48-49]

وَلَقَدْ
ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ وَهَٰرُونَ ٱلْفُرْقَانَ
وَضِيَآءً وَذِكْرًا لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٤٨﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ
يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُم بِٱلْغَيْبِ وَهُم مِّنَ ٱلسَّاعَةِ
مُشْفِقُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

And We gave Musa (Moses) the Book in order that they might see the right way. [23:49; see also 25: 35-36; 37: 117-118]

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى
ٱلْكِتَٰبَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

And after We had caused earlier generations to come to their end, We gave Musa (Moses) the Book as an enlightenment to people and as a guidance and grace, so that they might be mindful. [28:43]

وَلَقَدْ
ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى ٱلْكِتَٰبَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَآ أَهْلَكْنَا
ٱلْقُرُونَ ٱلْأُولَىٰ بَصَآئِرَ لِلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى
وَرَحْمَةً لَّعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

And We gave Musa (Moses) the Book, so be not [O Muhammad] in doubt of meeting him [Moses] in the life to come; or the Angel of Revelation who was sent to Moses with the Torah as he is sent

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى
ٱلْكِتَٰبَ فَلَا تَكُن فِى مِرْيَةٍ مِّن لِّقَآئِهِۦ ۖ

to you with the Quran in this life], and We caused it to be a guidance for the children of Israel, and We raised among them leaders who guide by Our command, as they endured patiently [in carrying out Our guidance] and had sure faith in Our signs and messages. [32:23-24]

وَ جَعَلْنَٰهُ هُدًى لِّبَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ ﴿٢٣﴾
وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا لَمَّا
صَبَرُوا۟ ۖ وَ كَانُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

And We gave Musa (Moses) aforetime the guidance and made the children of Israel heirs to the Book [revealed to Him], as guidance and a reminder to people who have minds. [40:53-54]

وَ لَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى ٱلْهُدَىٰ
وَ أَوْرَثْنَا بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ ﴿٥٣﴾
هُدًى وَ ذِكْرَىٰ لِأُو۟لِى ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ﴿٥٤﴾

Or has he [that stubborn denier of the truth] never been told of what was [stated] in the scrolls of Moses. [53:36; see also 87:19]

أَمْ
لَمْ يُنَبَّأْ بِمَا فِى صُحُفِ مُوسَىٰ ﴿٣٦﴾

The Muslim has to believe in the earlier messages before Muhammad, their conveyors and the books sent down to them [2:285; 4:136]. The Torah was the divine writ sent down to Moses, as a guidance to the essentials of faith and morality and a light to judge what is right and wrong. In general, God's guidance develops a certain mentality and insight as well as an ability to judge the particular cases that may emerge through the continuously changing circumstances. The faith in the One God and in the judgement and the requital in the life to come shields the believer when facing the ups and downs of this worldly life; it makes him/her grateful to God and not arrogant in cases of success, and patient, enduring and steadfast in cases of failure. The individual becomes more stable and balanced through the faith in the All–mighty who never fails to know or to recompense, and thus the society becomes more co-operative and solid as all human beings are equal in their rights and duties before God.

The ability to make the distinction between right and wrong is developed in the believer through God's guidance which nurtures certain sensibilities and sensitivities in the mind and conscience which the Quran calls in Arabic "*furqan,*" or the mentality and feeling which enable one to know the right from the wrong [e.g. 8:29]. This development enhances the ability of the human reason granted by God to people, as indicated by Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Rida in *Tafsir al- Manar* [vol.III, p.60]. The divine guidance and the human mind interact to provide the human being with the standard and measurement for judgement and decision-making in the worldly life with all its ever-changing circumstances and continuous developments and complications. While human reason may be influenced by certain biases or limitations, the divine guidance about right and wrong represents a permanent transcendental light from the Lord which embodies the absolute divine justice that is never biased with or against any individual, gender, ethnicity class or group of people. The Torah, for example, was described in the Quran as guidance, light,

remembrance and standard that enables one to make a distinction between what is right and what is wrong [2:53; 21:48, and see for the description of "*furqan*" for the Quran 2:185; 25:1].

Those who have been devoted to God and the rabbis who are knowledgeable of God's teachings have their human role in keeping the Book alive in the minds and behavior of its followers, and they have been urged to fear God alone and to avoid the selling of God's teachings for a trifling worldly gain [5:44]. They should not conceal any part of the divine guidance, nor should they distort it literally, twist its meaning, or misinterpret its text. If the people of the Book follow the teachings of their Book, be it the Torah or the Gospel, they will get the reward for their behavior in this life and the life to come [5:66]. It is significant that the Quran calls the people of the Book mainly to observe the teachings of their own book in their behavior, if they want to be worthy of being related to this book [5:68].

The Quran reports of some Jews fighting against other Jews, something which is strictly forbidden. As an example, one may refer to what was mentioned in the Bible about the tribe of Benjamin with its warlike character and its challenge to other Jewish tribes which led to a dreadful war [Judges XIX-XXI]. Also, the three Jewish tribes in Yathrib: Bani Qaynuqa', Bani al-Nadir, and Bani Qurayza were involved before Islam in the tribal wars between al-Aws and al-Khazraj, the Arab tribes of the city, the first two Jewish tribes being the allies of Khazraj while the third was an ally of Aws. In this way, Jews killed Jews in support of pagans. Ironically, they sometimes ransomed their captives showing their obedience to their law, even though this very law had already been violated. Such behavior of observing certain rules and ignoring others, conveying some things and concealing or distorting others, literally or conceptually, was repeatedly and sharply condemned by the Quran [e.g. 2:85-86; 5:41, 43, 68; 6:91]. The Bible also mentioned many acts of the children of Israel throughout their history, which contradicted commands that they had received [e.g. Exodus XXXII:9, XXXIII:3, XXXIV:9, Deuteronomy IX:6-8, 23-24, 27].

The law of retaliation was ordained in the Torah "lex talionis," but there was also a place for paying only damages [Exodus XXI:18-19, 22-30, Leviticus XXIV:19-20]. The victim, as reported in the Quran, is urged to forgive [5:45], just as he/she is urged to forgive in Islamic law [2:178]. Social ostracism was stated in different ranges as a penalty for certain offenses. Besides this, punishments may be inflicted on an animal if it caused injury to a human being, and the animal would be punished [e.g. Exodus 21:28-29]. The Quran states that some prohibitions were decided for the Israelites as a punishment for some evildoing [e.g. 4:160, 6:146, 16:118; and see Leviticus VII:23 where all manners of ox, sheep or goat fat are forbidden; see also Leviticus VII:24-25]. In his message, Jesus indicated that he would make lawful for the Jews some of what had been prohibited to them [3:50].

It is significant that the Torah was given to Moses in Sinai, when the children of Israel had become free from the Pharaonic oppression and bondage, a situation which calls to mind the revelation of the Quranic laws in Medina, after the migration of the Prophet Muhammad to it and the emergence of the earliest Islamic state, where the Muslims could live secure from any persecution and could conduct their own social life according to their faith and values. Also, just as the Quran revealed in Mecca dealt only with faith and worship, stressed patience and perseverance, and inspired hope for the future, the revelation

to Moses before the Torah - according to the Quran - had the same characteristics and aspects [e.g.7:128-129; 10:84-89]. *Smith's Bible Dictionary* states under "Law of Moses:" "There must necessarily have been before the law commandments and revelations of a fragmentary character, under which Israel had hitherto grown up. So far, therefore, as they were consistent with the objects of the Jewish law, the customs of Palestine and the laws of Egypt would doubtless be traceable in the Mosaic system... In many cases it rather should be said to guide and modify existing usages than actually sanction them; and the ignorance of their existence may lead to a conception of its ordinances not only erroneous but actually the reverse of the truth. Nor is it less noticeable that the degree of prominence given to each part of the Mosaic system has a similar reference to the period at which the nation had arrived... (So) the political and constitutional law is comparatively imperfect; a few leading principles are laid down to be developed hereafter; but the law is directed rather to sanction the various powers of the state than to define and balance their operations." The author notes that this law "marked and determined the transition of Israel from the condition of a tribe to that of a nation." Besides this he observes "the gradual process by which the law was revealed to the Israelites since its early outline in Exodus XX-XXIII, and the ceremonial outline in XXV-XXX], until the fabric of the Mosaic system gradually grew under the requirements of the time. The first revelation of the Law in anything like a perfect form is found in the book of Deuteronomy. Yet, even then, the revelation was not final; it was the duty of the prophets to amend and explain it in special points (Ezekiel XVIII) and to bring out more clearly its great principles".

Musa (Moses) and the Enlightened Sage

(60) *And [recall to mind] when Musa (Moses) said to his young companion "I shall carry on until I reach the junction of the two seas, even if I [have to] spend ages [for this purpose]!"*
(61) *But when they reached the junction between the two [seas], they forgot all about their fish, and it took its way burrowing into the sea and it disappeared from sight.*
(62) *And after the two had passed over, [Moses] said to his young companion, "Bring us our lunch; we have indeed suffered much fatigue along our journey."*
(63) *Said [the young companion,] "Can you imagine that when we made a stop at the rock for a rest, I forgot about the fish, and none but Satan caused me to forget it [in that way], and it, strangely, took its way into the sea!"*
(64) *[Moses] said, "That is what we were seek-*

وَ إِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِفَتَىٰهُ لَآ
أَبْرَحُ حَتَّىٰٓ أَبْلُغَ مَجْمَعَ ٱلْبَحْرَيْنِ أَوْ
أَمْضِيَ حُقُبًا ﴿٦٠﴾ فَلَمَّا بَلَغَا مَجْمَعَ
بَيْنِهِمَا نَسِيَا حُوتَهُمَا فَٱتَّخَذَ سَبِيلَهُۥ
فِي ٱلْبَحْرِ سَرَبًا ﴿٦١﴾ فَلَمَّا جَاوَزَا قَالَ
لِفَتَىٰهُ ءَاتِنَا غَدَآءَنَا لَقَدْ لَقِينَا مِن سَفَرِنَا
هَٰذَا نَصَبًا ﴿٦٢﴾ قَالَ أَرَءَيْتَ إِذْ أَوَيْنَآ
إِلَى ٱلصَّخْرَةِ فَإِنِّي نَسِيتُ ٱلْحُوتَ وَ مَآ
أَنسَىٰنِيهُ إِلَّا ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ أَنْ أَذْكُرَهُۥ ۚ
وَٱتَّخَذَ سَبِيلَهُۥ فِي ٱلْبَحْرِ عَجَبًا ﴿٦٣﴾
قَالَ ذَٰلِكَ مَا كُنَّا نَبْغِ ۚ فَٱرْتَدَّا عَلَىٰٓ

ing!" And so the two turned back, following the traces of their footsteps.(65)*And they found one of Our servants, on whom We had bestowed from Our grace, and unto whom We had imparted knowledge from Us.*

(66)*Moses said to him, "May I follow you so that you may teach me some consciousness of rightness of which you have been taught?"*

(67) *He said, "Assuredly you will not be able to bear with me patiently.* (68) *And how can you bear patiently about what is beyond [that which] you have ever experienced in your knowledge!"*

(69) *Said he [Moses,] "You shall find me patient, if God wills, and I shall not disobey you in any matter."*

(70) *He [the man] said, "Then if you follow me, question me not on anything until I myself initiate mentioning it to you"* (71) *And so the two went on their way till [they reached the seashore and when] they boarded the ship, [the man] made a hole in it, [and then Moses] said, "Have you made a hole in it so as to cause its passengers to drown? You have indeed done something grievous."*

(72) *He [the man] said, "Did I not say that you could never be able to bear patiently with me!"*

(73) *He [Moses] said, "Do not reprehend me that I have forgotten, and do not make the matter too hard for me."*

(74) *And they both went on, till they met a young man, and he [Moses' companion] slew him. [Whereupon Moses] said, "Have you slain an innocent human being without [a legitimate retaliation for another one's life? You have indeed done something terribly rejectable!"*

(75) *He [the man] said, "Did I not say that you could never bear with me patiently?"*

(76) *He [Moses] said, "If I should ever question you after this, then do not keep me in your company any more; and you will have sufficient excuse in my view [to do this]!"*

(77) *And they both went on till they came*

ءَاثَارِهِمَا قَصَصًا ﴿٦٤﴾ فَوَجَدَا عَبْدًا مِّنْ
عِبَادِنَآ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُ رَحْمَةً مِّنْ عِندِنَا
وَعَلَّمْنَٰهُ مِن لَّدُنَّا عِلْمًا ﴿٦٥﴾ قَالَ لَهُۥ
مُوسَىٰ هَلْ أَتَّبِعُكَ عَلَىٰٓ أَن تُعَلِّمَنِ مِمَّا
عُلِّمْتَ رُشْدًا ﴿٦٦﴾ قَالَ إِنَّكَ لَن تَسْتَطِيعَ
مَعِىَ صَبْرًا ﴿٦٧﴾ وَكَيْفَ تَصْبِرُ عَلَىٰ مَا
لَمْ تُحِطْ بِهِۦ خُبْرًا ﴿٦٨﴾ قَالَ سَتَجِدُنِىٓ
إِن شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ صَابِرًا وَلَآ أَعْصِى لَكَ
أَمْرًا ﴿٦٩﴾ قَالَ فَإِنِ ٱتَّبَعْتَنِى فَلَا
تَسْـَٔلْنِى عَن شَىْءٍ حَتَّىٰٓ أُحْدِثَ لَكَ مِنْهُ
ذِكْرًا ﴿٧٠﴾ فَٱنطَلَقَا حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا رَكِبَا فِى
ٱلسَّفِينَةِ خَرَقَهَا ۖ قَالَ أَخَرَقْتَهَا لِتُغْرِقَ
أَهْلَهَا لَقَدْ جِئْتَ شَيْـًٔا إِمْرًا ﴿٧١﴾ قَالَ
أَلَمْ أَقُلْ إِنَّكَ لَن تَسْتَطِيعَ مَعِىَ صَبْرًا
﴿٧٢﴾ قَالَ لَا تُؤَاخِذْنِى بِمَا نَسِيتُ وَلَا
تُرْهِقْنِى مِنْ أَمْرِى عُسْرًا ﴿٧٣﴾ فَٱنطَلَقَا
حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا لَقِيَا غُلَٰمًا فَقَتَلَهُۥ قَالَ
أَقَتَلْتَ نَفْسًا زَكِيَّةًۢ بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ لَّقَدْ جِئْتَ
شَيْـًٔا نُّكْرًا ﴿٧٤﴾ ۝ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُل لَّكَ
إِنَّكَ لَن تَسْتَطِيعَ مَعِىَ صَبْرًا ﴿٧٥﴾ قَالَ
إِن سَأَلْتُكَ عَن شَىْءٍۭ بَعْدَهَا فَلَا
تُصَٰحِبْنِى ۖ قَدْ بَلَغْتَ مِن لَّدُنِّى عُذْرًا
﴿٧٦﴾ فَٱنطَلَقَا حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَآ أَتَيَآ أَهْلَ

upon the people of a town; and asked them for food, but they refused them hospitality. There, they found a wall about to tumble down, and [the enlightened man] set it up.[Whereupon Moses] said, "Had you so wished, surely you could have got some payment for it."
(78) *[The enlightened man] said, "This is the parting point between me and you. Now I will tell you the real meaning behind all [these events] that you could not bear patiently.*
(79) *"As for the ship, it belonged to some poor people who were toiling upon the sea, and I wanted to cause some damage to it, for there was behind them a king who used to seize illegitimately every [faultless] ship by force.*
(80) *"And as for the young man, his parents were [true] believers, whereas we had every reason [according to what I surely know] that he would bring a formidable burden upon them by his swell-headed evil-doing and rebellion.* (81) *"Thus, we desired that their Lord grant them in his place another one more pure than him and closer to the parents in loving relationship.*
(82) *"And as for the wall, it belonged to two orphan boys [living] in the town, and under it was a treasure belonging to them, and their father was a righteous man. So your Lord willed that [these treasures should be kept secure and] when they come of age they should bring forth their treasure by your Lord's grace. "And I did not do [any of] this of my own accord; this is the real meaning behind all [those events] that you could not bear patiently."* [18:60-82]

قَرْيَةٍ ٱسْتَطْعَمَآ أَهْلَهَا فَأَبَوْا۟ أَن
يُضَيِّفُوهُمَا فَوَجَدَا فِيهَا جِدَارًا يُرِيدُ أَن
يَنقَضَّ فَأَقَامَهُۥ ۖ قَالَ لَوْ شِئْتَ لَتَّخَذْتَ
عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا ﴿٧٧﴾ قَالَ هَٰذَا فِرَاقُ بَيْنِى
وَبَيْنِكَ ۚ سَأُنَبِّئُكَ بِتَأْوِيلِ مَا لَمْ تَسْتَطِع
عَّلَيْهِ صَبْرًا ﴿٧٨﴾ أَمَّا ٱلسَّفِينَةُ فَكَانَتْ
لِمَسَٰكِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ فِى ٱلْبَحْرِ فَأَرَدتُّ أَنْ
أَعِيبَهَا وَكَانَ وَرَآءَهُم مَّلِكٌ يَأْخُذُ كُلَّ
سَفِينَةٍ غَصْبًا ﴿٧٩﴾ وَأَمَّا ٱلْغُلَٰمُ فَكَانَ
أَبَوَاهُ مُؤْمِنَيْنِ فَخَشِينَآ أَن يُرْهِقَهُمَا
طُغْيَٰنًا وَكُفْرًا ﴿٨٠﴾ فَأَرَدْنَآ أَن
يُبْدِلَهُمَا رَبُّهُمَا خَيْرًا مِّنْهُ زَكَوٰةً
وَأَقْرَبَ رُحْمًا ﴿٨١﴾ وَأَمَّا ٱلْجِدَارُ فَكَانَ
لِغُلَٰمَيْنِ يَتِيمَيْنِ فِى ٱلْمَدِينَةِ وَكَانَ
تَحْتَهُۥ كَنزٌ لَّهُمَا وَكَانَ أَبُوهُمَا صَٰلِحًا
فَأَرَادَ رَبُّكَ أَن يَبْلُغَآ أَشُدَّهُمَا
وَيَسْتَخْرِجَا كَنزَهُمَا رَحْمَةً مِّن رَّبِّكَ ۚ
وَمَا فَعَلْتُهُۥ عَنْ أَمْرِى ۚ ذَٰلِكَ تَأْوِيلُ مَا لَمْ
تَسْطِع عَّلَيْهِ صَبْرًا ﴿٨٢﴾

This is really a story which brings up significant issues. In the Quranic stories, we know that geographical or historical particulars are not necessarily provided, since the main goal is the moral message behind the story, and so in this Quranic story, there are no specifics given about the enlightened man and his origins. The general and essential message of the story is that any human knowledge is relative compared to God's knowledge, even if that human being is Prophet Moses who was formed under God's eye and chosen for His Own service [20:39, 41] and to whom God spoke directly [4:164]. Yet, the particulars of the story raise serious points for discussion, especially when we have in mind

how the story has been used as a support for the mystical against the rational, or the esoteric against the exoteric, in the human cognition. Can the individual insight however luminous and cognitive it may be, allow the causing of damage and killing? And due to the lack of specific details, can we assume this story to be merely a symbolic parable rather than one with factual information or for concrete implementation?

There is a tradition of the Prophet Muhammad, reported by his Companion Ubayy ibn Ka'b and included in the two reliable collections of al-Bukhari and Muslim, as well as in that of al-Tirmidhi, that supports the story and gives the name of "al-Khidr" or "al-Khadir" to the enlightened man. Moses had once mentioned that he was the most knowledgeable among people, so God revealed to him that there was a servant of His living at the junction of the two seas, on whom God had bestowed grace and unto whom He had imparted knowledge from Him. He would find the place of that humble and enlightened servant of God when a fish, that he should take with him, would disappear back into the sea. The Commentators on the Quran had different suggestions as to the location of the two seas: one was that they were the Persian and Byzantine seas and the junction would accordingly be a spot on the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean sea, which is the nearest site to both. Another suggestion was that the two seas were the Dead Sea, a lake that has been called a sea, and the Red Sea (Bahr ul-Qulzum), and its eastern arm "Gulf of Ayla" in particular. A third suggestion points to the area between the Qulzum Sea (Red Sea) and the Gulf of Qulzum in particular on the one side and the Byzantine Sea (Mediterranean) on the other. Other suggestions went so far as the junction of the two rivers Kyros (al-Karr) and Araxe (al-Rass) in northern Armenia in the east, and the meeting point of the Mediterranean sea and the Atlantic Ocean at the Strait of Gibraltar and the city of Tangier. All these suggestions cannot comply with the fact that Moses spent all his life after the Exodus in Sinai from which the suggested places are too far. The most reasonable location came later from Yusuf Ali in his English translation of the Quran, in which he suggested the junction of the two arms of the Red Sea (Bahr al-Qulzum)previously known as the Gulf of al-Qulzum and now known as the Gulf of Suez, and the Gulf of Ayla (now 'Aqaba), since they enclose the Sinai Peninsula in which Moses and the Israelites spent many years in their wanderings [note 2405 on the verse 18:60].

Other commentators interpreted the verses metaphorically. Al Baydawi, in his commentary on the Quran [verse 18:60], understood the two seas as an allegorical representation of the two sources of knowledge: the senses and the human intellect on one side (*ilm al-zahir*) and the spiritual intuitive insight or the esoteric on the other (*ilm al-batin*). The same interpretation was given to the two seas that meet but remain separate and distinctive and do not overpass or transgress one another [55:19-20]. This leads us to the next question: who was that mysterious sage al-Khidr? Was he a prophet or just an enlightened and wise man? I am more inclined towards the latter suggestion. In Muhammad Asad's view "al-Khadir" or "al-Khidr," according to what the Prophet's tradition called him, which means "the green one," refers to "an epithet rather than a name, implying that his wisdom was ever fresh ("green") and imperishable: a notion which bears out the assumption that we have here an allegoric figure symbolizing the utmost depth of mystic insight accessible to man" [note 73 on the verse 18:65]. Asad also mentions that the "fish" was "an ancient religious symbol, possibly signifying divine knowledge or life eternal." He therefore says that "there is no doubt that this tradition is a kind of allegoric introduction to our Quranic parable" [note 67 on the verse 18:60]. But as for the mystic or Sufi belief

which some people hold that this mysterious person, with his miraculous spirituality, enjoys a permanent life, is rejected by the majority of scholars including al-Bukhari, Ibn Atiyya, the prominent commentator on the Quran, and Ibn al-Arabi, the known Maliki jurist.

If one takes the story as referring to real events that took place, then it raises important questions about the significance of the indefinite esoteric spiritual cognition and its relation to and effect on the definite knowledge acquired by the senses and the human intellect as well as by the divine message as represented in certain concrete words understood by the mind. The place of "the spiritual reality" (*al-haqiqa*) in relation to the legal rule (*al-shari'a*) was a hot controversial issue argued by Muslim jurists and mystics, "sufis," and it led to a known conflict in the Islamic intellectual heritage. The distinguished commentator on the Quran, al-Qurtubi, who had in his learning an obvious sufi dimension which was reflected in his commentary, noticed the serious connotations that could be implied in the story and tried to refute them. He indicated that the spiritual knowledge of al-Khadir was restricted to "certain events or details" and that it should not be considered superior to the knowledge of Moses in a general or absolute way. He quoted his teacher Abu-l- 'Abbas al-Qurtubi who judged as heretics those who say that enlightened sufis who have their special contact with God and to whom "the reality" is exposed, do not need to obey the teachings and the laws revealed to the prophets for the common people. He stated that one who says that he follows what he/she knows in his/her heart to be God's command and who accordingly does not need what has been indicated in the Quran and the Sunna of the Prophet - such a person is putting himself/herself as a prophet, and that is a heresy since Muslims believe in the termination of prophethood [vol. 11; commentary on the verses 18:79-82].

Even if we draw a distinction between a prophet, *al-nabiyy*, and the enlightened devout sufi, *al-waliyy*, this story still presents specific problems. The conveyor of God's message presents people with a defined source of knowledge as represented in a certain book or in specific oral traditions, and made available to all people, while the enlightened sufi assumes a source of knowledge which is personal and is received and understood by him/her only. What the enlightened sufi may know as a "reality" through his/her special channels with God, and according to which he/she acts, may be seen as "clearly" damaging to others' property or even their lives as in the case of this story. This is very serious and the only way to understand this killing in a reasonable way is to bear in mind a few points that may clarify the situation.

Firstly, that the Arabic word "*ghulam*" does not necessarily mean a child in the Arabic language, especially according to some sources such as al-Kalbi, and al-Suhayli, and Wahb [quoted by Ibn Atiyya in his commentary volume 10 and volume 11, Qurtubi commentary on the verses 18:74-76]. Thus, the person killed here could have been an adult. Secondly, while Moses did not know of the slain person's evil deeds towards his parents and others, since he did not live in the area, the details of this were probably known to the people of the area as well as to the enlightened sage, as some narratives indicated, and this seems to reinforce the fact that the person was an adult [Ibn Atiyya in his commentary on the verse volume 10]. This also might explain why the evil young man was left to face death without any help from the people of the area, or from those who were with him when he was killed. Some commentators such as al-Qurtubi tried to explain this lack of help by suggesting that the killing - in addition to the damage which al-Khidr caused to the

ship - was only visible to the enlightened sage, Moses, and naturally the victim, because of the miraculous spiritual gifts with which the sage was bestowed. But was the victim also prevented from shouting and asking for help due to these miraculous spiritual gifts of al-Khidr? Thirdly, the Arabic verb used in the verse 18:80, "*khashina,*" literally meaning "we feared," can also sometimes denote "to have reason to fear" and thus "to know" [see the dictionaries: *Taj al-Arus* and *al-Sihah*, with specific reference to this verse, and see the commentary of al-Qurtubi vol. 11 on the verse 18:80, and note the same use of a verb close to this in meaning, *khafa*, in this meaning in the verse 2:229].

This sura (18), which contains this information about al-Khidr, also mentions certain other stories that require contemplation about the persons, times and places of their occurrence. Certain significant aspects of these stories will be briefly highlighted here. It is difficult to precisely determine what is meant by some parts of these stories, although their educational purpose can be grasped. For more details on these stories, see the classical commentaries such as those of al-Tabari, Ibn Kathir, al-Fakhr al-Razi, Ibn Atiyya, al-Qurtubi, etc. on the verses that will be referred to in sura 18, and the notes related to these verses in the translations of the Quran by Yusuf Ali and Muhammad Asad.

The first part of the sura refers to "The Men of The Cave" [verses 9-26], who were reported to have slept for a long time. The story may raise some questions about whether this long sleep and awakening were physical or spiritual. In any case, the moral lessons in this story are obvious and impressive. It is used, or abused, by some Sufi passivists to justify complete isolation from the society so that one can concentrate on the individual spirituality; this may contradict many clear teachings in the Quran and Sunna, especially the most obvious ones about enjoining the doing of what is right and forbidding the doing of what is wrong [e.g. 3:104, 110; 5:78-79; 9:71, 112; 22:41; 31:17]. Then, the sura refers to a certain person of power and knowledge (*Dhu-l-Qarnayn*, meaning "the man living in two centuries" or "the man with two horns on his headgear") who had wide travels to unspecified areas, where he came across uncommon experiences with certain societies and was able to offer them help through his power or knowledge [83-98]. The story of this man, especially the part of it which is related to some people's desire to build a barrier to protect themselves from the evil-doing of the two groups of Ya'juj and Ma'juj (the identification and location of whom has been arguable among commentators and scholars, e.g. whether they are Gog and Magog of the Bible [Genesis X:2; I Chronicles I:5; Ezekiel XXXVIII:2, XXXIX:6; Revelations XX:8] or Mongols and Tatars), raises questions about its content and its historical, geographical and ethnographical aspects. In any case, the moral goals are achieved through the story. Dhu-l-Qarnayn used his knowledge, with the help of the people which he needed for this task, to build the required barrier.

The Quran is sometimes definite in the historical significance of its stories, such as the stories of Joseph and Moses in Egypt [e.g. 12:111; 28:3-6]. At other times it explicitly states that it presents allegorical and parabolic stories [*mathal* in Arabic] for educational purposes [e.g. 2:26; 6:76, 112, 259; 17:89; 18:32-45, 54; 22:73; 24:35; 29:41, 43; 39:27; 47:15; 59:21; 68:18-33]. Between these two clear categories of history and parables, there is a group of stories which require deep study and thinking, and as a result different views may be provided for interpretation. Even the educational message itself may be understood in different ways. However, any interpretation ought to be bound to the text, the context, the authentic relevant traditions of the Prophet, and the linguistic rules and usage, especially at the time of revelation.

إِنَّآ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ كَمَآ
أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰ نُوحٍ وَ ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ ۚ
وَ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَ إِسْمَٰعِيلَ
وَ إِسْحَٰقَ وَ يَعْقُوبَ وَ ٱلْأَسْبَاطِ وَ عِيسَىٰ
وَ أَيُّوبَ وَ يُونُسَ وَ هَٰرُونَ وَ سُلَيْمَٰنَ ۚ
وَ ءَاتَيْنَا دَاوُۥدَ زَبُورًا ﴿١٦٣﴾

We have sent to you [O Muhammad] revelation, as We sent it to Nuh (Noah) and the prophets after him; and [also] We sent inspiration to Ibrahim (Abraham), and Isma'il (Ishmael), and Is-haq (Isaac) and Ya'qub (Jacob) and their descendants [the tribes, al-Asbat]; and to `Isa (Jesus), and Ayyub (Job), and Yunus (Jonah), and Harun (Aaron), and Sulayman (Solomon), and to Dawud (David) We gave a book of divine wisdom. [4:163; see also 6:84, 17:55]

أَلَمْ تَرَ
إِلَى ٱلْمَلَإِ مِنۢ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ
مُوسَىٰٓ ۘ إِذْ قَالُوا۟ لِنَبِىٍّ لَّهُمُ ٱبْعَثْ لَنَا
مَلِكًا نُّقَٰتِلْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ قَالَ هَلْ
عَسَيْتُمْ إِن كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْقِتَالُ أَلَّا
تُقَٰتِلُوا۟ ۖ قَالُوا۟ وَ مَا لَنَآ أَلَّا نُقَٰتِلَ فِى
سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَ قَدْ أُخْرِجْنَا مِن دِيَٰرِنَا
وَ أَبْنَآئِنَا ۖ فَلَمَّا كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْقِتَالُ
تَوَلَّوْا۟ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّنْهُمْ ۗ وَ ٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌۢ
بِٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٢٤٦﴾ وَ قَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ قَدْ بَعَثَ لَكُمْ طَالُوتَ مَلِكًا ۚ قَالُوٓا۟
أَنَّىٰ يَكُونُ لَهُ ٱلْمُلْكُ عَلَيْنَا وَ نَحْنُ أَحَقُّ
بِٱلْمُلْكِ مِنْهُ وَ لَمْ يُؤْتَ سَعَةً مِّنَ ٱلْمَالِ ۚ
قَالَ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱصْطَفَىٰهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَ زَادَهُۥ
بَسْطَةً فِى ٱلْعِلْمِ وَ ٱلْجِسْمِ ۖ وَ ٱللَّهُ
يُؤْتِى مُلْكَهُۥ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَ ٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ
عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٤٧﴾ وَ قَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ إِنَّ ءَايَةَ
مُلْكِهِۦٓ أَن يَأْتِيَكُمُ ٱلتَّابُوتُ فِيهِ سَكِينَةٌ

(246) *Have you not known about those leading persons among the children of Israel, after the time of Musa (Moses), when they said to a prophet of theirs, "Raise up for us a king, so that we might fight for God's cause"? He said, "Might it be that, if fighting is ordained for you, you would refrain from fighting?" They said, "Why should we not fight in God's cause, while we have been driven from our own homes and deprived of our [families and] children [who were slain by our enemies]?" Yet, when fighting was ordained for them, they turned their backs except a few of them; and God has full knowledge of the evildoers.* (247) *And their prophet said to them, "Now God has raised Talut (Saul) for you as a king." They said, "How should he be a king over us and we have more right than he to kingship, and he has not been given abundant wealth?" He [the prophet] said, "God has chosen him over you, and has granted him abundantly in his knowledge and body; and God gives the dominion to whom He wills, and God is All-embracing [in His knowledge and His will], All-knowing."*
(248) *And their Prophet said unto them, "It will be a sign for his [legitimate] dominion [Talut in the Quran, Saul in the Bible (I Samuel 8 ff.)] that the tabut [Ark of the Covenant] will come to you bringing peace*

within yourselves that is endowed by your Lord, and with a remnant of what the House of Musa [Moses] and the House of Harun [Aaron] left behind, borne by the angels. Surely, in that shall be a sign for you if you are [truly] believers." (249) *And when Talut (Saul) went forth with his forces, he said, "God will now try you by a river: whoever [of you] drinks of it does not belong to me, and whoever tastes it not belongs to me, but exempted shall be one who may scoop up a handful." But they drank of it, except a few of them; and when he and those who have kept their faith with him crossed it [the river], the others said, "We have no power today against Jalut [Goliath] and his forces."*
Said those who kept in mind that they should meet God, "How often has a small group overcome a numerous group by God's leave, and God is with those who are patient and enduring." (250) *And when they confronted Jalut (Goliath), and his forces, they said, "O our Lord! Pour out upon us patience and endurance, and make firm our steps, and succor us against the people who have stubbornly denied the truth."*
(251) *And thereupon they defeated them by God's leave, and Dawud (David) killed Jalut (Goliath); and God gave him [David] dominion and wisdom, and imparted to him the knowledge of whatever He willed. And had He not enabled people to repel some by the means of others, corruption would surely overwhelm the earth; but God is limitless in His bounty unto all beings.* [2:246-251]

مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَبَقِيَّةٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ ءَالُ مُوسَىٰ
وَءَالُ هَٰرُونَ تَحْمِلُهُ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ ۚ إِنَّ فِى
ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٤٨﴾
فَلَمَّا فَصَلَ طَالُوتُ بِٱلْجُنُودِ قَالَ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ مُبْتَلِيكُم بِنَهَرٍ فَمَن شَرِبَ مِنْهُ فَلَيْسَ
مِنِّى وَمَن لَّمْ يَطْعَمْهُ فَإِنَّهُۥ مِنِّىٓ إِلَّا مَنِ
ٱغْتَرَفَ غُرْفَةًۢ بِيَدِهِۦ ۚ فَشَرِبُوا۟ مِنْهُ إِلَّا
قَلِيلًا مِّنْهُمْ ۚ فَلَمَّا جَاوَزَهُۥ هُوَ وَٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا۟ مَعَهُۥ قَالُوا۟ لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا ٱلْيَوْمَ
بِجَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِۦ ۗ قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ
يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُم مُّلَٰقُوا۟ ٱللَّهِ كَم مِّن فِئَةٍ
قَلِيلَةٍ غَلَبَتْ فِئَةً كَثِيرَةًۢ بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ
وَٱللَّهُ مَعَ ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ ﴿٢٤٩﴾ وَلَمَّا بَرَزُوا۟
لِجَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِۦ قَالُوا۟ رَبَّنَآ أَفْرِغْ
عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا وَثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَنَا وَٱنصُرْنَا
عَلَى ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٢٥٠﴾ فَهَزَمُوهُم
بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ وَقَتَلَ دَاوُۥدُ جَالُوتَ
وَءَاتَىٰهُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُلْكَ وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ وَعَلَّمَهُۥ
مِمَّا يَشَآءُ ۗ وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ ٱللَّهِ ٱلنَّاسَ
بَعْضَهُم بِبَعْضٍ لَّفَسَدَتِ ٱلْأَرْضُ وَلَٰكِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٢٥١﴾

Those of the children of Israel who were bent on stubbornly denying the truth were cursed by the tongue of Dawud (David) and of Isa (Jesus) the son of Maryam (Mary), as a result of their rebelling [against God] and their transgressing persistently the bounds of what is right. They would not prevent one another from doing whatever

لُعِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِنۢ بَنِىٓ
إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ عَلَىٰ لِسَانِ دَاوُۥدَ وَعِيسَى
ٱبْنِ مَرْيَمَ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوا۟ وَّكَانُوا۟
يَعْتَدُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾ كَانُوا۟ لَا يَتَنَاهَوْنَ عَن

evil they might do; how hateful indeed was that which they were used to do. [5:78-79]

مُنكَرٍ فَعَلُوهُ ۚ لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾

(17) *Bear you with patience [O Muhammad] what they say, and remember Our servant Dawud (David), the man of might, who always turned to Us.*

(18) *And We caused the mountains to join him in exalting Our limitless glory in the evening and at sunrise,* (19) *and [likewise] the birds assembled before him, and all always turn to Him. (20) And We strengthened his dominion, and bestowed upon him wisdom and the power of conviction and decisiveness.*

(21) *And has the story of the [two] litigants come to you, when they surmounted the walls of the sanctuary [in which he prayed],* (22) *and he moved back as he was frightened of them. They said, "Fear not! [We are but] two litigants: one has wronged the other, so rule between us with justice, and transgress not and guide us to the right path.*

(23) *"This brother of mine has ninety-nine ewes and I have only one ewe; and yet he said to me, 'Give her over to me into my charge', and he could prevail over me in this dispute."*

(24) *He [David] said, "He has certainly wronged you by demanding that your [only] ewe be added to his [many] ewes; and indeed many partners do wrong one another, save those who attained to faith [in God] and do righteous deeds, and how few they are!" And [suddenly] David apprehended that We had tried him; therefore, he sought his Lord's forgiveness, and he fell down bowing and turned unto Him in repentance.*

(25) *And thereupon We forgave him; and he enjoyed precedence with us, and a beauteous return [to Us awaits him].* (26) *"O David! We did indeed make you a vicegerent on earth; so rule over people with [justice], and never follow a mere fleeting whim, lest it should lead*

ٱصْبِرْ
عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَ ٱذْكُرْ عَبْدَنَا دَاوُۥدَ ذَا
ٱلْأَيْدِ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ أَوَّابٌ ﴿١٧﴾ إِنَّا سَخَّرْنَا
ٱلْجِبَالَ مَعَهُۥ يُسَبِّحْنَ بِٱلْعَشِيِّ
وَٱلْإِشْرَاقِ ﴿١٨﴾ وَ ٱلطَّيْرَ مَحْشُورَةً ۖ كُلٌّ
لَّهُۥٓ أَوَّابٌ ﴿١٩﴾ وَ شَدَدْنَا مُلْكَهُۥ
وَءَاتَيْنَٰهُ ٱلْحِكْمَةَ وَ فَصْلَ ٱلْخِطَابِ ﴿٢٠﴾
۞ وَ هَلْ أَتَىٰكَ نَبَؤُا۟ ٱلْخَصْمِ إِذْ تَسَوَّرُوا۟
ٱلْمِحْرَابَ ﴿٢١﴾ إِذْ دَخَلُوا۟ عَلَىٰ دَاوُۥدَ
فَفَزِعَ مِنْهُمْ ۖ قَالُوا۟ لَا تَخَفْ ۖ خَصْمَانِ
بَغَىٰ بَعْضُنَا عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ ۖ فَٱحْكُم بَيْنَنَا
بِٱلْحَقِّ وَ لَا تُشْطِطْ وَ ٱهْدِنَآ إِلَىٰ سَوَآءِ
ٱلصِّرَٰطِ ﴿٢٢﴾ إِنَّ هَٰذَآ أَخِى لَهُۥ تِسْعٌ
وَتِسْعُونَ نَعْجَةً وَ لِىَ نَعْجَةٌ وَٰحِدَةٌ فَقَالَ
أَكْفِلْنِيهَا وَ عَزَّنِى فِى ٱلْخِطَابِ ﴿٢٣﴾
قَالَ لَقَدْ ظَلَمَكَ بِسُؤَالِ نَعْجَتِكَ إِلَىٰ
نِعَاجِهِۦ ۖ وَ إِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ ٱلْخُلَطَآءِ
لَيَبْغِى بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا۟ وَ عَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ ۗ وَ قَلِيلٌ مَّا
هُمْ ۗ وَ ظَنَّ دَاوُۥدُ أَنَّمَا فَتَنَّٰهُ فَٱسْتَغْفَرَ
رَبَّهُۥ وَ خَرَّ رَاكِعًا وَ أَنَابَ ۩ ﴿٢٤﴾
فَغَفَرْنَا لَهُۥ ذَٰلِكَ ۖ وَ إِنَّ لَهُۥ عِندَنَا
لَزُلْفَىٰ وَ حُسْنَ مَـَٔابٍ ﴿٢٥﴾ يَٰدَاوُۥدُ إِنَّا
جَعَلْنَٰكَ خَلِيفَةً فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَٱحْكُم بَيْنَ
ٱلنَّاسِ بِٱلْحَقِّ وَ لَا تَتَّبِعِ ٱلْهَوَىٰ فَيُضِلَّكَ
عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَضِلُّونَ عَن

you astray from the way of God; surely, for those who go astray from the way of God there is severe suffering that awaits them, as they have forgotten the Day of Reckoning." [38:17-26]

سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌۢ بِمَا نَسُوا۟
يَوْمَ ٱلْحِسَابِ ﴿٢٦﴾

And [remember] Dawud and Sulayman (David and Solomon), when both of them gave rulings concerning the tillage when some people's sheep had strayed by night [and destroyed the tillage], and We watched their rulings. We caused Solomon to understand the case [in a better way], yet We granted both sound judgement and knowledge; and We caused the mountains to join David in extolling Our limitless glory, and likewise the birds; as We are able to do [all things].
And We taught him how to make covering for you[your bodies] to shield you against your violence [that emerges between one another]; then are you grateful? And unto Solomon [We subjected] the wind, strongly blowing, that ran at his command unto that land that We had blessed, and We have knowledge of everything. And of the Satans some dived for him and did other work besides, and We kept watch over them. [21:78-82]

وَدَاوُۥدَ وَسُلَيْمَٰنَ إِذْ يَحْكُمَانِ فِى
ٱلْحَرْثِ إِذْ نَفَشَتْ فِيهِ غَنَمُ ٱلْقَوْمِ وَكُنَّا
لِحُكْمِهِمْ شَٰهِدِينَ ﴿٧٨﴾ فَفَهَّمْنَٰهَا
سُلَيْمَٰنَ ۚ وَكُلًّا ءَاتَيْنَا حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا ۚ
وَسَخَّرْنَا مَعَ دَاوُۥدَ ٱلْجِبَالَ يُسَبِّحْنَ
وَٱلطَّيْرَ ۚ وَكُنَّا فَٰعِلِينَ ﴿٧٩﴾ وَعَلَّمْنَٰهُ
صَنْعَةَ لَبُوسٍ لَّكُمْ لِتُحْصِنَكُم مِّنۢ بَأْسِكُمْ ۖ
فَهَلْ أَنتُمْ شَٰكِرُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾ وَلِسُلَيْمَٰنَ
ٱلرِّيحَ عَاصِفَةً تَجْرِى بِأَمْرِهِۦٓ إِلَى
ٱلْأَرْضِ ٱلَّتِى بَٰرَكْنَا فِيهَا ۚ وَكُنَّا بِكُلِّ
شَىْءٍ عَٰلِمِينَ ﴿٨١﴾ وَمِنَ ٱلشَّيَٰطِينِ مَن
يَغُوصُونَ لَهُۥ وَيَعْمَلُونَ عَمَلًا دُونَ
ذَٰلِكَ ۖ وَكُنَّا لَهُمْ حَٰفِظِينَ ﴿٨٢﴾

(15) *And We granted Dawud (David) and Sulayman (Solomon) knowledge, and they said, "All praise and gratitude is due to God, who has favored us above many of His believing servants."* (16) *And Solomon was David's heir, and he said, "O you people! We have been taught the speech of birds, and have been given [in abundance] of all [good] things; surely this is an evident favor."*
(17) *And there were gathered to Sulayman [Solomon] his hosts of invisible beings [jinn] and of human beings and birds, all organized and led according to orders,* (18) *till when they came upon a valley where ants dwelt, an ant*

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا دَاوُۥدَ
وَسُلَيْمَٰنَ عِلْمًا ۖ وَقَالَا ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى
فَضَّلَنَا عَلَىٰ كَثِيرٍ مِّنْ عِبَادِهِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ
﴿١٥﴾ وَوَرِثَ سُلَيْمَٰنُ دَاوُۥدَ ۖ وَقَالَ
يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ عُلِّمْنَا مَنطِقَ ٱلطَّيْرِ
وَأُوتِينَا مِن كُلِّ شَىْءٍ ۖ إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَهُوَ
ٱلْفَضْلُ ٱلْمُبِينُ ﴿١٦﴾ وَحُشِرَ لِسُلَيْمَٰنَ
جُنُودُهُۥ مِنَ ٱلْجِنِّ وَٱلْإِنسِ وَٱلطَّيْرِ
فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَآ أَتَوْا

said, "O ants! Enter your dwelling places, lest Solomon and his hosts crush you without even feeling that they are doing so!"
(19) *Thereupon he [Solomon] smiled, laughing at its words, and said, "O my Lord! Lead me to be ever grateful for your blessings wherewith You have blessed me and my parents, and to do righteousness that pleases you, and do You admit me by Your grace among Your righteous worshippers."*
(20) *And he checked the birds, then he said, "How is it that I do not see the hoopoe? Or could he be among the absent?* (21) *I will certainly punish him severely or kill him unless he brings a clear justification [for his absence]?"*
(22) *But he [the hoopoe] tarried not long, and [as he came] he said, "I have reached something that you have never yet reached, and I have come to you from Saba' (Sheba) with sure news.*
(23) *"I found there a woman ruling over them; and she has been given [abundance] of all [good] things, and she has a splendid throne.*
(24) *"I found her and her people prostrating themselves in adoration of the sun instead of God; and Satan has decked out fair their deeds to them [through their erroneous thinking] and has barred them from the path [of God], and thus they do not find the right way.* (25) *Ought they not prostrate themselves in adoration of God who brings forth all that is hidden in the heavens and on earth, and He knows all that you conceal and all that you reveal?*
(26) *"The One God, save Him there is no god, the Lord of the mighty throne."*
(27) *Said he [Solomon], "We shall see whether you have told the truth or you are one of the liars.* (28) *Go with this letter of mine, and cast it unto them, and then turn back from them and see what they come to."* (29) *[And so the hoopoe did and] she [the Queen] said,"O you leading persons! A distinguished letter has been brought to me.* (30) *It is from Solomon, and it is 'In the name of God, the All-merciful,*

عَلَىٰ وَادِ ٱلنَّمْلِ قَالَتْ نَمْلَةٌ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا
ٱلنَّمْلُ ٱدْخُلُوا۟ مَسَٰكِنَكُمْ لَا يَحْطِمَنَّكُمْ
سُلَيْمَٰنُ وَجُنُودُهُۥ وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ
(١٨) فَتَبَسَّمَ ضَاحِكًا مِّن قَوْلِهَا وَقَالَ
رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِىٓ أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ ٱلَّتِىٓ
أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَىَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَٰلِدَىَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ
صَٰلِحًا تَرْضَىٰهُ وَأَدْخِلْنِى بِرَحْمَتِكَ فِى
عِبَادِكَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ (١٩) وَتَفَقَّدَ ٱلطَّيْرَ
فَقَالَ مَالِىَ لَآ أَرَى ٱلْهُدْهُدَ أَمْ كَانَ مِنَ
ٱلْغَآئِبِينَ (٢٠) لَأُعَذِّبَنَّهُۥ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا
أَوْ لَأَا۟ذْبَحَنَّهُۥٓ أَوْ لَيَأْتِيَنِّى بِسُلْطَٰنٍ مُّبِينٍ
(٢١) فَمَكَثَ غَيْرَ بَعِيدٍ فَقَالَ أَحَطتُ بِمَا
لَمْ تُحِطْ بِهِۦ وَجِئْتُكَ مِن سَبَإٍۭ بِنَبَإٍ يَقِينٍ
(٢٢) إِنِّى وَجَدتُّ ٱمْرَأَةً تَمْلِكُهُمْ
وَأُوتِيَتْ مِن كُلِّ شَىْءٍ وَلَهَا عَرْشٌ عَظِيمٌ
(٢٣) وَجَدتُّهَا وَقَوْمَهَا يَسْجُدُونَ
لِلشَّمْسِ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ
ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ فَصَدَّهُمْ عَنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ
فَهُمْ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ (٢٤) أَلَّا يَسْجُدُوا۟ لِلَّهِ
ٱلَّذِى يُخْرِجُ ٱلْخَبْءَ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تُخْفُونَ وَمَا تُعْلِنُونَ
(٢٥) ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ رَبُّ ٱلْعَرْشِ
ٱلْعَظِيمِ ۞ (٢٦) ۞ قَالَ سَنَنظُرُ أَصَدَقْتَ
أَمْ كُنتَ مِنَ ٱلْكَٰذِبِينَ (٢٧) ٱذْهَب
بِّكِتَٰبِى هَٰذَا فَأَلْقِهْ إِلَيْهِمْ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ
فَٱنظُرْ مَاذَا يَرْجِعُونَ (٢٨) قَالَتْ
يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْمَلَؤُا۟ إِنِّىٓ أُلْقِىَ إِلَىَّ كِتَٰبٌ
كَرِيمٌ (٢٩) إِنَّهُۥ مِن سُلَيْمَٰنَ وَإِنَّهُۥ بِسْمِ
ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ (٣٠) أَلَّا تَعْلُوا۟

the Most Gracious; (31) *[denoting], 'Do not act haughtily towards me, but come to me committed to peace and submission to God.'"*
(32) *She said [in addition], "O you leading persons! Give me your opinion about this matter that has come to me; I would never make a decision in a matter [in such a serious case as this] unless you [with your views] are present with me."*
(33) *They said, "We have force and we possess great might in war, and the decision is yours, so consider what you will command."*
(34) *Said she, "Verily, whenever kings enter a city, they cause [a lot of] damage to it, and they humiliate those with the highest dignity among its people; and this is what they always do.*
(35) *Now, I will send them a present, then see what the envoys will come with."*
(36) *But when [the Queen's delegation] came to Solomon he said, "Would you bring me [more material possessions and] wealth? [Be sure that] what God has given me [materially and spiritually] is far better than what He has given you! Nay, it is [only such as] you that would rejoice in such a gift of yours.* (37) *Go back unto them; we shall assuredly come against them with forces that they cannot resist, and we shall assuredly cause them to be driven from their [land] humiliated abased and utterly yielding."*
(38) *And [then Solomon] said, "O you all who are around me, which one of you can bring me her throne, before [she and those around her] come to me committing themselves to peace and submission to God?"*
(39) *Said a bold one of the invisible beings [jinn, subject to Solomon], "I will bring it [the throne of the Queen of Saba' (Sheba)] before you rise from your place, and I am, for such [a work] powerful enough and worthy of trust."*
(40) *Said one who had knowledge from the books, "I can bring it to you before a twinkling of the eye is complete". And when we saw it set before him he said, "This is of my*

عَلَىَّ وَ أْتُونِى مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٣١﴾ قَالَتْ
يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْمَلَؤُا۟ أَفْتُونِى فِىٓ أَمْرِى مَا
كُنتُ قَاطِعَةً أَمْرًا حَتَّىٰ تَشْهَدُونِ ﴿٣٢﴾
قَالُوا۟ نَحْنُ أُو۟لُوا۟ قُوَّةٍ وَ أُو۟لُوا۟ بَأْسٍ
شَدِيدٍ وَ ٱلْأَمْرُ إِلَيْكِ فَٱنظُرِى مَاذَا
تَأْمُرِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾ قَالَتْ إِنَّ ٱلْمُلُوكَ إِذَا
دَخَلُوا۟ قَرْيَةً أَفْسَدُوهَا وَ جَعَلُوٓا۟ أَعِزَّةَ
أَهْلِهَآ أَذِلَّةً ۖ وَ كَذَٰلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾
وَ إِنِّى مُرْسِلَةٌ إِلَيْهِم بِهَدِيَّةٍ فَنَاظِرَةٌۢ بِمَ
يَرْجِعُ ٱلْمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾ فَلَمَّا جَآءَ
سُلَيْمَـٰنَ قَالَ أَتُمِدُّونَنِ بِمَالٍ فَمَآ
ءَاتَىٰنِۦَ ٱللَّهُ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّآ ءَاتَىٰكُم ۖ بَلْ
أَنتُم بِهَدِيَّتِكُمْ تَفْرَحُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ ٱرْجِعْ
إِلَيْهِمْ فَلَنَأْتِيَنَّهُم بِجُنُودٍ لَّا قِبَلَ لَهُم بِهَا
وَلَنُخْرِجَنَّهُم مِّنْهَآ أَذِلَّةً وَ هُمْ صَٰغِرُونَ
﴿٣٧﴾ قَالَ يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْمَلَؤُا۟ أَيُّكُمْ يَأْتِينِى
بِعَرْشِهَا قَبْلَ أَن يَأْتُونِى مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾
قَالَ عِفْرِيتٌ مِّنَ ٱلْجِنِّ أَنَا۠ ءَاتِيكَ بِهِۦ
قَبْلَ أَن تَقُومَ مِن مَّقَامِكَ ۖ وَ إِنِّى عَلَيْهِ
لَقَوِىٌّ أَمِينٌ ﴿٣٩﴾ قَالَ ٱلَّذِى عِندَهُۥ عِلْمٌ
مِّنَ ٱلْكِتَـٰبِ أَنَا۠ ءَاتِيكَ بِهِۦ قَبْلَ أَن يَرْتَدَّ
إِلَيْكَ طَرْفُكَ ۚ فَلَمَّا رَءَاهُ مُسْتَقِرًّا عِندَهُۥ
قَالَ هَـٰذَا مِن فَضْلِ رَبِّى لِيَبْلُوَنِىٓ ءَأَشْكُرُ

Lord's bounty, to test me whether I am grateful or ungrateful; and whosoever is grateful [to God] he [/she] is but grateful for his [/her] own good, and whosoever is ungrateful — surely, my Lord is All-sufficient, All-generous."

أَمْ أَكْفُرُ ۖ وَمَن شَكَرَ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ
لِنَفْسِهِۦ ۖ وَمَن كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ رَبِّى غَنِىٌّ كَرِيمٌ

(41) *[And] he said [in addition, to those around him,] "Change [the main features of] her throne for her, and let us see whether she may know [the reality] or she may not know [it]."* (42) *So, when she came, it was said, "Is your throne like this?"*
She said, "As if it were the same!" [So, Solomon said to himself,] "And we have been given the knowledge [of the reality of the whole matter] before her, since we have [always] been in [full] submission [to God]. (43) *And what barred her [from reaching the truth] has been that which she has been used to worship apart from God; she was of a people who stubbornly denied the truth."* (44) *[Then] it was said to her, "Enter the pavilion;" but when she saw it, she thought it was an expanse of water, and she bared her legs.*
Said he, "It is but a pavilion smoothed of crystal." She said, "O my Lord! I have wronged myself, and I submit myself with Solomon to God, the Lord of all- being." [27:15-44]

قَالَ نَكِّرُوا۟ لَهَا عَرْشَهَا نَنظُرْ
أَتَهْتَدِىٓ أَمْ تَكُونُ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ
فَلَمَّا جَآءَتْ قِيلَ أَهَٰكَذَا عَرْشُكِ ۖ
قَالَتْ كَأَنَّهُۥ هُوَ ۚ وَأُوتِينَا ٱلْعِلْمَ مِن
قَبْلِهَا وَكُنَّا مُسْلِمِينَ وَصَدَّهَا مَا
كَانَت تَّعْبُدُ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّهَا كَانَتْ
مِن قَوْمٍ كَٰفِرِينَ قِيلَ لَهَا ٱدْخُلِى
ٱلصَّرْحَ ۖ فَلَمَّا رَأَتْهُ حَسِبَتْهُ لُجَّةً
وَكَشَفَتْ عَن سَاقَيْهَا ۚ قَالَ إِنَّهُۥ صَرْحٌ
مُّمَرَّدٌ مِّن قَوَارِيرَ ۗ قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّى
ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِى وَأَسْلَمْتُ مَعَ سُلَيْمَٰنَ لِلَّهِ
رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ

And did We grace Dawud (David) with Our favor: "O you mountains! Echo God's praise with him, and you birds!" And We softened iron for him: "Make suits of armor which are fully-protecting [for the body], and measure well the links [that join the pacts of armor]; and do [you and your family] righteousness; surely, I see all that you do."
And unto Sulayman [(Solomon) We made subservient] the wind; its course every morning and every evening [covered the distance through which the human being could travel in] a month's journey each, and We caused a source of molten copper to flow at his disposal; and among the invisible beings [jinn] there

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا
دَاوُۥدَ مِنَّا فَضْلًا ۖ يَٰجِبَالُ أَوِّبِى مَعَهُۥ
وَٱلطَّيْرَ ۖ وَأَلَنَّا لَهُ ٱلْحَدِيدَ أَنِ
ٱعْمَلْ سَٰبِغَٰتٍ وَقَدِّرْ فِى ٱلسَّرْدِ ۖ
وَٱعْمَلُوا۟ صَٰلِحًا ۖ إِنِّى بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ
بَصِيرٌ وَلِسُلَيْمَٰنَ ٱلرِّيحَ غُدُوُّهَا
شَهْرٌ وَرَوَاحُهَا شَهْرٌ ۖ وَأَسَلْنَا لَهُۥ
عَيْنَ ٱلْقِطْرِ ۖ وَمِنَ ٱلْجِنِّ مَن يَعْمَلُ بَيْنَ
يَدَيْهِ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِۦ ۖ وَمَن يَزِغْ مِنْهُمْ عَنْ

were some that had [been assigned] to work for him by his Lord's leave; and any of them that might swerve from Our command, We let taste suffering through a blazing flame. They made for him whatever he wished of sanctuaries and statues and bowls as large as huge water troughs and pots firmly anchored. [We said,] "Labor, O House of David, feeling gratitude [towards Me]; and few are the truly grateful among My human creatures."
And when We determined that he should die, nothing indicated to them that he was dead except a [little] living creature from the earth that ate away his staff; and when he [his body] fell down to the ground, the invisible beings [jinn subservient to him] saw clearly that had they but understood the reality which was beyond the reach of their perception, they would not have continued in the humiliating suffering [of such servitude]. [34:10-14]

أَمْرِنَا نُذِقْهُ مِنْ عَذَابِ ٱلسَّعِيرِ ﴿١٢﴾
يَعْمَلُونَ لَهُۥ مَا يَشَآءُ مِن مَّحَٰرِيبَ
وَتَمَٰثِيلَ وَجِفَانٍ كَٱلْجَوَابِ وَقُدُورٍ
رَّاسِيَٰتٍ ۚ ٱعْمَلُوٓاْ ءَالَ دَاوُۥدَ شُكْرًا
وَقَلِيلٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِىَ ٱلشَّكُورُ ﴿١٣﴾ فَلَمَّا
قَضَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ ٱلْمَوْتَ مَا دَلَّهُمْ عَلَىٰ مَوْتِهِۦٓ
إِلَّا دَآبَّةُ ٱلْأَرْضِ تَأْكُلُ مِنسَأَتَهُۥ ۖ فَلَمَّا
خَرَّ تَبَيَّنَتِ ٱلْجِنُّ أَن لَّوْ كَانُواْ يَعْلَمُونَ
ٱلْغَيْبَ مَا لَبِثُواْ فِى ٱلْعَذَابِ ٱلْمُهِينِ
﴿١٤﴾

(30) *And unto Dawud (David) We granted Sulayman (Solomon); how excellent a worshipper [of Ours] he was; and how much he turned to Us.* (31) *And when the evening approached and the elegantly-moving and swift steeds were presented to him,* (32) *he said, "Truly, I have come to love all that is good [in this world's life], bearing in mind [always] my Lord," until they were hidden from his sight [by distance.]* (33) *"Bring them back unto me," [he said,] and lovingly he stroked their legs and their necks.* (34) *And We tried Solomon by placing upon his throne a [sickly and feeble] body; and then he turned [towards us.]* (35) *and prayed, "O my Lord! Forgive me and grant me a dominion which is not to come to anyone after me; surely You are the All-giver."* (36) *So We made subservient to him the wind that ran at his command softly wherever he might will,* (37) *and from the Satans every builder and diver,* (38) *and others linked together in fetters:* (39) *"This is Our gift for you, give to others or withhold,*

وَوَهَبْنَا لِدَاوُۥدَ سُلَيْمَٰنَ
نِعْمَ ٱلْعَبْدُ ۖ إِنَّهُۥٓ أَوَّابٌ ﴿٣٠﴾ إِذْ عُرِضَ
عَلَيْهِ بِٱلْعَشِىِّ ٱلصَّٰفِنَٰتُ ٱلْجِيَادُ ﴿٣١﴾
فَقَالَ إِنِّىٓ أَحْبَبْتُ حُبَّ ٱلْخَيْرِ عَن ذِكْرِ
رَبِّى حَتَّىٰ تَوَارَتْ بِٱلْحِجَابِ ﴿٣٢﴾
رُدُّوهَا عَلَىَّ ۖ فَطَفِقَ مَسْحًۢا بِٱلسُّوقِ
وَٱلْأَعْنَاقِ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا سُلَيْمَٰنَ
وَأَلْقَيْنَا عَلَىٰ كُرْسِيِّهِۦ جَسَدًا ثُمَّ أَنَابَ
﴿٣٤﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ ٱغْفِرْ لِى وَهَبْ لِى مُلْكًا
لَّا يَنۢبَغِى لِأَحَدٍ مِّنۢ بَعْدِىٓ ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ
ٱلْوَهَّابُ ﴿٣٥﴾ فَسَخَّرْنَا لَهُ ٱلرِّيحَ تَجْرِى
بِأَمْرِهِۦ رُخَآءً حَيْثُ أَصَابَ ﴿٣٦﴾
وَٱلشَّيَٰطِينَ كُلَّ بَنَّآءٍ وَغَوَّاصٍ ﴿٣٧﴾
وَءَاخَرِينَ مُقَرَّنِينَ فِى ٱلْأَصْفَادِ ﴿٣٨﴾
هَٰذَا عَطَآؤُنَا فَٱمْنُنْ أَوْ أَمْسِكْ بِغَيْرِ

without [having to render to others except Us] account." (40) *And He has precedence with Us, and a beauteous return [to Us awaits him].* [38:30-40]

حِسَابٍ ﴿٣٩﴾ وَإِنَّ لَهُۥ عِندَنَا لَزُلْفَىٰ
وَحُسْنَ مَـَٔابٍ ﴿٤٠﴾

And they followed what the devils used to recite during Solomon's reign, and it was not Solomon who denied the truth but it was those devils who did by teaching people sorcery and what has come down through the two angels [or kings] in Babil [Babylon], Harut and Marut, who never taught it to anyone unless they warned in advance, "We are but a temptation to evil, so do not ever deny [God's] truth."
And they learn from these two how they might separate a person from his[/her] spouse, but they can harm none thereby except by God's leave, and [thus] they learn what only harms them and does not benefit them, knowing well that one who acquires such knowledge shall have no share in the [eternal] life to come, and how evil then [is that for which] they have sold their own selves, if they had but known. And had they but attained [firmly] to faith and been conscious of Him, a reward from God would indeed have been far better, if they had but known. [2:102-103]

وَٱتَّبَعُوا۟ مَا تَتْلُوا۟ ٱلشَّيَـٰطِينُ عَلَىٰ مُلْكِ
سُلَيْمَـٰنَ ۖ وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَـٰنُ وَلَـٰكِنَّ
ٱلشَّيَـٰطِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ يُعَلِّمُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ
ٱلسِّحْرَ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَى ٱلْمَلَكَيْنِ بِبَابِلَ
هَـٰرُوتَ وَمَـٰرُوتَ ۚ وَمَا يُعَلِّمَانِ مِنْ
أَحَدٍ حَتَّىٰ يَقُولَآ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ فَلَا
تَكْفُرْ ۖ فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّقُونَ
بِهِۦ بَيْنَ ٱلْمَرْءِ وَزَوْجِهِۦ ۚ وَمَا هُم
بِضَآرِّينَ بِهِۦ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ
وَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنفَعُهُمْ ۚ وَلَقَدْ
عَلِمُوا۟ لَمَنِ ٱشْتَرَىٰهُ مَا لَهُۥ فِى ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ
مِنْ خَلَـٰقٍ ۚ وَلَبِئْسَ مَا شَرَوْا۟ بِهِۦٓ
أَنفُسَهُمْ ۚ لَوْ كَانُوا۟ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٠٢﴾ وَلَوْ
أَنَّهُمْ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَٱتَّقَوْا۟ لَمَثُوبَةٌ مِّنْ عِندِ
ٱللَّهِ خَيْرٌ ۚ لَّوْ كَانُوا۟ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

Dawud (David) and his son Sulayman (Solomon) are distinguished figures in Israelite history. In Jewish sources they were kings (c. 1000 - 916 B.C.E., c. 961-922 B.C.E., respectively). David ruled the whole of Canaan and he also controlled areas of neighboring lands. Wealth flowed, and trade brought contacts and ideas. Unfortunately, none of David's work has been recovered, but fragments of city walls and gateways from Solomon's time can be identified in some cities such as Gizer, Hazar, and Megiddo. Solomon also built the temple, although it was David who acquired the materials for it.

Solomon's reign that accomplished security and wealth gave a chance for civilization and culture to flourish and was a golden era for ancient Israel. According to the Quran, Solomon was able to extend his influence to Saba' on the coast of the Red Sea in the Arabian peninsula, whose queen came to him in submission to God and to his military, economical and civilizational power [27:20-44], as significantly represented in the story. But although the land during Solomon's reign in the Quran had expressive landmarks such as a pavilion made or tiled with glass as a sign of glory, Jewish sources also underline some negatives about the time such as heavy taxation, forced labor and an infiltration of foreign

wives and gods [e.g. see I Kings: 11]. These negatives and others resulted in the decline of Solomon's power and the division of his kingdom after his death.

According to the Quran, David and Solomon were also prophets. It seems that before this time, kinship and prophethood had been separate, as the Quran indicates: *"Have you not known about these leading persons among the children of Israel after the time of Moses, when they said to a prophet of theirs, 'Raise up for us a king, so that we might fight for God's cause ...'"* [2:246]. The king might be chosen by God as in this case when the Quran mentioned: *"And their prophet said to them, 'Now God has raised Talut for you as a king'."* That prophet and that king were identified in the Bible to be Samuel and Saul, respectively. However, according to the Quran, each of David and Solomon joined prophethood and kingship together. That explains why Muslims do not accept the wrong-doings attributed by the Bible to each, since they believe that prophets represent in their lives a model of the human behavior and the ideal that has to be followed by the believers, including other prophets themselves who had to follow one another as examples in conveying the message, bearing with the people in patience and relying on God alone with whom they had close and constant contact, and representing the moral values that they call the people to follow in their behavior [e.g. 6:90, 46:35].

In the Quran, David is represented as a maker of armor and shields [21:80; 34:10-11], a courageous fighter for God's cause who was able to kill the giant Jalut [2:251] (Goliath in the Bible, see Samuel :17), a pious worshipper who devoted some time to praying in a designated sanctuary in his house [38:21], and a king and judge who was privileged with knowledge and wisdom, and particularly with good argument and judgement [21:78-9; 27:15; 38:26]. He became distinguished in the Quran, as in the Bible, with his penetrating praise of God, through which he interacted with all of nature and living creatures [34:10; 38:18-19].

The Quran calls the book which presented the revelation to David "*al-Zabur*" [4:163; 17:55] which means "the writ" or "the book," and some early commentators indicated that it contained pieces of wisdom and preaching. In the Bible there is a collection of 150 hymns, prayers and poems, expressing various human emotions, and united by a theme of deep faith in and love for God, under the title of "The Psalms." These hymns are grouped into five books, each closing with words of praise. It is thought that there was an early collection of the Psalms in King David's time and perhaps earlier, but that process of recollecting them went on through much of Israel's history, probably reaching its peak after the Jewish return from Babylon and the rebuilding of the temple.

The Quranic story about the two persons who came suddenly upon David while he was in seclusion in his worshipping place, and presented to him their case that one of them, who had 99 ewes, wanted to take the only ewe that his brother had [38:21-26], has been understood by some early commentators such as al-Tabari as referring to the Biblical story [II Samuel XI-XII] in which David planned with his field commander that a certain soldier would be exposed to death, as David wanted to marry his wife as soon as she became a widow, thus adding her to his numerous wives. This latter story was so shocking for Muslims that it was reported that Caliph 'Ali ibn Abi Talib said that he would inflict the punishment of slander, or its double, on anyone who would narrate the story of David in this way since he would be slandering a prophet.

The story as presented in these Quranic verses [38:21-26] can be understood in a different way, which is relevant to the text and is simpler and more understandable. The account ought not to blame David for anything which was not mentioned in the Quranic text, and its authenticity may be argued against and challenged. As the Quranic text states, David made a judgement right after he heard the case of one litigant, without waiting to hear the case of the other .He was so sympathetic with the litigant who made his case first, that, against the primary principles of justice, he hastily made a ruling in his favor. His test, "*fitna*," was in his handling the case itself, not in something behind the scene and beyond the case, and he was taught by God not to follow such hasty whims that might lead him to be biased with or against any litigant, but to study any case thoroughly and listen to different points of views in order to "judge between people with justice." David realized his serious albeit unintentional error, and he turned to God in repentance, and his error was forgiven.

Solomon shared the knowledge and wisdom of his father, but his state and power were wider and stronger. In the verses 21:78-79, Solomon seems more sharp and deep than his father in his understanding of a certain case that was presented: "*And [call to mind] David and Solomon, when both of them gave judgement concerning the tillage [of a field] into which the sheep of some people had strayed by night [and therein pastured and caused damage]; and We were witnessing their judgement. And We caused Solomon to understand the case [more profoundly], yet We gave both an ability of right judgement and knowledge.*" We have no clarification of the case in some detail in these Quranic verses or in the reliable traditions of the Prophet, but such a clarification could be found in what was reported by many Companions of the Prophet and their immediate successors (*tabi`in*), although we cannot deduce whether the source of these reports was something heard from the Prophet or some ancient Arabian tradition. I quote the story as presented in English by Muhammad Asad in Note 70 on the above verses in "*The Message of the Quran*": "According to this story, a flock of sheep strayed at night into a neighboring field and destroyed its crop. The case was brought before King David for judicial decision. On finding that the incident was due to the negligence of the owner of the sheep, David awarded the whole flock - the value of which corresponded roughly to the extent of the damage — as an indemnity to the owner of the field. David's young son, Solomon, regarded this judgement as too severe, in as much as the sheep represented the defendant's capital, whereas the damage was of a transitory nature, involving no more than the loss of one year's crop, i.e. of income. He therefore suggested to his father that the judgement should be altered: the owner of the field should have the temporary possession [holding] and usufruct of the sheep (milk, wool, newborn lambs, etc.) while their owner should tend the damaged field until it was restored to its former productivity, whereupon both the field and the flock of sheep should revert to their erstwhile owners; in this way the plaintiff would be fully compensated for his loss without depriving the defendant of his substance. David realized that his son's solution of the case was better than his own, and passed judgement accordingly." However, both were granted the enlightened ability by God of making judgements and granting knowledge, and God witnessed both their judgements. In the subsequent note 71 Asad points out that "the fact that Solomon's judgement was more profound did not disprove the intrinsic justice of David's original judgement or deprive it of

its merit."

According to the Quran, supernatural powers are also attributed to Solomon. He had power over birds, wind, and even the invisible beings (jinn) and the devils [21:82; 34:12-14; 38:37-38]. He could communicate with the birds and could understand how the ants communicate information one to the other [27:16-28]. In his note 77 on the verse 21:82 about the devils working for Solomon, Muhammad Asad expresses his belief that: "In this as well as in several other passages related to Solomon, the Quran alludes to the many poetic legends which were associated with his name since early antiquity and had become part and parcel of Judeo-Christian and Arabian lore a long time before the advent of Islam." I do not agree with this view initially, but it may be useful here to allow such a prominent thinker and man of knowledge to explain his unconventional view: "Because they were so deeply ingrained in the imagination of the people to whom the Quran addresses itself in the first instance, these legendary accounts of Solomon's wisdom and magical powers had acquired cultural reality of their own and were, therefore eminently suited to serve as a medium for the parabolic exposition of certain ethical truths with which this book is concerned; and so, without denying or confirming their mythical character, the Quran uses them as a foil for the idea that God is the ultimate source of all human power and glory, and that all achievements of human ingenuity, even though they may sometimes border on the miraculous, are but an expression of His transcendental creativity."

Other critics of religious scriptures also hold this view. Smith in his Bible Dictionary, states in the end of the article on Solomon, under the significant subtitle "Legends:" "Round the facts of history as a nucleus, there gathers a whole world of fantastic fables: Jewish, Christian and Mohammadan. Even in the Targum of Ecclesiastes we find strange stories of his [Solomon's] character. He left behind him spells and charms to cure diseases and cast out evil spirits. His wisdom enabled him to interpret the speech of beasts and birds. He knew the secret virtues of gems and herbs. Arabic imagination took a yet wilder flight, [as] Solomon conquered jinns ... To him belonged the magic ring which revealed to him the past, the present and the future. The visit of the queen of Sheba furnished some romances.

In my opinion, God is in no need of using legends or mythology for educational purposes in his final and permanent message, since He has endless ways of presenting His guidance, and He can either use true information about particular events that already happened, or general parables that are not specifying a certain person, time, or place, such as the "*one who passed by a town deserted by its people, with its roofs collapsed, [and] said, 'How could God bring this back to life now that it is dead!' So God caused him to be dead for a hundred years, whereafter He brought him back to life [and] said, 'How long have you remained thus?' He said, 'I have remained thus a day or a part of a day.' Said [God], 'Nay, but you have remained thus for a hundred years! But look at your food and your drink which have not been changed [or spoiled by the passing years], and look at your donkey. And [this happened so that] We might make you a sign for people. And look at the bones how We set them up and then clothe them with flesh.' So when this was made clear to him, he said, 'I know that God has power over everything [He wills]'" [2:259].* Such a parable which does not give any specificities, is used by the Quran for education,

and then it would be a mere guesswork to claim that it is referring to a certain person or factual event. But when the Quran relates certain supernatural powers to Solomon, they can not be understood as legends used for ethical education merely because they had already become "cultural realities!" Thus, although Asad's belief has been widely accepted by historians of religion and critics of religious scriptures, I cannot, as a Muslim, accept it with regard to the Quran.

In my view, all the supernatural powers endowed to Solomon, who used them in strengthening his dominion, can be considered as an answer to his prayer to God, *"O my Lord! Forgive me, and grant me a dominion which is not to come to anyone after me; surely You are the All-giver"* [38:35]. Such powers were definitely miraculous, but prophethood in itself is the greatest miracle, and if God sends His revelation to any human being, He can support him physically and morally as He wills. I cannot imagine that God is in need of legends to educate people, since the Arabic language and its various ways of expression and the unique Quranic style have not run short of using realities and allegory, and thus they have not been in need of legends and mythology which have intellectual and ethical negatives on the Islamic epistomological and theological fundamentals. Although a legend can be woven around a historical figure, I do not consider it helpful to use it as a clarification in a book of faith which repeatedly stresses the practical and moral value of always saying the truth. How can we imagine that God Himself might disregard such a principle in any case or for any reason, while He is the One who says: *"And all that We relate to you of the accounts of [earlier] conveyors of [God's] messages, [aim to] strengthen your heart; and in them there has come to you the truth, as well as an admonition and a reminder to those who believe"* [11:120], *"In the stories of these [people of the past] there are lessons for those who have minds; it is not a tale forged, but a confirmation of what came [of God's revelation] before it, clearly spelling out knowledge [that the human beings need] and offering guidance and grace to people who believe"* [12:111].

It may be relevant here to relate what was mentioned by some early commentators about the verse [38:34]: *"And We tried Solomon by placing on his throne a [sickly and feeble] body, and then he turned [towards Us]..."* The prominent commentator al-Razi rejected the earlier suppositions in interpreting this verse, and saw "the body/ *jasad*" mentioned in the verse as simply referring to Solomon's own body. Solomon was once tried by an exhausting disease (from which he recovered) that made his body so feeble and tenuous that it might have been thought of as a mere body without any life, especially since the Arabs used to describe a very weak person as "mere flesh on bones, or body without soul" [Razi, his commentary on this verse 38:34, vol. 26]. Ibn Kathir, in his commentary on this verse, wrote that the common explanations given to the verse, which were based on Israelite traditions, had to be rejected. This is something which was supported by Asad who stated that "almost all of them go back to Talmudic sources."

As for the magical powers attributed to Solomon, the Quran states that it was the devils or Satans who spread that misinformation *"concerning Solomon's reign, and it was not Solomon who denied the truth but it was those devils who did by teaching people sorcery ..."* [2:102]. Muhammad Asad considers that the Quran expresses the moral obligation of the human being "to reject every attempt at 'sorcery' in as much as - irrespective of whether it succeeds or fails - it aims at subverting the order of nature as instituted by

God.... It does not raise the question as to whether there is an objective truth in the occult phenomena loosely described as 'magic' or whether it is based on self-deception. The intent here is no more and no less than to warn man that any attempt at influencing the course of events by means which — at least in the mind of the person responsible for it — have a 'supernatural' connotation is a spiritual offense, and must inevitably result in the most serious damage to their author's [or practicer's] spiritual status" [notes 83-84 on the verse 2:102]. However, I find that this does not bear on any supernatural and miraculous powers that Solomon might personally have as a prophet, despite the fact that these powers faced misinformation and abuse by the human and invisible forces of evil, *"and it was not Solomon who denied the truth but it was those devils who did by teaching people sorcery..."*

YUNUS (JONAH)

Regarding the mention of the name of Yunus (Jonah) among the prophets see 4:163; 6:86.

And what a mighty reward for a town that [its people] attained to faith [as a whole], and it is [in this present world's life and in the life to come], but this was obvious only in the case of the people of Yunus (Jonah) who when they came to believe, we removed from them the suffering of humiliation in this present world's life, and allowed them to enjoy the pleasures of their life for an appointed time [until their life in this world comes to its determined end]. [10:98]

فَلَوْلَا كَانَتْ قَرْيَةٌ
ءَامَنَتْ فَنَفَعَهَآ إِيمَٰنُهَآ إِلَّا قَوْمَ يُونُسَ
لَمَّآ ءَامَنُوا۟ كَشَفْنَا عَنْهُمْ عَذَابَ ٱلْخِزْىِ
فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَمَتَّعْنَٰهُمْ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ
﴿٩٨﴾

And the man of the great fish, when he went forth enraged, thinking that We had no power over him. But he then called out in the deep darkness, "There is no god but You. Limitless are you in Your glory! Verily, I have been among the wrongdoers." And so We answered him, and delivered him from [his] distress; and thus do We deliver all who have faith. [21:87-88]

وَذَا ٱلنُّونِ إِذ ذَّهَبَ مُغَٰضِبًا فَظَنَّ أَن لَّن
نَّقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ فَنَادَىٰ فِى ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ أَن لَّآ
إِلَٰهَ إِلَّآ أَنتَ سُبْحَٰنَكَ إِنِّى كُنتُ مِنَ
ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾ فَٱسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُۥ وَنَجَّيْنَٰهُ
مِنَ ٱلْغَمِّ ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نُنجِى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ
﴿٨٨﴾

And Yunus (Jonah) was one of Our message-bearers; [recall to mind] when he fled deserting [his people] to a laden ship. And [when the ship faced a violent storm through the sea and those on board

وَإِنَّ يُونُسَ لَمِنَ
ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٣٩﴾ إِذْ أَبَقَ إِلَى ٱلْفُلْكِ
ٱلْمَشْحُونِ ﴿١٤٠﴾ فَسَاهَمَ فَكَانَ مِنَ

realized that it was overloaded] they then cast lots [to throw someone into the sea to reduce the ship's load] and he was the loser. So[he was cast into the sea and] the great fish swallowed him, and he was worthy of blame. And had he not been of those who [remember God in distress and] extol God's limitless glory [in all circumstances] he would have remained in its belly until the Day when all shall be raised from the dead; but We caused him to be cast forth on a bare land, feeling sick. And We caused [a nourishing and shady] tree of gourd to grow over him. Then We sent him unto a hundred thousand or more; and they believed [in his message this time], and so We allowed them to enjoy the pleasures of this life for an appointed time [when their life in this world comes to its determined end]. [37:139-148]

اَلْمُدْحَضِينَ ﴿١٤١﴾ فَالْتَقَمَهُ الْحُوتُ
وَهُوَ مُلِيمٌ ﴿١٤٢﴾ فَلَوْلَا أَنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ
الْمُسَبِّحِينَ ﴿١٤٣﴾ لَلَبِثَ فِي بَطْنِهِ
إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿١٤٤﴾ ۝ فَنَبَذْنَاهُ
بِالْعَرَاءِ وَهُوَ سَقِيمٌ ﴿١٤٥﴾ وَأَنْبَتْنَا عَلَيْهِ
شَجَرَةً مِنْ يَقْطِينٍ ﴿١٤٦﴾ وَأَرْسَلْنَاهُ إِلَىٰ
مِائَةِ أَلْفٍ أَوْ يَزِيدُونَ ﴿١٤٧﴾ فَآمَنُوا
فَمَتَّعْنَاهُمْ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ ﴿١٤٨﴾

Bear then with patience what your Lord wills, and be not as the man of the great fish, who called out [to God] under the heavy pressures that he felt. And had not grace from his Lord reached him, he would have been cast upon the wilderness, being condemned. But [as he repented], his Lord chose him [for His grace] and placed him among the righteous. [68:48-50]

فَاصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ وَلَا تَكُنْ كَصَاحِبِ
الْحُوتِ إِذْ نَادَىٰ وَهُوَ مَكْظُومٌ ﴿٤٨﴾
لَوْلَا أَنْ تَدَارَكَهُ نِعْمَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ لَنُبِذَ
بِالْعَرَاءِ وَهُوَ مَذْمُومٌ ﴿٤٩﴾ فَاجْتَبَاهُ
رَبُّهُ فَجَعَلَهُ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿٥٠﴾

Yunus (Jonah in the Bible) was a prophet of the Assyrian city of Ninevah. As his people did not listen to his message and continued their evil-doing, he left them in a moment of anger and despair and boarded a ship, abandoning the mission entrusted to him by God. It happened that the ship was overloaded, and when those on board faced trouble and realized that the ship could not sail safely with its excessive load, they had to throw one person into the sea, and when they cast lots to determine who would be thrown into the sea, Jonah was allotted. Upon being thrown into the sea, he was swallowed by a great fish. This whole ordeal was a sufficient reminder for Jonah, who kept crying out to God in repentance. His prayer was answered and he was cast forth into a wilderness, where he was able to survive and recover due to the presence of some nutritive plants that were caused to grow close to him. He thus resumed his mission to a community of approximately one hundred thousand who apparently finally responded to his message when they saw God's punishment approaching them, as opposed to previous communities that stubbornly persisted in their evil-doing and challenged the message and warning until God's judgement seized them. These people of Jonah were saved and allowed to live

and enjoy the pleasures of this world's life until their lives came to their natural end.

Jonah's experience was significant, since he was the only conveyor of God's message of whom we know who failed to bear with patience the defiance and confrontation of his people. It is thus no wonder that Prophet Muhammad was reminded of Jonah's experience and its lesson. Although Jonah was a prophet, he still felt the human emotions of fury and despair, and he even committed the serious wrong-doing of abandoning the mission entrusted to him by God. Yet, the repentance of Jonah and his deliverance emphasized the fact that whenever repentance for wrongdoing is genuinely felt, God changes the situation and removes the hardship.

The Biblical Book of Jonah gives a more detailed account than that of the Quran which focuses on the moral lesson of the story. Jonah appears in his book in the Bible to have been an Israelite prophet, living in approximately the eighth century B.C.E. as suggested by the *Lion Encyclopedia of the Bible* [ed. Pat Alexander]. The Encyclopedia also mentions that the Book of Jonah was probably "a story about Jonah rather than by him ... it may have been written after the decline of the Assyrians during a later generation; using the events of earlier times as an object lesson."

ILIAS (ELIJAH), AL-YASA' (ELISHA)

Regarding the mention of their names among the prophets see 6:85-86; 38:48.

And Ilias [Elijah], too, was one of [Our] message-bearers; when he said to his people, "Will you not be genuinely conscious of God? Do you call on Ba`l (Baal) and forsake [the One God] the Best of Creators — God your Lord and the Lord of your earliest forefathers?"
But they denounced him as a liar, and they will most surely be brought [to justice for their evil-doing on the Day of Judgement], except [those who were] God's true worshippers [who will be saved].
And We left him thus to be remembered among later generations: "Peace be upon Ilias (Elijah) and his fellow-believers." Thus do We reward the good-doers; he was truly one of Our believing servants. [37:123-132]

وَ إِنَّ إِلْيَاسَ لَمِنَ
ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٢٣﴾ إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِۦٓ أَلَا
تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٢٤﴾ أَتَدْعُونَ بَعْلًا وَ تَذَرُونَ
أَحْسَنَ ٱلْخَٰلِقِينَ ﴿١٢٥﴾ ٱللَّهَ رَبَّكُمْ
وَرَبَّ ءَابَآئِكُمُ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٢٦﴾ فَكَذَّبُوهُ
فَإِنَّهُمْ لَمُحْضَرُونَ ﴿١٢٧﴾ إِلَّا عِبَادَ ٱللَّهِ
ٱلْمُخْلَصِينَ ﴿١٢٨﴾ وَ تَرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِ فِى
ٱلْءَاخِرِينَ ﴿١٢٩﴾ سَلَٰمٌ عَلَىٰٓ إِلْ يَاسِينَ
﴿١٣٠﴾ إِنَّا كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِى ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ
﴿١٣١﴾ إِنَّهُۥ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٣٢﴾

The Hebrew prophet Ilias (Elijah in the Bible I Kings XVIIff., II Kings 1-2) is mentioned among a group of prophets in the Quran in the verse 6:85, as well as in the above verse. According to the Bible, he lived in the northern kingdom of Israel which emerged from the division of the state that followed the death of Solomon. He lived in the 9th

century B.C.E., during the reigns of Ahab and Ahaziah. The former, along with his foreign wife, Queen Jezebel, was accused of worshipping the ancient Phoenician god Ba`l (Baal), which signified lord or master. Moreover, he was accused of killing God's prophets, and was warned by Elijah about a coming drought as a punishment from God. In the end — according to the Bible — Elijah prevailed, the drought was over and the king was killed in a battle and followed by Ahaziah.

Al-Yasa' (Elisha in the Bible) followed Ilias (Elijah) and was a prophet for more than 50 years, under six kings of Israel [19:16ff., II Kings 2-9, 13:14ff.]. The Bible reported that Elijah brought a dead man to life by his prayer, while Elisha, as well as bringing a dead man back to life, healed another of leprosy. The Biblical prophet Malachi foretold that Elijah would return, and later the Gospels reported that Moses and Elijah were envisioned with Jesus by the disciples of Jesus in what was called "the transfiguration" [Malachi 4:5-6, Luke 9:28ff.]. Jesus himself was thought by some people to be and asked by others if he was Elias (Elijah) [e.g. Mark 6:15], and he reminded the people of what had happened under Elijah and how the non-Israelites, not the Israelites, had benefitted from his healing [Luke 4:26-28].

ZAKARIYYA (ZACHARIAH), YAHYA (JOHN THE BAPTIST)

Regarding the mention of their names among the prophets see 6:85; 21:89-90.

(35) *When a woman of [the House of] `Imran prayed, "O my Lord! Unto you do I vow [the child] that is in my womb to be devoted to worshipping You. Accept it, then, from me; you alone are All-hearing, All- knowing."*
(36) *And when she gave birth to the child, she said, "O my Lord! I have given birth to a female" — and God is fully aware of what she gave birth to - "and the male is not as the female, [for such a vowed service], and I have named her Maryam (Mary), and I seek your protection for her and her offspring against Satan, the accursed."* (37) *And her Lord accepted her with gracious favor, and caused her to grow up in goodly growth, and placed her in the care of Zakariyya (Zachariah). Whenever Zachariah went in to her in the sanctuary, he found her provided with [God's] sustenance. "Mary," he said, "how did this come to you?" She said, "It is from God; truly*

إِذْ قَالَتِ
ٱمْرَأَتُ عِمْرَٰنَ رَبِّ إِنِّى نَذَرْتُ لَكَ مَا
فِى بَطْنِى مُحَرَّرًا فَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّىٓ ۖ إِنَّكَ
أَنتَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿٣٥﴾ فَلَمَّا وَضَعَتْهَا
قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّى وَضَعْتُهَآ أُنثَىٰ وَٱللَّهُ
أَعْلَمُ بِمَا وَضَعَتْ وَلَيْسَ ٱلذَّكَرُ
كَٱلْأُنثَىٰ ۖ وَإِنِّى سَمَّيْتُهَا مَرْيَمَ وَإِنِّىٓ
أُعِيذُهَا بِكَ وَذُرِّيَّتَهَا مِنَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ
ٱلرَّجِيمِ ﴿٣٦﴾ فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ
حَسَنٍ وَأَنۢبَتَهَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا وَكَفَّلَهَا
زَكَرِيَّا ۖ كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا
ٱلْمِحْرَابَ وَجَدَ عِندَهَا رِزْقًا ۖ قَالَ
يَٰمَرْيَمُ أَنَّىٰ لَكِ هَٰذَا ۖ قَالَتْ هُوَ مِنْ عِندِ
ٱللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَن يَشَآءُ بِغَيْرِ

حِسَابٍ ﴿٣٧﴾ هُنَالِكَ دَعَا زَكَرِيَّا رَبَّهُ ۖ
قَالَ رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِن لَّدُنكَ ذُرِّيَّةً طَيِّبَةً
إِنَّكَ سَمِيعُ الدُّعَاءِ ﴿٣٨﴾ فَنَادَتْهُ
الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَائِمٌ يُصَلِّي فِي
الْمِحْرَابِ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بِيَحْيَىٰ
مُصَدِّقًا بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَسَيِّدًا
وَحَصُورًا وَنَبِيًّا مِّنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾ قَالَ
رَبِّ أَنَّىٰ يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ وَقَدْ بَلَغَنِيَ
الْكِبَرُ وَامْرَأَتِي عَاقِرٌ ۖ قَالَ كَذَٰلِكَ
اللَّهُ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَاءُ ﴿٤٠﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ
اجْعَل لِّيَ آيَةً ۚ قَالَ آيَتُكَ أَلَّا تُكَلِّمَ
النَّاسَ ثَلَاثَةَ أَيَّامٍ إِلَّا رَمْزًا وَاذْكُر رَّبَّكَ
كَثِيرًا وَسَبِّحْ بِالْعَشِيِّ وَالْإِبْكَارِ ﴿٤١﴾

God grants sustenance unto whomsoever He wills, beyond all reckoning." (38) *Thereupon in that very place, Zachariah prayed to his Lord, "O my Lord! Grant me out of Your Grace the gift of goodly offspring; You, indeed, hear all prayer."*
(39) *Thereupon, as he stood praying in the sanctuary, the angels called out unto him: "God gives you good tidings of [the birth of] Yahya (John), who shall confirm the truth of a word of God, and shall be outstanding among people, and utterly chaste, and a prophet from among the righteous."*
(40) *"My Lord," said Zachariah, "how shall I have a son, seeing I am an old man, and my wife is barren?" "Thus it is," [the angel] said, "God does what He wills."* (41) *Zachariah said, "My Lord! Appoint for me a sign." Said [the angels], "Your sign shall be that for three days you shall not speak to people other than by gestures. And keep remembering and invoking your Lord unceasingly, and extol His limitless glory by night and by day."* [3:35-41]

ذِكْرُ رَحْمَتِ رَبِّكَ عَبْدَهُ
زَكَرِيَّا ﴿٢﴾ إِذْ نَادَىٰ رَبَّهُ نِدَاءً خَفِيًّا
﴿٣﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي وَهَنَ الْعَظْمُ مِنِّي
وَاشْتَعَلَ الرَّأْسُ شَيْبًا وَلَمْ أَكُن بِدُعَائِكَ
رَبِّ شَقِيًّا ﴿٤﴾ وَإِنِّي خِفْتُ الْمَوَالِيَ مِن
وَرَائِي وَكَانَتِ امْرَأَتِي عَاقِرًا فَهَبْ لِي
مِن لَّدُنكَ وَلِيًّا ﴿٥﴾ يَرِثُنِي وَيَرِثُ مِنْ
آلِ يَعْقُوبَ ۖ وَاجْعَلْهُ رَبِّ رَضِيًّا ﴿٦﴾
يَا زَكَرِيَّا إِنَّا نُبَشِّرُكَ بِغُلَامٍ اسْمُهُ يَحْيَىٰ
لَمْ نَجْعَل لَّهُ مِن قَبْلُ سَمِيًّا ﴿٧﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ
أَنَّىٰ يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ وَكَانَتِ امْرَأَتِي

(2) *[Here is] an account of the grace which your Lord bestowed upon His worshipper Zakariyya (Zachariah);* (3) *when he called unto his Lord secretly [and sincerely from his heart],* (4) *saying, "O my Lord! Feeble have become my bones, and my head is aflame with grey hair, and never in calling You, my Lord, have I felt distressed!* (5) *And now I am worried about [what] my kinsfolk [may do] after I am gone, since my wife has been barren. Grant me, then, out of your grace the gift of a successor* (6) *who will be my heir and an heir to the house of Ya'qub (Jacob), and make him, my Lord, well-pleasing unto You."*
(7) *He said"O Zachariah! We bring you the good tidings of [the coming birth of] a son whose name shall be Yahya (John). Never before have We made a namesake of him."* (8) *[Zachariah] said, "O my Lord! How can I*

have a son when my wife has been barren and I have attained to the declining of old age!"
(9) *He said, "Thus it is; your Lord says, 'Easy is that for Me, and I have created you aforetime when you were nothing.'"*
(10) *He [Zackariah] said, "My Lord, appoint for me some sign."*
He said, "Your sign is that for three full nights [and days] you will not speak to people."
(11) *Thereupon he came out of the sanctuary unto his people and signaled to them [by gestures]: "Extol His glory at dawn and in the evening."*
(12) *"O Yahya (John)! Hold fast unto the Book with [all your] strength," and We gave him wisdom and [the ability of] right judgement while he was a little boy,* (13) *and [We gave him] compassion from Us and purity, and he was [always] conscious of Us,* (14) *and kind to his parents and caring for them, and never was he haughty or rebellious.* (15) *And [God's] peace be upon him, on the day he was born, and on the day he dies, and on the day he shall be raised again to life.* [19:2-15]

عَاقِرًا وَ قَدْ بَلَغْتُ مِنَ ٱلْكِبَرِ عِتِيًّا ﴿٨﴾
قَالَ كَذَٰلِكَ قَالَ رَبُّكَ هُوَ عَلَىَّ هَيِّنٌ وَ قَدْ
خَلَقْتُكَ مِن قَبْلُ وَ لَمْ تَكُ شَيْـًٔا ﴿٩﴾ قَالَ
رَبِّ ٱجْعَل لِّىٓ ءَايَةً ۚ قَالَ ءَايَتُكَ أَلَّا
تُكَلِّمَ ٱلنَّاسَ ثَلَٰثَ لَيَالٍ سَوِيًّا ﴿١٠﴾
فَخَرَجَ عَلَىٰ قَوْمِهِۦ مِنَ ٱلْمِحْرَابِ
فَأَوْحَىٰٓ إِلَيْهِمْ أَن سَبِّحُوا۟ بُكْرَةً
وَعَشِيًّا ﴿١١﴾ يَٰيَحْيَىٰ خُذِ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ بِقُوَّةٍ ۖ
وَ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُ ٱلْحُكْمَ صَبِيًّا ﴿١٢﴾ وَ حَنَانًا
مِّن لَّدُنَّا وَ زَكَوٰةً ۖ وَ كَانَ تَقِيًّا ﴿١٣﴾
وَبَرًّۢا بِوَٰلِدَيْهِ وَ لَمْ يَكُن جَبَّارًا عَصِيًّا ﴿١٤﴾
وَ سَلَٰمٌ عَلَيْهِ يَوْمَ وُلِدَ وَ يَوْمَ يَمُوتُ
وَ يَوْمَ يُبْعَثُ حَيًّا ﴿١٥﴾

" 'Imran," who is mentioned in the verse 3:35, is 'Amram of the Bible, the father of Moses and Aaron. Zakariyya (Zachariah in the Bible) and his wife were both descendants of Aaron, the priestly clan among the Israelites [see I Chronicles XXIV:10; also Luke 1:5, stating that Zachariah's wife, Elizabeth, was one "of the daughters of Aaron," as well as the cousin of Mary the mother of Jesus - Luke I:36].

According to the Quran, it was Zachariah who took care of Mary after lots were drawn to decide the fate of the girl who was to be dedicated to Temple service according to her mother's vow. Being motivated with fatherly emotions he prayed to God for a child, despite the fact that he was too old and that his wife was barren. Miraculously, his prayer was answered by God and the angels gave him the glad tiding of the coming birth of his son Yahya (John), who would be given wisdom and the ability of right judgement even as a little boy, in addition to compassion from God and purity. He would be always conscious of God, kind and caring to his parents, and he would never be haughty or rebellious [3:39; 19:12-15]. Zachariah asked for a sign that would be given to him and to his people as an assurance of this coming miracle, and as an expression of his gratefulness to God for His gift and favor. He was ordered to refrain from speaking to people for three full days and to devote all his time and the time of his people to praying and extolling the limitless glory of God [3:41; 19:10-11; contrary to this, the Gospel of Luke 1:20-22

narrated that Zachariah was struck dumb.

Yahya (John), thus, was related to Jesus and was just a little older than him. According to the existing Gospels he lived in the desert until God called him to prophethood. Crowds of people came to hear his fiery and severely critical preaching: "Turn away from your sins and be baptized and God will forgive you." Jesus asked John the Baptist to baptize him, too, in the River Jordan. Later, John was put in prison by Herod, the king of Judaea [37-4 B.C.E.] for his open attacks against that king's behavior, and the Gospels mention a contact between both men when John was in prison. In the end Herod's wife made the king kill John [Matthew 3, 11, 14:1-2, Mark 1:2-4; Luke 1, 3, 7:18ff.]. Although "John did no miracle" [John 10:41] "his supernatural birth, his hard ascetic life, his reputation of extraordinary sanctity, and the generally prevailing expectation that some great one was about to appear — these causes were sufficient to attract to him a great multitude 'from every quarter,'" as *Smith's Bible Dictionary* states. John the Baptist had his distinctive place in the history of prophethood for the Christians, since he had that special relation to Jesus, and he was believed to be preparing the people for his coming. His moral courage in enjoying the doing of what is right and forbidding the doing of what is wrong, even with regard to the highest authority, the king, which led to his imprisonment and death, became an inspiration for the successive generations "*And [God's] peace be upon him, on the day he was born, and on the day he dies, and on the day he shall be raised again to life*" [19:15].

'ISA IBN MARYAM (JESUS THE SON OF MARY)

Regarding the mention of his name among the prophets see 4:163; 6:85; 42:13.

Those conveyors of [God's] messages, some of them We endowed more highly than others; among them were those to whom God spoke, and some He raised in rank; and We gave 'Isa ibn Maryam (Jesus the son of Mary) all evidence of truth, and supported him with the Spirit of the Holiness. And if God had so willed, they who succeeded those [conveyors of God's messages] would not have contended with one another, after all evidence of the truth had come to them, but they fell into variance and some of them attained to faith while some of them stubbornly denied the truth. Yet if God had so willed, they would not have contended with one another, but God does whatever He wills. [2:253]

تِلْكَ ٱلرُّسُلُ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ ۘ مِّنْهُم
مَّن كَلَّمَ ٱللَّهُ ۖ وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَهُمْ دَرَجَٰتٍ ۚ
وَءَاتَيْنَا عِيسَى ٱبْنَ مَرْيَمَ ٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ
وَأَيَّدْنَٰهُ بِرُوحِ ٱلْقُدُسِ ۗ وَلَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ
مَا ٱقْتَتَلَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ مَا
جَآءَتْهُمُ ٱلْبَيِّنَٰتُ وَلَٰكِنِ ٱخْتَلَفُوا۟
فَمِنْهُم مَّنْ ءَامَنَ وَمِنْهُم مَّن كَفَرَ ۚ وَلَوْ
شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ مَا ٱقْتَتَلُوا۟ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَفْعَلُ
مَا يُرِيدُ ﴿٢٥٣﴾

(42) *And when the angels said, "O Maryam (Mary)! God has chosen you and made you pure and raised you above all the women of the world.* (43) *O Mary, remain truly devout unto your Lord and prostrate yourself in worship and bow down with those who bow down [before Him]."*
(44) *This account of something that was beyond your perception We reveal unto you, and you were not with them when they drew their lots as to which of them should be Mary's guardian, and you were not with them when they disputed [about this matter].*
(45) *When the angels said, "O Mary! God sends you the good tidings of a word from Him, whose name shall be al-Masih 'Isa ibn Maryam ("the anointed", Jesus Christ the son of Mary); highly honored shall he be in this world and in the life to come, and [he shall be] of those who are drawn near unto God.* (46) *And he shall speak unto people in the cradle, and as a grown man, and shall be of the righteous."* (47) *"O my Lord!" said she, "How can I have a son when no man has ever touched me?" [The angels said,] "Thus it is; God creates what He wills; when He wills a thing to be He but says to it 'Be' and it is!* (48) *And God will teach him the Book and the wisdom and the Torah and the Gospel.* (49) *And [He will make him] a conveyor of His message to the children of Israel, [saying]: 'I have come to you with a sign from your Lord; I will make for you out of clay as if it were the figure of a bird, and then I breathe into it and it becomes a [real] bird by God's leave; and I will heal the blind and the leper and I will bring the dead back to life by God's leave; and I will tell you what you may eat and what you store in your houses. Surely, therein is a sign and message for you if you are [truly] believers.*
(50) *"'And [I have come to you] to confirm the Torah that I have found there before me, and to make lawful to you some of what was [before] forbidden to you. And I have come to*

وَ إِذْ قَالَتِ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ يَٰمَرْيَمُ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
ٱصْطَفَىٰكِ وَ طَهَّرَكِ وَ ٱصْطَفَىٰكِ عَلَىٰ
نِسَآءِ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾ يَٰمَرْيَمُ ٱقْنُتِى
لِرَبِّكِ وَ ٱسْجُدِى وَ ٱرْكَعِى مَعَ ٱلرَّٰكِعِينَ
﴿٤٣﴾ ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ أَنۢبَآءِ ٱلْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهِ
إِلَيْكَ ۚ وَ مَا كُنتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يُلْقُونَ
أَقْلَٰمَهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ يَكْفُلُ مَرْيَمَ ۖ وَ مَا كُنتَ
لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يَخْتَصِمُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾ إِذْ قَالَتِ
ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ يَٰمَرْيَمُ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكِ
بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنْهُ ٱسْمُهُ ٱلْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ٱبْنُ
مَرْيَمَ وَجِيهًا فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا وَ ٱلْأَخِرَةِ وَ مِنَ
ٱلْمُقَرَّبِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾ وَ يُكَلِّمُ ٱلنَّاسَ فِى
ٱلْمَهْدِ وَ كَهْلًا وَ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾
قَالَتْ رَبِّ أَنَّىٰ يَكُونُ لِى وَلَدٌ وَ لَمْ
يَمْسَسْنِى بَشَرٌ ۖ قَالَ كَذَٰلِكِ ٱللَّهُ يَخْلُقُ
مَا يَشَآءُ ۚ إِذَا قَضَىٰٓ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ
لَهُۥ كُن فَيَكُونُ ﴿٤٧﴾ وَ يُعَلِّمُهُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ
وَ ٱلْحِكْمَةَ وَ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةَ وَ ٱلْإِنجِيلَ ﴿٤٨﴾
وَ رَسُولًا إِلَىٰ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ أَنِّى قَدْ
جِئْتُكُم بِـَٔايَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ ۖ أَنِّىٓ أَخْلُقُ
لَكُم مِّنَ ٱلطِّينِ كَهَيْـَٔةِ ٱلطَّيْرِ فَأَنفُخُ فِيهِ
فَيَكُونُ طَيْرًۢا بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَ أُبْرِئُ
ٱلْأَكْمَهَ وَ ٱلْأَبْرَصَ وَ أُحْىِ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ
بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَ أُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا تَأْكُلُونَ وَ مَا
تَدَّخِرُونَ فِى بُيُوتِكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً
لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾ وَ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا
بَيْنَ يَدَىَّ مِنَ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ وَ لِأُحِلَّ لَكُم بَعْضَ

you with a sign and message from your Lord. So, be conscious of God, and obey me.
(51) *"'It is God who is my Lord and your Lord; so worship Him [alone]. This is a straight way.'"*
(52) *And when Jesus felt their stubborn rejection of his message he said, "Who will be my supporters [in the cause of] God?" Said the white garbed-ones [or makers of white garments; the disciples of Jesus], "We are the supporters of God's cause; we believe in God and bear you witness that we have submitted ourselves to Him.* (53) *Our Lord, we believe in that you have sent down and we follow the conveyor of your message; so make us among all those who bear witness [to the truth]."*
(54) *And those [who stubbornly denied the truth] planned [against Jesus], and God planned, and God is above all planners.*
(55) When God said, "O Jesus! I shall cause your term [in this world's life] to come to its determined end, and shall raise you unto Me" and I shall clear you [of the falsehood] of those who stubbornly deny the truth, and I shall place those who follow you above those who stubbornly reject the truth unto the Day of Resurrection. In the end unto Me shall you all return and I shall judge between you with regard to all on which you were at variance.
(56) *"As to those who stubbornly deny the truth; I will cause them to suffer severely in this world and in the life to come; and none shall they have for support."* (57) *And as to those who attain to faith and do good deeds, God will grant them their reward in full; and God does not love evildoers.* (58) *This is what we convey to you of the message and the reminder full of wisdom.*
(59) *Verily, in God's right, the case of Jesus[' s birth] is [as miraculous] as that of Adam[' s creation], whom He created out of dust and then said unto him, "Be," and he is.* (60) *The truth [thus has come] from your Lord, so be not of those who doubt.* [3:42-60]

ٱلَّذِى حُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ ۚ وَ جِئْتُكُم بِـَٔايَةٍ مِّن
رَّبِّكُمْ ۖ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَ أَطِيعُونِ ﴿٥٠﴾
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ رَبِّى وَ رَبُّكُمْ فَٱعْبُدُوهُ ۚ هَٰذَا
صِرَٰطٌ مُّسْتَقِيمٌ ﴿٥١﴾ ۞ فَلَمَّآ أَحَسَّ
عِيسَىٰ مِنْهُمُ ٱلْكُفْرَ قَالَ مَنْ أَنصَارِىٓ
إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۖ قَالَ ٱلْحَوَارِيُّونَ نَحْنُ
أَنصَارُ ٱللَّهِ ءَامَنَّا بِٱللَّهِ وَ ٱشْهَدْ بِأَنَّا
مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾ رَبَّنَآ ءَامَنَّا بِمَآ أَنزَلْتَ
وَ ٱتَّبَعْنَا ٱلرَّسُولَ فَٱكْتُبْنَا مَعَ ٱلشَّٰهِدِينَ
﴿٥٣﴾ وَ مَكَرُوا۟ وَ مَكَرَ ٱللَّهُ ۖ وَ ٱللَّهُ
خَيْرُ ٱلْمَٰكِرِينَ ﴿٥٤﴾ إِذْ قَالَ ٱللَّهُ
يَٰعِيسَىٰٓ إِنِّى مُتَوَفِّيكَ وَ رَافِعُكَ إِلَىَّ
وَمُطَهِّرُكَ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ وَ جَاعِلُ
ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ
يَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۖ ثُمَّ إِلَىَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأَحْكُمُ
بَيْنَكُمْ فِيمَا كُنتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾
فَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ فَأُعَذِّبُهُمْ عَذَابًا
شَدِيدًا فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا وَ ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ ۖ وَ مَا لَهُم
مِّن نَّٰصِرِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾ وَ أَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟
وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ فَيُوَفِّيهِمْ أُجُورَهُمْ ۗ
وَٱللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾ ذَٰلِكَ
نَتْلُوهُ عَلَيْكَ مِنَ ٱلْـَٔايَٰتِ وَ ٱلذِّكْرِ ٱلْحَكِيمِ
﴿٥٨﴾ إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَىٰ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ
ءَادَمَ ۖ خَلَقَهُۥ مِن تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُۥ كُن
فَيَكُونُ ﴿٥٩﴾ ٱلْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّكَ فَلَا تَكُن مِّنَ
ٱلْمُمْتَرِينَ ﴿٦٠﴾

And [they will be requited in the life to come for their evil-doing and] for their stubborn rejection of the truth, and for their uttering against Maryam (Mary) the awesome calumny, and for their saying, "We killed al-Masih Isa ibn Maryam (the Christ Jesus, the son of Mary)" who was the conveyor of God's message, and they actually did neither kill him nor crucify him, but it only seemed to them [to be this way], and those who hold different views thereon are indeed confused since they have no [true] knowledge thereof, and are following mere conjecture, whereas they certainly did not kill him,(158) but God raised him up unto Himself, and God is All-mighty All-wise.

And there is none of the people of the Book who will not assuredly at the moment of death grasp the truth about him [Jesus], and on the Day of Resurrection he [himself] shall be a witness of the truth against them. [4:156-159]

وَبِكُفْرِهِمْ وَقَوْلِهِمْ عَلَىٰ
مَرْيَمَ بُهْتَٰنًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١٥٦﴾ وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا
قَتَلْنَا ٱلْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ٱبْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ
ٱللَّهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَٰكِن
شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ ۚ وَإِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱخْتَلَفُوا۟ فِيهِ
لَفِى شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ ۚ مَا لَهُم بِهِۦ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا
ٱتِّبَاعَ ٱلظَّنِّ ۚ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًۢا ﴿١٥٧﴾
بَل رَّفَعَهُ ٱللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَزِيزًا
حَكِيمًا ﴿١٥٨﴾ وَإِن مِّنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ إِلَّا
لَيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهِۦ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِۦ ۖ وَيَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ
يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا ﴿١٥٩﴾

O people of the Book! Do not exceed the bounds in your faith, and say nothing as to God but the truth. Al-Masih 'Isa ibn Maryam (the Christ Jesus, the son of Mary) was but the conveyor of God's message and His word that He conveyed unto Maryam (Mary) and a spirit from Him. Believe, then, in God and the conveyors of His messages, and say not, "Three;" refrain [from this], it will be for your own good. God is but One God, in His limitless glory, He is beyond having any son; unto Him belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on earth; and none suffices as God for a guardian.

Never did the Christ disdain to be a worshipper of God, nor do the angels who are near unto Him; and whosoever disdains to worship Him and becomes haughty, He will assuredly gather them all unto Him [on the Day of Reckoning]. As for those who have attained to faith and have done good deeds, He will reward them in full and give them more out of

يَٰٓأَهْلَ
ٱلْكِتَٰبِ لَا تَغْلُوا۟ فِى دِينِكُمْ وَلَا تَقُولُوا۟
عَلَى ٱللَّهِ إِلَّا ٱلْحَقَّ ۚ إِنَّمَا ٱلْمَسِيحُ
عِيسَى ٱبْنُ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتُهُۥٓ
أَلْقَىٰهَآ إِلَىٰ مَرْيَمَ وَرُوحٌ مِّنْهُ ۖ
فَـَٔامِنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِۦ ۖ وَلَا تَقُولُوا۟
ثَلَٰثَةٌ ۚ ٱنتَهُوا۟ خَيْرًا لَّكُمْ ۚ إِنَّمَا ٱللَّهُ
إِلَٰهٌ وَٰحِدٌ ۖ سُبْحَٰنَهُۥٓ أَن يَكُونَ لَهُۥ
وَلَدٌ ۘ لَّهُۥ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ وَكِيلًا ﴿١٧١﴾ لَّن
يَسْتَنكِفَ ٱلْمَسِيحُ أَن يَكُونَ عَبْدًا لِّلَّهِ
وَلَا ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ ٱلْمُقَرَّبُونَ ۚ وَمَن يَسْتَنكِفْ
عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِۦ وَيَسْتَكْبِرْ فَسَيَحْشُرُهُمْ إِلَيْهِ
جَمِيعًا ﴿١٧٢﴾ فَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟
وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ فَيُوَفِّيهِمْ أُجُورَهُمْ

His bounty, but as for those who have disdained [from worshipping Him] and have felt arrogance, He will destine them to grievous suffering, and they shall find apart from God none to protect or support them. [4:171-173]

وَيَزِيدُهُم مِّن فَضْلِهِۦ ۖ وَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ
ٱسْتَنكَفُوا۟ وَٱسْتَكْبَرُوا۟ فَيُعَذِّبُهُمْ عَذَابًا
أَلِيمًا وَلَا يَجِدُونَ لَهُم مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ
وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا ﴿١٧٣﴾

Indeed they stubbornly deny the truth those who say, "God is al-Masih 'Isa ibn Maryam (the Christ son of Mary)." Say, "And who could have any power with God had it been His will to destroy the Christ son of Mary, and his mother, and everyone on earth — all of them? To God belongs the dominion over the heavens and the earth and all between them; He creates what He wills, and God has power over everything." And [both] the Jews and Christians say, "We are the children of God, and His beloved ones". Say, "Why then does He cause you to suffer for your evil-doing? Nay, you are but human beings, of His creation. He forgives whom He wills and He causes to suffer whom He wills [according to what everyone does with his/her free choice], and to God belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and all that is in between; and with Him is the all journeys' end." [5:17-18]

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ
ٱلْمَسِيحُ ٱبْنُ مَرْيَمَ ۚ قُلْ فَمَن يَمْلِكُ مِنَ
ٱللَّهِ شَيْـًٔا إِنْ أَرَادَ أَن يُهْلِكَ ٱلْمَسِيحَ
ٱبْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَأُمَّهُۥ وَمَن فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ
جَمِيعًا ۗ وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا ۚ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَآءُ ۚ
وَٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٧﴾
وَقَالَتِ ٱلْيَهُودُ وَٱلنَّصَٰرَىٰ نَحْنُ أَبْنَٰٓؤُا۟
ٱللَّهِ وَأَحِبَّٰٓؤُهُۥ ۚ قُلْ فَلِمَ يُعَذِّبُكُم
بِذُنُوبِكُم ۖ بَلْ أَنتُم بَشَرٌ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقَ ۚ
يَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ
وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا
بَيْنَهُمَا ۖ وَإِلَيْهِ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٨﴾

And we sent 'Isa ibn Maryam (Jesus the son of Mary) to follow in the footsteps of those [earlier prophets], confirming the truth of the Torah that he found before him, and We gave to him the Gospel, wherein is guidance and light, confirming the truth of the Torah that he found there before him, and as a guidance and an admonition unto those who are God-conscious. And the followers of the Gospel are bidden to judge in accordance with what God has sent down therein, and they who do not judge in accordance with what God has sent down, they are truly the iniquitous. [5:46-47]

وَقَفَّيْنَا عَلَىٰٓ ءَاثَٰرِهِم بِعِيسَى ٱبْنِ مَرْيَمَ
مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ ۖ
وَءَاتَيْنَٰهُ ٱلْإِنجِيلَ فِيهِ هُدًى وَنُورٌ
وَمُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ
وَهُدًى وَمَوْعِظَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾ وَلْيَحْكُمْ
أَهْلُ ٱلْإِنجِيلِ بِمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ فِيهِ ۚ
وَمَن لَّمْ يَحْكُم بِمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ
ٱلْفَٰسِقُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوٓاْ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلْمَسِيحُ ٱبْنُ مَرْيَمَ ۖ وَقَالَ
ٱلْمَسِيحُ يَٰبَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ ٱعْبُدُواْ ٱللَّهَ
رَبِّى وَرَبَّكُمْ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ مَن يُشْرِكْ بِٱللَّهِ فَقَدْ
حَرَّمَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ ٱلْجَنَّةَ وَمَأْوَىٰهُ ٱلنَّارُ ۖ
وَمَا لِلظَّٰلِمِينَ مِنْ أَنصَارٍ ﴿٧٢﴾ لَّقَدْ كَفَرَ
ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوٓاْ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ثَالِثُ ثَلَٰثَةٍ ۘ وَمَا
مِنْ إِلَٰهٍ إِلَّآ إِلَٰهٌ وَٰحِدٌ ۚ وَإِن لَّمْ يَنتَهُواْ
عَمَّا يَقُولُونَ لَيَمَسَّنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ مِنْهُمْ
عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٣﴾ أَفَلَا يَتُوبُونَ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ
وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونَهُۥ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ
﴿٧٤﴾ مَّا ٱلْمَسِيحُ ٱبْنُ مَرْيَمَ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ
قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِهِ ٱلرُّسُلُ وَأُمُّهُۥ
صِدِّيقَةٌ ۖ كَانَا يَأْكُلَانِ ٱلطَّعَامَ ۗ ٱنظُرْ
كَيْفَ نُبَيِّنُ لَهُمُ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ ثُمَّ ٱنظُرْ أَنَّىٰ
يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾ قُلْ أَتَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ
ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا يَمْلِكُ لَكُمْ ضَرًّا وَلَا نَفْعًا ۚ
وَٱللَّهُ هُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿٧٦﴾ قُلْ يَٰٓأَهْلَ
ٱلْكِتَٰبِ لَا تَغْلُواْ فِى دِينِكُمْ غَيْرَ ٱلْحَقِّ
وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوٓاْ أَهْوَآءَ قَوْمٍ قَدْ ضَلُّواْ مِن قَبْلُ
وَأَضَلُّواْ كَثِيرًا وَضَلُّواْ عَن سَوَآءِ
ٱلسَّبِيلِ ﴿٧٧﴾

(72) *Indeed they stubbornly deny the truth those who say, "God is al-Masih 'Isa ibn Maryam (the Christ son of Mary)," whereas the Christ himself said, "O children of Israel! Worship God [alone] who is my Lord and your Lord as well." Whoever associates others with God, unto him [/her] will God deny paradise, and his [/her] end will be in the fire, and such evil-doers none can succor them.* (73) *Indeed they stubbornly deny the truth those who say, "God is the third of a trinity," and there is no God save the One God. And unless they refrain from what they say, grievous suffering is bound to befall such of them who stubbornly deny the truth.*(74) *Will they not, then, turn towards God in repentance, and ask His forgiveness? And God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious.*(75) *The Christ son of Mary was but a conveyor of [God's] message; and his mother was one who was devoted to the truth; and they both ate food [like all other human beings]. See how clear We make these messages to them, and then see how perverted are their minds!* (76) *Say, "Do you worship, apart from God, any that cannot hurt nor benefit you; while God alone is the All-hearing, All-knowing?"* (77) *Say, "O people of the Book! Do not exceed the bounds [of truth] in your faith, and do not follow the errant attitudes of people who have gone astray aforetime, and have led many [others] astray, and are still straying from the right way."* [5:72-77]

إِذْ قَالَ ٱللَّهُ
يَٰعِيسَى ٱبْنَ مَرْيَمَ ٱذْكُرْ نِعْمَتِى عَلَيْكَ
وَعَلَىٰ وَٰلِدَتِكَ إِذْ أَيَّدتُّكَ بِرُوحِ ٱلْقُدُسِ
تُكَلِّمُ ٱلنَّاسَ فِى ٱلْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا ۖ وَإِذْ
عَلَّمْتُكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ وَٱلتَّوْرَىٰةَ
وَٱلْإِنجِيلَ ۖ وَإِذْ تَخْلُقُ مِنَ ٱلطِّينِ كَهَيْـَٔةِ

(110) *And when God says [on the Day of Judgement], "O 'Isa ibn Maryam (Jesus, son of Mary)! Remember My blessings upon you and upon your mother, when I supported you with the spirit of Holiness; you could speak to people in your cradle and as a grown man, and when I taught you the Book and the wisdom and the Torah and the Gospel, and when you make out of a clay by My leave the figure of a bird and*

you breathe into it and it is a bird by My leave, and you heal the blind and the leper by My leave, and you bring the death forth by My leave, and when I prevented from you the children of Israel as you came unto them with all evidence of the truth, and those who stubbornly rejected the truth said: 'This is nothing but utter deception.' (111) *And when I inspired the white garbed ones [or makers of white garments; disciples of Jesus]: 'Believe in Me and in the conveyor of My message' and they said, 'We believe and be our witness that we have submitted ourselves [to God alone].'"*

(112) *And when the white-garbed ones (disciples) once said, "O Jesus son of Mary! Could your Lord send down unto us a repast from heaven?" Jesus said, "Be conscious of God, if you are truly believers!"*

(113) *They said, "We want to eat of it, and our hearts be at rest, and so that we might know that you have spoken the truth to us, and that we might be of those who bear witness thereto."*

(114) *Said Jesus the son of Mary, "O God our Lord! Send down upon us a repast from heaven, it shall be an ever-recurring feast for us through our successive generations, and a sign from you; and provide [O God] for us sustenance, and You are the best of providers"*

(115) *God said, "I do send it down on you, but whoever of you should henceforth stubbornly deny the truth and be ungrateful, on him[/her], I shall inflict suffering wherewith I inflict on no other being."*

(116) *And when God said, "O Jesus son of Mary! Did you say unto people, 'Worship me and my mother as gods apart from God"? He said, "Limitless are You in Your glory! It is not to me to say what I have no right [to say]. Had I said this, You would surely have known it already; You know all that is within myself, but I know not what is in Yourself. Surely, it is You alone who fully knows all what is beyond the reach of a created being's perception.*

ٱلطَّيْرِ بِإِذْنِى فَتَنفُخُ فِيهَا فَتَكُونُ طَيْرًۢا
بِإِذْنِى ۖ وَتُبْرِئُ ٱلْأَكْمَهَ وَٱلْأَبْرَصَ
بِإِذْنِى ۖ وَإِذْ تُخْرِجُ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ بِإِذْنِى
وَإِذْ كَفَفْتُ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ عَنكَ إِذْ
جِئْتَهُم بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ فَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟
مِنْهُمْ إِنْ هَٰذَآ إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١١٠﴾ وَإِذْ
أَوْحَيْتُ إِلَى ٱلْحَوَارِيِّـۧنَ أَنْ ءَامِنُوا۟ بِى
وَبِرَسُولِى قَالُوٓا۟ ءَامَنَّا وَٱشْهَدْ بِأَنَّنَا
مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١١١﴾ إِذْ قَالَ ٱلْحَوَارِيُّونَ
يَٰعِيسَى ٱبْنَ مَرْيَمَ هَلْ يَسْتَطِيعُ رَبُّكَ أَن
يُنَزِّلَ عَلَيْنَا مَآئِدَةً مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ ۖ قَالَ
ٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١١٢﴾
قَالُوا۟ نُرِيدُ أَن نَّأْكُلَ مِنْهَا وَتَطْمَئِنَّ
قُلُوبُنَا وَنَعْلَمَ أَن قَدْ صَدَقْتَنَا وَنَكُونَ
عَلَيْهَا مِنَ ٱلشَّٰهِدِينَ ﴿١١٣﴾ قَالَ عِيسَى
ٱبْنُ مَرْيَمَ ٱللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَآ أَنزِلْ عَلَيْنَا مَآئِدَةً
مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ تَكُونُ لَنَا عِيدًا لِّأَوَّلِنَا
وَءَاخِرِنَا وَءَايَةً مِّنكَ ۖ وَٱرْزُقْنَا
وَأَنتَ خَيْرُ ٱلرَّٰزِقِينَ ﴿١١٤﴾ قَالَ ٱللَّهُ
إِنِّى مُنَزِّلُهَا عَلَيْكُمْ ۖ فَمَن يَكْفُرْ بَعْدُ
مِنكُمْ فَإِنِّىٓ أُعَذِّبُهُۥ عَذَابًا لَّآ أُعَذِّبُهُۥٓ
أَحَدًا مِّنَ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١١٥﴾ وَإِذْ قَالَ
ٱللَّهُ يَٰعِيسَى ٱبْنَ مَرْيَمَ ءَأَنتَ قُلْتَ
لِلنَّاسِ ٱتَّخِذُونِى وَأُمِّىَ إِلَٰهَيْنِ مِن
دُونِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ قَالَ سُبْحَٰنَكَ مَا يَكُونُ لِىٓ
أَنْ أَقُولَ مَا لَيْسَ لِى بِحَقٍّ ۚ إِن كُنتُ
قُلْتُهُۥ فَقَدْ عَلِمْتَهُۥ ۚ تَعْلَمُ مَا فِى نَفْسِى
وَلَآ أَعْلَمُ مَا فِى نَفْسِكَ ۚ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ عَلَّٰمُ
ٱلْغُيُوبِ ﴿١١٦﴾ مَا قُلْتُ لَهُمْ إِلَّا مَآ

(117) *Nothing did I tell them beyond what you did bid me [to say]: 'Worship God [alone], my Lord and your Lord. And I was a witness over them so long as I was among them; but [ever] since my term [in this world's life] came to an end as determined by You, You alone have been the One who watches over them, and You are a witness to everything.* (118) *If You cause them to suffer they are Your servants, and if You forgive them You alone are the All-mighty, the All-wise."*
(119) *God said, "This is the day when the truth shall benefit the truthful, theirs will be gardens beneath which rivers flow, therein to abide forever; God is well-pleased with them, and they are well-pleased with Him; that is indeed the supreme accomplishment.* [5:110-119]

أَمَرْتَنِى بِهِۦٓ أَنِ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ رَبِّى
وَرَبَّكُمْ ۚ وَكُنتُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا مَّا دُمْتُ
فِيهِمْ ۖ فَلَمَّا تَوَفَّيْتَنِى كُنتَ أَنتَ
ٱلرَّقِيبَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ وَأَنتَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ
شَهِيدٌ ﴿١١٧﴾ إِن تُعَذِّبْهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ عِبَادُكَ ۖ
وَإِن تَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ فَإِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ
ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿١١٨﴾ قَالَ ٱللَّهُ هَٰذَا يَوْمُ يَنفَعُ
ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ صِدْقُهُمْ ۚ لَهُمْ جَنَّٰتٌ تَجْرِى مِن
تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَدًا ۚ
رَّضِىَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا۟ عَنْهُ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ
ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿١١٩﴾

And the Jews say, " 'Uzayr (Ezra) is God's son," while the Christians say, "Al-Masih (The Christ) is God's son." Such are the sayings which they utter with their mouths, following the same way of the sayings of those who stubbornly denied the truth aforetime. [Indeed they deserve to have said about them:] May God strike them! How they are perverted!
They have taken their learned persons and their monks, as well as the Christ son of Mary, for their lords beside God, while they have been bidden to worship none but the One God; no god is there but He, who is in His limitless glory beyond any that they may associate with Him. [9:30-31]

وَقَالَتِ ٱلْيَهُودُ عُزَيْرٌ ٱبْنُ ٱللَّهِ وَقَالَتِ
ٱلنَّصَٰرَى ٱلْمَسِيحُ ٱبْنُ ٱللَّهِ ۖ ذَٰلِكَ
قَوْلُهُم بِأَفْوَٰهِهِمْ ۖ يُضَٰهِـُٔونَ قَوْلَ ٱلَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا۟ مِن قَبْلُ ۚ قَٰتَلَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ ۚ أَنَّىٰ
يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ ٱتَّخَذُوٓا۟ أَحْبَارَهُمْ
وَرُهْبَٰنَهُمْ أَرْبَابًا مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱلْمَسِيحَ
ٱبْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَمَآ أُمِرُوٓا۟ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوٓا۟ إِلَٰهًا
وَٰحِدًا ۖ لَّآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ سُبْحَٰنَهُۥ عَمَّا
يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

(16) *And mention in the Book Maryam [Mary] when she withdrew from her family to an eastern place,* (17) *and kept herself in seclusion from them [for undisturbed worship], then We sent unto her Our spirit that appeared to her as a fully-shaped human being.*
(18) *She said, "I seek refuge from you with the*

وَٱذْكُرْ فِى
ٱلْكِتَٰبِ مَرْيَمَ إِذِ ٱنتَبَذَتْ مِنْ أَهْلِهَا
مَكَانًا شَرْقِيًّا ﴿١٦﴾ فَٱتَّخَذَتْ مِن دُونِهِمْ
حِجَابًا فَأَرْسَلْنَآ إِلَيْهَا رُوحَنَا فَتَمَثَّلَ
لَهَا بَشَرًا سَوِيًّا ﴿١٧﴾ قَالَتْ إِنِّىٓ أَعُوذُ

All-merciful [Whom you should fear] if you are conscious of Him."

(19) *The angel said, "I am but a messenger of your Lord to bring you [God's] gift of a son endowed with purity."*

(20) *She said, "How can I have a son when no man has ever touched me, and I have never been unchaste?"*

(21) *The angel said, "Thus it is; your Lord says, 'Easy is that for Me, and that We might make him a sign to human beings, and an act of grace from Us'". And [thus] it has been determined [by God].*

(22) *And in time she conceived him, and then she withdrew with him [within her] to a remote place.* (23) *And as the birth pangs drove her to the trunk of a palm-tree, she said, "Would I had died ere this, and had become a thing forgotten, utterly forgotten!"*

(24) *But the voice from below her called to her, "Grieve not! Your Lord has provided a rivulet [running] beneath you;* (25) *and shake the trunk of the palm-trees towards you, it will drop fresh ripe dates upon you.* (26) *Eat, then, and drink, and let your eye be unworried and at ease. And if you should see any human being, say, "I have vowed to the All-merciful an absence from speech (a fast); hence, I will not speak today to any human being."*

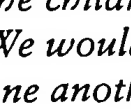
(27) *And in time she brought the child to her folk, carrying him. They said, "O Mary! You have committed what can never be believed!* (28) *O sister of Harun (Aaron), your father was not a wicked man, nor was your mother a loose woman."*

(29) *And she [Mary] then pointed to him [the child]; they said, "How can we talk to one who is a little boy still in the cradle!"* (30) *[But] he said, "I am a worshipper of God; He has given me the Book and has made me a prophet.* (31) *Blessed has He made me wherever I may be, and He has enjoined upon me the prayer and the purifying charity as long as I live,* (32) *and [He has endowed me with]*

بِٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ مِنكَ إِن كُنتَ تَقِيًّا ﴿١٨﴾ قَالَ
إِنَّمَآ أَنَا۠ رَسُولُ رَبِّكِ لِأَهَبَ لَكِ غُلَٰمًا
زَكِيًّا ﴿١٩﴾ قَالَتْ أَنَّىٰ يَكُونُ لِى غُلَٰمٌ
وَلَمْ يَمْسَسْنِى بَشَرٌ وَلَمْ أَكُ بَغِيًّا ﴿٢٠﴾
قَالَ كَذَٰلِكِ قَالَ رَبُّكِ هُوَ عَلَىَّ هَيِّنٌ ۖ
وَلِنَجْعَلَهُۥٓ ءَايَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَرَحْمَةً مِّنَّا ۚ
وَكَانَ أَمْرًا مَّقْضِيًّا ﴿٢١﴾ ۝ فَحَمَلَتْهُ
فَٱنتَبَذَتْ بِهِۦ مَكَانًا قَصِيًّا ﴿٢٢﴾
فَأَجَآءَهَا ٱلْمَخَاضُ إِلَىٰ جِذْعِ ٱلنَّخْلَةِ
قَالَتْ يَٰلَيْتَنِى مِتُّ قَبْلَ هَٰذَا وَكُنتُ
نَسْيًا مَّنسِيًّا ﴿٢٣﴾ فَنَادَىٰهَا مِن تَحْتِهَآ
أَلَّا تَحْزَنِى قَدْ جَعَلَ رَبُّكِ تَحْتَكِ سَرِيًّا
﴿٢٤﴾ وَهُزِّىٓ إِلَيْكِ بِجِذْعِ ٱلنَّخْلَةِ تُسَٰقِطْ
عَلَيْكِ رُطَبًا جَنِيًّا ﴿٢٥﴾ فَكُلِى وَٱشْرَبِى
وَقَرِّى عَيْنًا ۖ فَإِمَّا تَرَيِٰنَّ مِنَ ٱلْبَشَرِ
أَحَدًا فَقُولِىٓ إِنِّى نَذَرْتُ لِلرَّحْمَٰنِ
صَوْمًا فَلَنْ أُكَلِّمَ ٱلْيَوْمَ إِنسِيًّا ﴿٢٦﴾
فَأَتَتْ بِهِۦ قَوْمَهَا تَحْمِلُهُۥ ۖ قَالُوا۟
يَٰمَرْيَمُ لَقَدْ جِئْتِ شَيْـًٔا فَرِيًّا ﴿٢٧﴾
يَٰٓأُخْتَ هَٰرُونَ مَا كَانَ أَبُوكِ ٱمْرَأَ سَوْءٍ
وَمَا كَانَتْ أُمُّكِ بَغِيًّا ﴿٢٨﴾ فَأَشَارَتْ
إِلَيْهِ ۖ قَالُوا۟ كَيْفَ نُكَلِّمُ مَن كَانَ فِى
ٱلْمَهْدِ صَبِيًّا ﴿٢٩﴾ قَالَ إِنِّى عَبْدُ ٱللَّهِ
ءَاتَىٰنِىَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَجَعَلَنِى نَبِيًّا ﴿٣٠﴾
وَجَعَلَنِى مُبَارَكًا أَيْنَ مَا كُنتُ وَأَوْصَٰنِى
بِٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَٱلزَّكَوٰةِ مَا دُمْتُ حَيًّا ﴿٣١﴾

kindness and care towards my mother, and He has not made me haughty nor wretched. (33) *Peace be upon me, on the day when I was born, and on the day I die, and on the day I am raised [again] to life"*
(34) *Such was Jesus the son of Mary in words of truth, about whom they dispute.* (35) *It is not for God to take a son unto Him; limitless is He in His glory! When He wills a thing to be, He but says unto it, 'Be' and it is.*
(36) And *surely God is my Lord, and your Lord; so worship [none but] Him, this [alone] is the straight way.* [19:16-36]

وَبَرًّۢا بِوَٰلِدَتِى وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْنِى جَبَّارًا
شَقِيًّا ﴿٣٢﴾ وَٱلسَّلَٰمُ عَلَىَّ يَوْمَ وُلِدتُّ
وَيَوْمَ أَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ أُبْعَثُ حَيًّا ﴿٣٣﴾ ذَٰلِكَ
عِيسَى ٱبْنُ مَرْيَمَ ۖ قَوْلَ ٱلْحَقِّ ٱلَّذِى فِيهِ
يَمْتَرُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾ مَا كَانَ لِلَّهِ أَن يَتَّخِذَ مِن
وَلَدٍ ۖ سُبْحَٰنَهُۥٓ ۚ إِذَا قَضَىٰٓ أَمْرًا
فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُۥ كُن فَيَكُونُ ﴿٣٥﴾ وَإِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ رَبِّى وَرَبُّكُمْ فَٱعْبُدُوهُ ۚ هَٰذَا صِرَٰطٌ
مُّسْتَقِيمٌ ﴿٣٦﴾



And we made Ibn Maryam (the son of Mary) and his mother to be a sign [of Us to people] and provided for both a shelter upon a height where there was both lodging and a source of water. [23:50]

وَجَعَلْنَا
ٱبْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَأُمَّهُۥٓ ءَايَةً وَءَاوَيْنَٰهُمَآ
إِلَىٰ رَبْوَةٍ ذَاتِ قَرَارٍ وَمَعِينٍ ﴿٥٠﴾

And [call to mind that] We took from the Prophets their solemn pledge, and from you [O Muhammad] as well as from Nuh (Noah), Ibrahim (Abraham), Musa (Moses), and 'Isa ibn Maryam (Jesus the Son of Mary) -We took from [all of] them a weighty solemn pledge, so that God might ask the truthful about their truthfulness, and grievous suffering has He readied for all who stubbornly deny the truth. [33:7-8]

وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِنَ
ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ مِيثَٰقَهُمْ وَمِنكَ وَمِن نُّوحٍ
وَإِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَمُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَى ٱبْنِ مَرْيَمَ ۖ
وَأَخَذْنَا مِنْهُم مِّيثَٰقًا غَلِيظًا ﴿٧﴾ لِّيَسْـَٔلَ
ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ عَن صِدْقِهِمْ ۚ وَأَعَدَّ لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ
عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿٨﴾

(57) *And when Ibn Maryam (the son of Mary) is set forth as an example, your people [O Muhammad] turn away from it* (58) *and say, "Are our gods better or he?" They just mention him to dispute; nay, but they are a contentious folk.* (59) *He is only a worshipper [of Ours] whom We blessed, and whom We made an example for the children of Israel.* (60) *And had We willed, We would have made of you angels succeeding one another on earth.* (61) *And this is a means*

وَلَمَّا ضُرِبَ ٱبْنُ مَرْيَمَ
مَثَلًا إِذَا قَوْمُكَ مِنْهُ يَصِدُّونَ ﴿٥٧﴾
وَقَالُوٓا۟ ءَأَٰلِهَتُنَا خَيْرٌ أَمْ هُوَ ۚ مَا ضَرَبُوهُ
لَكَ إِلَّا جَدَلًۢا ۚ بَلْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ خَصِمُونَ
﴿٥٨﴾ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا عَبْدٌ أَنْعَمْنَا عَلَيْهِ
وَجَعَلْنَٰهُ مَثَلًا لِّبَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ ﴿٥٩﴾ وَلَوْ
نَشَآءُ لَجَعَلْنَا مِنكُم مَّلَٰٓئِكَةً فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ

يَخْلُفُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾ وَ إِنَّهُۥ لَعِلْمٌ لِّلسَّاعَةِ فَلَا
تَمْتَرُنَّ بِهَا وَ ٱتَّبِعُونِ ۚ هَٰذَا صِرَٰطٌ
مُّسْتَقِيمٌ ﴿٦١﴾ وَ لَا يَصُدَّنَّكُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ ۖ
إِنَّهُۥ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٦٢﴾ وَ لَمَّا جَآءَ
عِيسَىٰ بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ قَالَ قَدْ جِئْتُكُم
بِٱلْحِكْمَةِ وَ لِأُبَيِّنَ لَكُم بَعْضَ ٱلَّذِى
تَخْتَلِفُونَ فِيهِ ۖ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَ أَطِيعُونِ
﴿٦٣﴾ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ رَبِّى وَ رَبُّكُمْ
فَٱعْبُدُوهُ ۗ هَٰذَا صِرَٰطٌ مُّسْتَقِيمٌ ﴿٦٤﴾
فَٱخْتَلَفَ ٱلْأَحْزَابُ مِنۢ بَيْنِهِمْ ۖ فَوَيْلٌ
لِّلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ مِنْ عَذَابِ يَوْمٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٦٥﴾

to know [that] the Last hour [is bound to come]; so have no doubt whatsoever about it, and follow Me; this [alone] is a straight way. (62) *And let not Satan bar you [from the straight way to which God guides you]; he is for you a foe whose hostility is evident.* (63) *And when 'Isa (Jesus) came [to his people] with all evidence of the truth, he said, "I have come unto you with wisdom, and to make clear unto you some of that whereon you are at variance; so be conscious of God and pay heed unto me.* (64) *Verily, God is my Lord and your Lord as well; so worship [none but] Him, this [alone] is a straight way."* (65) *But factions from among those began to be at variance; woe, then, unto those who are bent on evil-doing for the suffering [that will befall them] on a grievous day!* [43:57-65]

ثُمَّ قَفَّيْنَا عَلَىٰٓ ءَاثَٰرِهِم بِرُسُلِنَا
وَقَفَّيْنَا بِعِيسَى ٱبْنِ مَرْيَمَ وَ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُ
ٱلْإِنجِيلَ ۖ وَ جَعَلْنَا فِى قُلُوبِ ٱلَّذِينَ
ٱتَّبَعُوهُ رَأْفَةً وَ رَحْمَةً ۚ وَ رَهْبَانِيَّةً
ٱبْتَدَعُوهَا ۖ مَا كَتَبْنَٰهَا عَلَيْهِمْ إِلَّا ٱبْتِغَآءَ
رِضْوَٰنِ ٱللَّهِ فَمَا رَعَوْهَا حَقَّ رِعَايَتِهَا ۖ
فَـَٔاتَيْنَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مِنْهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ ۖ
وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَٰسِقُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

Then, in their footsteps We caused [other] conveyors of Our messages to follow; and We sent forth after them 'Isa ibn Maryam (Jesus the son of Mary) and gave unto him the Gospel; and We set in the hearts of those who followed him tenderness and mercy. But as for monastic asceticism they initiated it themselves and We did not ordain it upon them; [We have commanded] only seeking the goodly acceptance of God. [However] they have not always] observed it as it should have been observed; and so We gave those among them who had truly attained to faith their [due] reward, whereas many of them became iniquitous. [57:27]

وَ إِذْ قَالَ عِيسَى
ٱبْنُ مَرْيَمَ يَٰبَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ إِنِّى رَسُولُ
ٱللَّهِ إِلَيْكُم مُّصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَىَّ مِنَ
ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ وَ مُبَشِّرًۢا بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِى مِنۢ
بَعْدِى ٱسْمُهُۥٓ أَحْمَدُ ۖ فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُم
بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ قَالُوا۟ هَٰذَا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٦﴾

And when 'Isa ibn Maryam (Jesus the son of Mary) said, "O children of Israel! I am indeed a conveyor of God's message unto you, confirming the Torah that I have found there before me, and giving good tidings of a message- bearer who shall come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad. But when he came unto them with all evidence of the truth, they said, "This is [but] an evident

magic [of eloquence]." [61:6]

O You have attained to faith! Be supporters [in the cause] of God; following [the example of the supporters of] 'Isa ibn Maryam (Jesus the son of Mary) when he said to the white-garbed ones [or makers of white garments; disciples of Jesus], "Who will be my supporters in God's cause?" Said the white-garbed ones, "We are the supporters [in the cause] of God." Then some of the Children of Israel believed [in the message of Jesus], while others stubbornly denied the truth. But We gave strength to those who [truly] attained to faith against their foes, and they [in time] became those who prevailed. [61:14]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُواْ كُونُوٓاْ أَنصَارَ ٱللَّهِ كَمَا قَالَ
عِيسَى ٱبۡنُ مَرۡيَمَ لِلۡحَوَارِيِّـۧنَ مَنۡ
أَنصَارِيٓ إِلَى ٱللَّهِۖ قَالَ ٱلۡحَوَارِيُّونَ
نَحۡنُ أَنصَارُ ٱللَّهِۖ فَـَٔامَنَت طَّآئِفَةٞ مِّنۢ
بَنِيٓ إِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ وَكَفَرَت طَّآئِفَةٞۖ
فَأَيَّدۡنَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ عَلَىٰ عَدُوِّهِمۡ
فَأَصۡبَحُواْ ظَٰهِرِينَ ١٤

The person of Jesus has probably raised some of the most heated disputes in the history of God's messages, and these disputes arise not only between those who follow him and those who do not, but even among his very followers. His miraculous emergence and his sudden - and tragic for his followers - disappearance, has always invited certain philosophical and theological thoughts and beliefs about both his person and his mission. This has been stepped up as a result of the conversion to Christianity of the Roman citizen and Pharisee rabbi "Saul," who was born in Tarsus, educated in Jerusalem, and later executed around 67 C.E. during the reign of Emperor Nero. Called "Paul" after his conversion, he became one of the main sources of Christianity as he presented Jesus and his message to the Gentiles [non Jews]; Jesus' miracles of healing the blind and the lepers and bringing the dead to life have also contributed to continuous disputes and differing views.

The Quranic information about 'Isa ibn Maryam (Jesus the son of Mary) is presented in relative detail and in connection with the information about Yahya ibn Zakariyya (John 'the Baptist,' son of Zachariah) in two suras of the Quran [3:33-60; 18:2-37]. In addition to the fact that the two men were cousins, the birth of each of them was, in different degrees, extraordinary, and was announced through the angels in a supernatural way. According to the Gospels they were contemporaries and almost of the same age. Yahya (John), who was a few months older, baptized Jesus in the Jordan river, tried to keep contact with him on some occasions, and thought of him as the expected "Messiah" for whom he was preparing the way.

The name "Jesus" [the same as the name Joshua in the Old Testament] means "savior." The Arabic word "al- Masih" came from the Aramaic "Meshiha" and the Hebrew "M'shiah," meaning "the anointed," "a term frequently applied in the Bible to the Hebrew kings, whose accession to power used to be consecrated by a touch with holy oil taken

from the Temple. The anointment appears to have been so important a rite among the Hebrews that the term 'the anointed' became in the course of time more or less synonymous with 'king'" [Muhammad Asad, note 32 on the verse 3:45]. The honorifying title "the anointed" was applied to Jesus during his lifetime according to the conviction among his contemporaries that he was a descendant from the royal house of David. "In the Greek version of the Gospels," as Asad states, "which is undoubtedly based on a now-lost Aramaic original, this designation is correctly translated as Christos (a noun derived from the Greek verb chrier, 'to anoint')," and thus the form "Christ" became acceptable in Western languages. For Christians as well Muslims, Jesus was miraculously born of his virgin mother Mary, without a father: *"And Mary the descendant of 'Imran who guarded her virginity, whereupon We breathed of Our spirit into her [womb], and who accepted the truth of her Lord's words and books and was one of the truly devout"* [66:12].

As for Jesus' other miracles, many questions have been raised about them by the Christian and Muslim scholars both in the past and the present. Although the Islamic sources agree on the miracles of healing the blind and lepers and bringing the dead back to life, the Quran actually only mentions that Jesus *"shall speak unto people in the cradle"* [3:46; 5:110], *"I will make out of clay as if it were the figure of a bird and then breathe into it and it becomes a [real alive] bird by God's leave"* [3:49], and the repast which the disciples of Jesus asked to be sent down from heaven. The existing Gospels, on their side, also mention some miracles of which the Quran does not give an account, including that of the crucifixion and resurrection, the occurrence of which the Quran does not accept [4:157-158] although it states that Jesus was raised up to God by Him [3:55; 5:158]. The Quran does not explicitly state that Jesus did not die; on the contrary the word *"mutawaffika"* used in the verse 3:55 can simply and literally, and most likely, mean "causing you to die," and similarly the word *"tawaffaytani"* in the verse 5:117 means "caused me to die" a meaning which was supported by modern commentators and scholars [see the opinion of Muhammad Abduh in "*Tafsir al-Manar*", in the commentary on the verse 3:55, vol.. 3, pp. 316-317, also: Mahmud Shaltut, "*al-Fatawa*", pp. 59-65, Cairo 1975]. The belief that Jesus' body was elevated alive to the heavens, where he remains, is also not acceptable for the supporter of this opinion, and he would have reservations about the Prophet's tradition that Jesus will come back when this world's life is about to come to its end as well.

According to the relatively detailed account of Jesus' life and message [3:42-60], he was brought to this world through *"a word from Him"* [3:45], as the Quran stresses in another verse: *"Christ Jesus, the son of Mary, was but the conveyor of God's message and His word He cast to Mary, and a spirit from Him"* [4:171]. How was Jesus God's word? The word from God could have merely been - as it was in Adam's creation - *"He but says, 'Be' and it is"* [3:47; see also 3:59]. Then how was Jesus a spirit from God? According to the Quran, the human being, since the creation of Adam, has been created through "God's breathing of His spirit into him" [15:29; 38:72], but the "spirit from God" in the case of Jesus was breathed in his mother's womb [21:91; 66:12], not in the human form made by God from clay as in the case of Adam.

According to this interpretation of the above mentioned verses and to other verses, Muslims believe that however distinctive Jesus' birth was, his doubtless supernaturality was not equivalent to divinity, just as all the particular circumstances of the creation of Adam through a direct action of God and the granting of certain merits over all God's creation to him and his wife did not mean that the first couple was divine. However, Jesus - as the Quran accurately reports - has been always remarkable and well regarded by people in this life, as he will be countlessly rewarded by God in the life to come, not only because of his miraculous birth or his other miracles, but because of his message and how he presented and represented it throughout his life. He was taught by God not merely the "letter" of the Book, but the "essence" and the "deep of wisdom" of God's revelation that is beyond the letter, and thus he could complement the Torah, with its strictness and legality, with the Gospel in its impressiveness and spirituality [3:48, 50; 5:110].

In general, throughout the successive messages of God, including the one of Jesus and the other of Muhammad, we see the *"Book"* combined with *"wisdom"* in several Quranic verses [e.g. 2:129, 151, 231; 3:81, 164; 4:54, 113; 5:110; 62:2]. This "wisdom" may be meant to indicate understanding God's guidance and applying it to the existing cultural and social circumstances in the different given times and places. Besides, God's blessings of developing self-purity is added to the combination of "learning" the message and having wisdom in carrying it out [2:129, 151; 3:164; 62:2]. Jesus confirmed the Torah that had been revealed before him and thus stressed the essence of continuation and oneness in God's message, despite the differences that might arise in the required practices due to the continuously changing circumstances of human societies. Therefore, Jesus was sent to announce lawful some of what had been considered before to be unlawful for the children of Israel [3:50; see also 3:93; 4:160; 5:146].

The miraculous side in Jesus' life overshadowed his significant role in the history of prophethood, in addition to his part in the history of the Children of Israel and of humanity as a whole. His treatment of human hearts and minds, of moral and intellectual defects such as blindness or others, and even of moral and intellectual death, has been continuous and universal, while his curing of physical blindness and leprosy, his blowing life into a bird shaped out of clay or even his reviving a dead person with God's will and enabling overall physical miracles were only witnessed by one community and generation, and were presented as mere "signs" that should call the human attention to the "essence" of the message and its real addition and contribution to humanity. Those who believed early in the message of Jesus and were ready to support him were those who could conceive the "change" that it presented, and who could thus become a milestone that is representative of this significant metamorphosis of human history. The followers of Muhammad were urged by the Quran to follow this example of the followers of Jesus in their support of the message [61:14], since it is only through such a human support for ideals and principles that turning points in history can exist. The verses 3:42-60 and 18:16-37 simply and understandably explain the message of Jesus, as it is accepted by Muslims: *"And [I have come to you] to confirm the Torah that I have found there before me, and to make lawful to you some of what was [before] forbidden to you..." [3:50], "... and We gave him the*

Gospel, wherein is guidance and light, confirming the truth of the Torah that he found there before him, and as a guidance and admonition unto those who are God conscious. And the followers of the Gospel are bidden to judge in accordance with what God has sent down therein, and they who do not judge in accordance with what God has sent down, they are truly iniquitous" [5:46-47], *"Say: 'O People of the Book! You have no valid solid ground unless you [truly] apply the Torah and the Gospel and all that was sent to you from your Lord"* [5:68]. In other places in the Quran, care of and kindness to parents, and avoidance of haughtiness and rebelliousness, were emphasized as merits of Jesus whose behavior impressively represented the values to which he called people. Therefore, it should be again mentioned that what the Quran repeatedly rejects is the divinity of Jesus [4:171, 5:17, 72-77]. In almost every place where Jesus is mentioned in the Quran his name is followed by "the son of Mary" to stress that he was a human being and the son of another human being, although both have their special place with regard to God. Mary was selected and made pure and raised above all the women of the world [3:42], and Jesus was "*highly honored shall he be in this world and in the life to come, and [he shall be] of those who are drawn near unto God*" [3:45].

Jesus is described in the Quran as "*the conveyor of God's message and His word that He conveyed unto Mary and a spirit from Him*" [4:171], but these terms "word of God, and a spirit from Him" are understood by Muslims in a way that is absolutely different from any attribution of divinity to Jesus, as it has been mentioned above. The word of God referred to here is His command that Jesus would be created in this way [3:45-47], conveyed to Mary by the angels, and the "spirit from God" has been endowed by Him to the human being ever since the creation of Adam [15:29; 38:72 also 32:9]. That is why the Quran states the similarity of Jesus to Adam *"whom He created out of dust and then said unto him, 'Be', and he is"* [3:59].

It seems that calling God "father" was a practice that started among the Israelites [e.g. Exodus 4:22-23, Jeremiah 31:9] as well as in symbolic and metaphorical descriptions which were attributed to Jesus or that were in other statements in the Gospels. As time went on, this practice began to be as a fact of which they boasted; it led first the Jews and then the Christians to the double standard of looking at others in a way that was different from how they regarded themselves. They had secured salvation, while others have to work hard for it, and they would never reach their exclusive degree of acceptance and honor on the grounds of being the "chosen people" with regard to Jews, and the believers in Jesus Christ the Savior and Redeemer with regard to Christians [5:18]. Muslims have been strictly taught to absolutely avoid falling into the traps of such symbols or metaphors, and they should emphasize the oneness and absolute uniqueness of God and His fundamental difference from anything that exists or could exist: "*There is nothing like Him*" [42:11; also 112:4]. However, Muslims should always remember that God is called "Rabb" in the Quran, a word often translated as "Lord," but which really combines the meanings of Lord, and Sustainer, and Cherisher, and even the One who raises, rears and educates. In this way, Muslims feel God's closeness to the human being and His care and love for him/her without the use of a confusing term, but it should be noted that such closeness, care and love are not exclusively for Muslims, but for all who worship and obey God, and His mercy and compassion even reach all His creatures [see for example 6:12,

54; 7:156; 10:21; 21:107; 30:21; 38:9; 39:53].

The assumed dialogue between God and Jesus that is reported in the verses [5:116-119] is clear and self-explanatory, regardless of whether it actually happened in the past, or will happen in the future on the Day of Judgement, or whether it presents facts and does not necessarily report a particular event. In any case, it presents the Islamic beliefs with regard to Jesus and his mother in the form of a dialogue between God and Jesus, in which Jesus denies any deity attributed to himself or his mother. Although his mother "The Virgin" was not a part in the divine trinity, she has been highly revered and almost adored by many Christians, and calling her "God's Mother"/ "La Mere de Dieu" is significant in this respect. He also significantly states that his life is limited and his knowledge is within his human abilities and the limits of his life. Jesus' words are very impressive as he fully entrusts the judgement of his followers to God, while at the same time referring to God's forgiveness. Whatever the miracles and blessings of God that were bestowed on Jesus and his mother Mary were, the two were but blessed human beings in the Quranic faith [2:87, 253; 3:37, 42-43, 45-50; 4:171; 5:75, 110; 19:16-36; 61:14; 66:12]. The Quran urges the believers in the divinity of Jesus to rethink their belief and reconsider it, and this dialoguing is consistent and legitimate as long as the Islamic side is committed to the Quranic principle "*There is no coercion in matters of faith*" [2:256, also 10:99, 11:28; 16:125; 29:46] and strictly observes it.

In general, the degrees that God gave to the conveyors of His messages [2:253; also 17:55] should not be a reason for conflict among the followers of any, since their belief in the One God provides the common ground between them, and they all believe in the "wholeness" and "oneness" of God's messages, and in all the conveyors of His messages without making a distinction among them with regard to their belief in them, and with due respect and love to all of them. If God had willed that all humanity believe in one way and follow human reason and common sense and agree on the truth and righteousness and have no differences, he could have secured such an agreement and made any difference or conflict impossible [5:48; 11:118-119; 16:93; 42:8]. But God willed to allow the human being freedom of choice, to endow the individual with intellectual and spiritual faculties, and to send His messages of guidance, and after providing all this He lets everyone free to make his/her own choices and decisions. Freedom means difference in human thinking and doing: the individual may have different views and actions at different times, and the society often has differences among its individuals. Difference, as an inevitable essence of human life, is inseparable from human freedom, is stressed in several verses of the Quran [e.g. 2:253; 5:48; 10:19; 11:118-119; 18:29]. But although human differences are normal and should be expected, human conflicts and fighting should be resisted, since the judgement about the truth belongs only to God who knows each person's intention, abilities and circumstances in making his/her decisions [e.g. 2:113; 3:55; 5:48, 105; 6:54, 60, 108, 164; 10:4, 23, 46, 93; 11:4; 16:92, 124; 22:69; 29:8; 31:15; 32:25; 39:3, 7, 46; 45:17].

Whatever the theological differences between Christians and Muslims may be, the moral merits and attributes of Christians in the past and the present are acknowledged in

the Quran. The believers in the message of Muhammad have been urged to be firm in their faith and support of the message, as the followers of Jesus were [61:14]. In Arabia, in the time of the Prophet, the Christians were considered "*closer to feeling affection for those who believe [in this divine writ], as there are priests and monks among them and as they are not arrogant*" [5:82]. Although the Quran states that monastic asceticism was not enjoined by God on the followers of Jesus, it mentions that they are blessed with "*compassion and mercy*" [57:27], and some commentators have understood the verse as indicating that the monastic asceticism introduced by them on their own was developed "*out of a desire for God's goodly acceptance*" [57:27]. The Muslims were permitted to eat the food of the People of the Book and marry their women [5:5]. As for the Christian's simultaneous belief in the One God and the Trinity, and the Quranic qualification of this as a deliberate denial of the truth, the Arabic word "*kufr*" used by the Quran in this context can mean grave ungratefulness and rebelliousness against the One God, as it means in many other verses, and this meaning is thought to be the only one by many people [5:17, 72-73; also 5:44; 14:34].

The Quran, regarding Jesus' crucifixion by the Jews, indicates "*...and they actually did neither kill him nor crucify him, but it only seemed to them [to be this way]...but God raised him up unto Himself, and God is All-mighty, All-wise*" [4:157-8]. In other places, the Quran reads, " *When God said, O Jesus! I shall cause your term [in this world's life] to come to its determined end, and shall raise you unto Me*" [3:55], " *[Jesus said...] but since You caused my term [in this world's life] to come to its determined end, You alone have been the One who watches over them...*" [5:117]. The verses may be easily understood as referring to a normal death for Jesus. What "seemed to" some people to be a different way, could have been the whole story of Jesus' killing and crucifixion, and not only the person who was killed and crucified, and was narrated to have resembled Jesus. Such narratives evolved in the course of time, and were believed by Jews and Christians, and a philosophy was developed to make such a crucifixion a relief for humanity from the alleged "original sin" which the Quran denies [e.g. 2:37, 7:23, 20:122]. Muhammad Asad elaborates on this understanding of the Quranic stand about the end of Jesus' life [notes 171,172 on verses 4:157-8]. He believes that "raising Jesus unto God [13:55, 4:157] does not merely refer to the normal raising of the soul in death, but to "exalting Jesus unto God" and elevating and honoring him by God. However, the physical elevation of the body of Jesus -even while he was still alive- was mentioned by classical commentators with whom Muhammad Abduh, and later the former Shaykh of al-Azhar Mahmud Shaltut, differed [Muhammad Abduh, *Tafsir al-Manar*, vol.3, pp.316-8, commentary on verse 3:56; Mahmud Shaltut, *al-Fatawa,* 8th ed., Cairo: 1975, pp.59-65]. Nevertheless, Abduh apparently agreed that someone (a traitor among Jesus' followers) who resembled him was taken for him and crucified [Abduh, *ibid,* vol.6, pp.18-21, commentary on verses 4:157-8]. A Prophet's tradition that mentions the return of Jesus by the end of this life is not considered binding by Abduh on the grounds that its reporters in their successive links are very few *(hadith 'ahad),* and such a tradition cannot be binding in matters of faith according to classical scholars [Abduh, *ibid,* vol.3 p.317; compare Shaltut, *ibid;* and see for how binding a Prophet's tradition reported by few in its successive links is in matters of faith : Mahmud Shaltut: *al-Islam, 'Aqida wa Shari'a,* 12th ed., Cairo:1983, pp.59-61].

Regarding the good tidings given by Jesus about the coming of a prophet after him called "Ahmad" [61:6], Muhammad Asad has put a concise informative note [No 6] on the verse: "This prediction is supported by several references in the Gospel of St. John to the 'Parklitos' (usually rendered as 'comforter') who was to come after Jesus. This designation is almost certainly a corruption of Periklytos "the much-praised," an exact Greek translation of the Aramaic term or name Mawhamana (it is to be born in mind that Aramaic was the language used in Palestine during the time of, and for some centuries after, Jesus, and was thus undoubtedly the language in which the original - now lost - texts of the Gospels were composed). In view of the phonetic closeness of Periklytos and Parecletos, it is easy to understand how the translator - or, more probably, a later scribe - confused these two expressions. It is significant that both the Aramaic Mawhamana and the Greek Periklytos have the same meaning as the two names of the Last Prophet, Muhammad and Ahmad, both of which are derived from the verb "*hamida*" (he praised) and the noun "*hamd*" (praise). An even more unequivocal prediction of the advent of the Prophet Muhammad - mentioned by name, in its Arabic form - is said to be forth coming from the so-called Gospel of St. Barnabas, which, though now regarded as apocryphal, was accepted as authentic and was read in the churches until the year 496 C.E., when it was banned as "heretical" by a decree of Pope Gelasius I [492-96 C.E.]. However, since the original text of that gospel is not available (having come down to us in an Italian translation dating from the late 16th century), its authenticity cannot be established with certainty." It may be useful, also, to add here that in his notes 33 on the verse 2:42 and 24 on the verse 7:157, Asad made reference to Deuteronomy XVIII: 15, 18: "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him you shall hearken," "I will raise them up a prophet from among thy brethren, like unto thee, and will put My words in his mouth." Asad comments: "The brethren of the children of Israel are obviously the Arabs, and particularly the group that traces its descent to Ishmael and Abraham, and since it is to this group that the Arabian Prophet's own tribe 'Quraysh' belonged, the above Biblical passages must be taken as referring to his advent."

THE ENVIRONMENT

[Abraham and Ishmael prayed,] "O our Lord! Raise up to them [our offspring] a conveyor of [Your] message from among themselves, who shall convey to them Your message, and teach them the divine writ and the wisdom as well, and cause them to grow in purity; surely, You are the All-mighty, the All-wise." [2:129]

رَبَّنَا وَ ٱبۡعَثۡ فِيهِمۡ رَسُولٗا مِّنۡهُمۡ
يَتۡلُواْ عَلَيۡهِمۡ ءَايَٰتِكَ وَ يُعَلِّمُهُمُ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ
وَٱلۡحِكۡمَةَ وَ يُزَكِّيهِمۡۚ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلۡعَزِيزُ
ٱلۡحَكِيمُ ﴿١٢٩﴾

Truly God was gracious to the believers, when He raised up among them a conveyor of His message from among themselves, to recite [and convey] unto them His messages, and to cause them to grow in purity, and to impart unto them the Book and the wisdom as well, whereas before that they were lost in evident error. [3:164]

لَقَدۡ مَنَّ ٱللَّهُ
عَلَى ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ إِذۡ بَعَثَ فِيهِمۡ رَسُولٗا مِّنۡ
أَنفُسِهِمۡ يَتۡلُواْ عَلَيۡهِمۡ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ وَ يُزَكِّيهِمۡ
وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ وَ ٱلۡحِكۡمَةَ وَ إِن كَانُواْ
مِن قَبۡلُ لَفِي ضَلَٰلٖ مُّبِينٍ ﴿١٦٤﴾

And this is a Book which We have sent down and is blessed; follow it, then, and be conscious of God, so that you might be graced with His mercy; lest you should say, "Only unto two groups of people, [both of them] before our time, has a Book been sent down, and we were indeed unaware of their teachings"; or lest you say, "If the Book had been sent down upon us, we would surely have followed its guidance better than they did." Yet indeed, a clear evidence of the truth has now come unto you from your Lord, and guidance and grace. Who, then, could be of greater evil-doing than one who denounces as lies God's messages and turns away from them in disdain? We shall requite those who turn away from Our messages in disdain with evil suffering for having thus turned away. [6:155-157]

وَ هَٰذَا كِتَٰبٌ أَنزَلۡنَٰهُ مُبَارَكٞ فَٱتَّبِعُوهُ
وَٱتَّقُواْ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تُرۡحَمُونَ ﴿١٥٥﴾ أَن
تَقُولُوٓاْ إِنَّمَآ أُنزِلَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبُ عَلَىٰ
طَآئِفَتَيۡنِ مِن قَبۡلِنَا وَ إِن كُنَّا عَن
دِرَاسَتِهِمۡ لَغَٰفِلِينَ ﴿١٥٦﴾ أَوۡ تَقُولُواْ لَوۡ
أَنَّآ أُنزِلَ عَلَيۡنَا ٱلۡكِتَٰبُ لَكُنَّآ أَهۡدَىٰ
مِنۡهُمۡۚ فَقَدۡ جَآءَكُم بَيِّنَةٞ مِّن رَّبِّكُمۡ وَ هُدٗى
وَ رَحۡمَةٞۚ فَمَنۡ أَظۡلَمُ مِمَّن كَذَّبَ بِـَٔايَٰتِ
ٱللَّهِ وَ صَدَفَ عَنۡهَاۗ سَنَجۡزِي ٱلَّذِينَ
يَصۡدِفُونَ عَنۡ ءَايَٰتِنَا سُوٓءَ ٱلۡعَذَابِ بِمَا
كَانُواْ يَصۡدِفُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾

Those who follow the Conveyor of God's message, the unlettered

ٱلَّذِينَ
يَتَّبِعُونَ ٱلرَّسُولَ ٱلنَّبِيَّ ٱلۡأُمِّيَّ ٱلَّذِي

Prophet, whom they find mentioned in the Torah and the Gospel that they had: [the Prophet] who enjoins upon them the doing of what is right and forbids them the doing of what is wrong, and makes lawful to them the good things of life and forbids the bad and impure things, and lifts from them their burdens and the shackles that have been [before] upon them. It is those who believe in him, and honor him, and support him and follow the light which is sent down with him, it is they who will attain to success.

Say: "O people! Surely, I am a conveyor of God's message to all of you; [God] unto whom the dominion over the heavens and the earth belongs. There is no god but He; He [alone] grants life and makes to die. Believe, then, in God and the conveyor of His message - the unlettered Prophet who believes in God and His words, and follow him, so that you might find guidance." [7:157-158]

يَجِدُونَهُۥ مَكْتُوبًا عِندَهُمْ فِى ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ
وَٱلْإِنجِيلِ يَأْمُرُهُم بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَىٰهُمْ
عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ وَيُحِلُّ لَهُمُ ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ
عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْخَبَٰٓئِثَ وَيَضَعُ عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ
وَٱلْأَغْلَٰلَ ٱلَّتِى كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ فَٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا۟ بِهِۦ وَعَزَّرُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ
وَٱتَّبَعُوا۟ ٱلنُّورَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أُنزِلَ مَعَهُۥٓ ۙ
أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾ قُلْ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا
ٱلنَّاسُ إِنِّى رَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا
ٱلَّذِى لَهُۥ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ
لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ يُحْىِۦ وَيُمِيتُ ۖ
فَـَٔامِنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ٱلنَّبِىِّ ٱلْأُمِّىِّ
ٱلَّذِى يُؤْمِنُ بِٱللَّهِ وَكَلِمَٰتِهِۦ وَٱتَّبِعُوهُ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥٨﴾

Now there has come unto you a Conveyor of [God's] message from among yourselves; caring for you that you might not suffer, full of concern about you [your good], [and] full of compassion and mercy towards the believers. [9:128]

لَقَدْ جَآءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ
أَنفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ
عَلَيْكُم بِٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٢٨﴾

Not before this have you been able to recite any Book, nor have you ever written one with your own hand, and [if you did] then those who follow falsehood might have had cause to have doubt [about it]. [29:48]

وَمَا كُنتَ تَتْلُوا۟ مِن قَبْلِهِۦ مِن
كِتَٰبٍ وَلَا تَخُطُّهُۥ بِيَمِينِكَ ۖ إِذًا
لَّٱرْتَابَ ٱلْمُبْطِلُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

And thus, too [O Muhammad], have We, by Our command, sent inspiration to you; you knew not before what the [divine] book is, nor what the faith [precisely] is [and what it comprehends], but We have caused this [message] to be a light, whereby We guide whom We will of Our

وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَوْحَيْنَآ
إِلَيْكَ رُوحًا مِّنْ أَمْرِنَا ۚ مَا كُنتَ تَدْرِى
مَا ٱلْكِتَٰبُ وَلَا ٱلْإِيمَٰنُ وَلَٰكِن جَعَلْنَٰهُ
نُورًا نَّهْدِى بِهِۦ مَن نَّشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا ۚ
وَإِنَّكَ لَتَهْدِىٓ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٥٢﴾

servants; and you surely shall guide [people] to the straight way, the way of God, to whom belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on earth; surely, and unto God all matters end. [42:52-53]

صِرَٰطِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّذِى لَهُۥ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ أَلَآ إِلَى
ٱللَّهِ تَصِيرُ ٱلْأُمُورُ ﴿٥٣﴾

It is He who has sent unto the unlettered people a conveyor of [God's] message from among themselves, to recite [and convey] unto them His messages and to cause them to grow in purity and to impart unto them the Book and the wisdom as well, whereas before that they were indeed lost in evident error; and unto other people who have not joined them [the early believers]; and He alone is All- mighty, All-wise [62:2-3]

هُوَ ٱلَّذِى بَعَثَ فِى ٱلْأُمِّيِّۧنَ
رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُوا۟ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ
وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ
وَإِن كَانُوا۟ مِن قَبْلُ لَفِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٢﴾
وَءَاخَرِينَ مِنْهُمْ لَمَّا يَلْحَقُوا۟ بِهِمْ ۚ وَهُوَ
ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٣﴾

The Quran highlights the environment in which Muhammad was raised before his prophethood, and to which he was sent with God's message. By the time of Muhammad, Mecca had became an outstanding city at the crossroads of the caravan route between Yemen and Syria that was part of the world routes between the East and the West through the Indian Ocean, and the Red and Mediterranean Seas. It was also home to the House of God which had been established by Ibrahim (Abraham) and Isma'il (Ishmael), and which could have dimly reminded the people of Arabia of the belief in One God. Besides this, Arabia had areas of Judaism and Christianity, the Books of which had some references to a future Arab prophet [e.g. Deuteronomy XVIII: 15, 18; Gospel of John, reference to "the comforter"]. However, the Arabs of this region themselves had not received any divine message for a very long time before Muhammad, since their land at the time of the establishment of the House of God by Abraham and Ishmael had not attracted a considerable population [see 14:37], and it was only later that it became populated.

Muhammad himself was an unlettered person in an unlettered society. Not only was he unlettered in the particular sense of not having had a divine book before the revelation of the Quran, but he was also unlettered in the general sense of not knowing how to read and write. However, it seems that since he was young, he cared about his people and attended the tribal gatherings at which common concerns among tribes were discussed such as the gathering which resulted in forming the tribal "Alliance of the Nobles" the purpose of which was to defend anyone who might be wronged in his area until justice is restored, and to help those in need [a tradition reported by Ibn Hanbal; see also Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqat al-Kubra*, vol. 1, pp. 128-9, Beirut, 1978]. He once solved an emerging conflict among some tribes who all wanted to have the honor of putting back the "black cornerstone" of the Ka 'ba when it was rebuilt, after having been damaged by a flood [Ibn Said, *al-Tabaqat*, vol. 1, pp. 146, 157]. He was known as a truthful and honest young man [Ibn Said, *al-Tabaqat*, vol. 1, pp. 121, 146]. In addition to his personal qualities, he had the advantage of being from the clan of bani Hashim, which was a part of the distinguished

tribe of Quraysh. This tribe was in charge of the maintenance of the Inviolable House of God in Mecca, and the service of the pilgrims who came to it from all over Arabia.

The Revelation and the Message

Recite, in the name of your Lord, who has created, has created the human being of a suspending mixture [of sperm and egg]. Read, and your Lord is the Most Bountiful, who has taught [the human being] through the pen, taught the human being what he did not know. [96:1-5]

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ﴿١﴾ خَلَقَ
الْإِنسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ﴿٢﴾ اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ
الْأَكْرَمُ ﴿٣﴾ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ﴿٤﴾ عَلَّمَ
الْإِنسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ ﴿٥﴾

"Nun;" and by the pen, and all that they write [therewith], you are not, by your Lord's grace, a mad man. And, surely, yours shall be a reward never failing; and you have indeed an outstanding character. So you shall see, and they shall see, which of you is out of his mind.
Surely, your Lord alone is fully aware of who

has strayed from His way, just as He alone is fully aware of those who have followed the right way. Hence, follow not [the likes and dislikes of] those who denounce the truth as lies; they would like you to be soft, and so they would be soft with you. [68:1-9]

نٓ ۚ وَالْقَلَمِ وَمَا يَسْطُرُونَ ﴿١﴾ مَا
أَنتَ بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ بِمَجْنُونٍ ﴿٢﴾ وَإِنَّ لَكَ
لَأَجْرًا غَيْرَ مَمْنُونٍ ﴿٣﴾ وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ
خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٤﴾ فَسَتُبْصِرُ وَيُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٥﴾
بِأَييِّكُمُ الْمَفْتُونُ ﴿٦﴾ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ
بِمَن ضَلَّ عَن سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ
بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿٧﴾ فَلَا تُطِعِ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٨﴾
وَدُّوا لَوْ تُدْهِنُ فَيُدْهِنُونَ ﴿٩﴾

O you enwrapped one! Keep awake [in prayer] at night, all but a small part, of one-half thereof, or make it little less than that, or add to it [according to your will and ability], and recite the Quran quietly and distinctly. Behold, We shall bestow upon you a weighty message. Surely, the hours of the night would be more burdening [for human activity and to pray in], but more suitable for saying the right words [in prayer and communication with God]. And during the day, you have an ample chance to go through a long work. But [by night or day] remember your Lord's name, and devote yourself unto Him with utter devotion the Lord of the East

يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُزَّمِّلُ ﴿١﴾ قُمِ اللَّيْلَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا
﴿٢﴾ نِّصْفَهُ أَوِ انقُصْ مِنْهُ قَلِيلًا ﴿٣﴾ أَوْ
زِدْ عَلَيْهِ وَرَتِّلِ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلًا ﴿٤﴾
إِنَّا سَنُلْقِي عَلَيْكَ قَوْلًا ثَقِيلًا ﴿٥﴾ إِنَّ
نَاشِئَةَ اللَّيْلِ هِيَ أَشَدُّ وَطْئًا وَأَقْوَمُ قِيلًا
﴿٦﴾ إِنَّ لَكَ فِي النَّهَارِ سَبْحًا طَوِيلًا
﴿٧﴾ وَاذْكُرِ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ وَتَبَتَّلْ إِلَيْهِ
تَبْتِيلًا ﴿٨﴾ رَّبُّ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ لَا
إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَاتَّخِذْهُ وَكِيلًا ﴿٩﴾

and West, there is no god but Him; take Him, then, as the only guardian. And endure with patience whatever people may say, and forsake them graciously. [73:1-10]

وَٱصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَٱهْجُرْهُمْ هَجْرًا
جَمِيلًا ﴿١٠﴾

By the bright morning hours, and the covering night with its stillness and darkness, your Lord has neither forsaken you, nor has He disliked you; and the life to come shall be better for you than this earlier life [in this world]. And your Lord, in time, shall give you, and you shall be well-pleased. Has He not found you an orphan, and He has sheltered you? And has found you lost on your way, and has guided you? And has found you in want, and has given you sufficiency? Therefore, the orphan shall you never wrong, nor chide one who seeks [your] help, but of the bounty of your Lord shall you [ever] speak [in words and deeds]. [93:1-11]

وَٱلضُّحَىٰ ﴿١﴾ وَٱلَّيْلِ إِذَا سَجَىٰ ﴿٢﴾
مَا وَدَّعَكَ رَبُّكَ وَمَا قَلَىٰ ﴿٣﴾ وَلَلْآخِرَةُ
خَيْرٌ لَّكَ مِنَ ٱلْأُولَىٰ ﴿٤﴾ وَلَسَوْفَ
يُعْطِيكَ رَبُّكَ فَتَرْضَىٰٓ ﴿٥﴾ أَلَمْ يَجِدْكَ
يَتِيمًا فَـَٔاوَىٰ ﴿٦﴾ وَوَجَدَكَ ضَآلًّا
فَهَدَىٰ ﴿٧﴾ وَوَجَدَكَ عَآئِلًا فَأَغْنَىٰ
﴿٨﴾ فَأَمَّا ٱلْيَتِيمَ فَلَا تَقْهَرْ ﴿٩﴾ وَأَمَّا
ٱلسَّآئِلَ فَلَا تَنْهَرْ ﴿١٠﴾ وَأَمَّا
بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ فَحَدِّثْ ﴿١١﴾

Have We not inspired and comforted your heart? And lifted from you your burden that had weighed so heavily on your back? And [have We not] raised you high [in this world's life and in the life to come]? So truly with hardship comes ease; truly with hardship comes ease. Hence, whenever you have a chance [in time and energy], work hard [for your message], and unto your Lord turn with full appeal. [94:1-8]

أَلَمْ نَشْرَحْ لَكَ صَدْرَكَ ﴿١﴾ وَوَضَعْنَا
عَنكَ وِزْرَكَ ﴿٢﴾ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنقَضَ ظَهْرَكَ
﴿٣﴾ وَرَفَعْنَا لَكَ ذِكْرَكَ ﴿٤﴾ فَإِنَّ مَعَ
ٱلْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا ﴿٥﴾ إِنَّ مَعَ ٱلْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا
﴿٦﴾ فَإِذَا فَرَغْتَ فَٱنصَبْ ﴿٧﴾
وَإِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ فَٱرْغَب ﴿٨﴾

Have you ever seen a human being who contradicts the [essence of] faith [in God and His Judgement]? Then such is the one who thrusts the orphan away, and feels no urge to feed the needy. [107:1-3]

أَرَءَيْتَ ٱلَّذِى يُكَذِّبُ بِٱلدِّينِ ﴿١﴾ فَذَٰلِكَ
ٱلَّذِى يَدُعُّ ٱلْيَتِيمَ ﴿٢﴾ وَلَا يَحُضُّ عَلَىٰ
طَعَامِ ٱلْمِسْكِينِ ﴿٣﴾

Say: "O you who [stubbornly] deny the truth! I worship not that which you worship; nor do you worship that which I worship.
"And I will never worship that which you have [ever] worshiped; nor will you [ever] worship

قُلْ يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْكَـٰفِرُونَ ﴿١﴾ لَآ أَعْبُدُ مَا
تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٢﴾ وَلَآ أَنتُمْ عَـٰبِدُونَ مَآ أَعْبُدُ
﴿٣﴾ وَلَآ أَنَا۠ عَابِدٌ مَّا عَبَدتُّمْ ﴿٤﴾ وَلَآ

that which I worship.
"Unto you be your way, in what you believe, and unto me mine [and both can never meet or be compromised]." [109:1-6]

أَنتُمْ عَٰبِدُونَ مَآ أَعْبُدُ ﴿٥﴾ لَكُمْ
دِينُكُمْ وَلِىَ دِينِ ﴿٦﴾

Say: "He is God, the One God, the Eternal and Absolute and Everlasting Refuge.
"He has not begotten, and has not been begotten. And equal to [and comparable with] Him is none." [112:1-4]

قُلْ هُوَ ٱللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ﴿١﴾ ٱللَّهُ ٱلصَّمَدُ ﴿٢﴾
لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ﴿٣﴾ وَلَمْ يَكُن
لَّهُۥ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌۢ ﴿٤﴾

The above verses represent how the message of Muhammad began, how he was guided for his mission, and what was the essence of his message. Learning is essential in the message of Islam, and the pen was mentioned twice in the earliest suras revealed [96:1-4; 68:1]. It was reported that when Muhammad received the revelation for the first time, he felt his body trembling as if he was very cold, and he asked his wife as soon as he reached home to cover and enwrap him. The subsequent revelation called on him to rise, as there would be no time for more rest, since he had to carry out the responsibilities of his mission [74:1-7]. He had to devote enough time to worshipping God and to obtaining the spiritual and moral support from this communication to overcome the obstacles that faced him [73:1-11]. Besides this, he was guided to adhere in his faith and message to clarity and steadfastness, and in his behavior to patience and purity in all its physical and moral dimensions. He had to refrain from all defilement, whatever it might be, so that his behavior would be a concrete living representation of his message. He could by no means seek any personal benefits for what he might give and offer. There is no room for compromise in the faith, although there is no place also for imposition and compulsion: *"To you your faith, and to me my faith"* [109:6].

When the revelation underwent an interval of suspension, and Muhammad was worried that it had stopped, he was later assured, when it was resumed, that God had not forsaken or had become hateful to him, and that he had always been under his Lord's care since he was a little child without first a father then, after a few years, a mother. God had provided for him materially and spiritually. Bearing this always in mind, Muhammad had to always avoid suppressing or hurting an orphan or anyone else who was in need in any way, and he had to always let his words and deeds speak about God's favors and blessings to him [93:1-11]. As for the essence of his message, it is worshipping God alone; He has no associates in His divinity, and none can be compared with Him [e.g. 12:1-4]. The message could be crystallized in its earliest times as a message of absolute monotheism and caring for those who are in need [e.g. 93:9-11; 103:1-3; 107:1-7].

The Early Opponents

Nay, surely, the human being becomes grossly transgressing [all

كَلَّآ إِنَّ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ
لَيَطْغَىٰٓ ﴿٦﴾ أَن رَّءَاهُ ٱسْتَغْنَىٰٓ ﴿٧﴾

bounds of reason and fairness], whenever he [/she] feels himself[/herself] self-sufficient. Surely, unto your Lord all must return.Have you seen the one who tries to prevent a servant [of God] from praying? Have you seen that [he had never considered that] such a person [who worships God alone] might be on the right way, or might be bidding righteousness? Have you seen that he is denouncing the truth as a lie [stubbornly and without thinking] and he is turning his back [to it]? Does he, then, not know that God sees [all]? [96:6-14]

إِنَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ ٱلرُّجْعَىٰٓ ﴿٨﴾ أَرَءَيْتَ
ٱلَّذِى يَنْهَىٰ ﴿٩﴾ عَبْدًا إِذَا صَلَّىٰٓ
﴿١٠﴾ أَرَءَيْتَ إِن كَانَ عَلَى ٱلْهُدَىٰٓ ﴿١١﴾
أَوْ أَمَرَ بِٱلتَّقْوَىٰٓ ﴿١٢﴾ أَرَءَيْتَ إِن كَذَّبَ
وَتَوَلَّىٰٓ ﴿١٣﴾ أَلَمْ يَعْلَم بِأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَرَىٰ
﴿١٤﴾

And do not follow every contemptible thrower of oaths [supporting his/her own claim irresponsibly], [or] the slanderer that goes about with defaming tales [about the believers in the truth], [or] the withholder and obstructor of good who is [really] an evil aggressor, [or] one who is fierce but [morally and socially] valueless, [the one who is behaving in this way] just because he has wealth and children, so whenever Our messages are conveyed to him, he says, "These are but fables of the ancients!" We shall brand him upon the muzzle [with the indelible disgrace]. [68:10-16]

وَلَا تُطِعْ
كُلَّ حَلَّافٍ مَّهِينٍ ﴿١٠﴾ هَمَّازٍ مَّشَّآءٍۭ بِنَمِيمٍ
﴿١١﴾ مَّنَّاعٍ لِّلْخَيْرِ مُعْتَدٍ أَثِيمٍ ﴿١٢﴾ عُتُلٍّ
بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ زَنِيمٍ ﴿١٣﴾ أَن كَانَ ذَا مَالٍ
وَبَنِينَ ﴿١٤﴾ إِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِ ءَايَٰتُنَا قَالَ
أَسَٰطِيرُ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٥﴾ سَنَسِمُهُۥ عَلَى
ٱلْخُرْطُومِ ﴿١٦﴾

And leave Me [to deal] with those who denounce the truth as lies, those who enjoy the blessings [of God] in this life [without thinking of the All-giver], and allow them a little respite. [73:11]

وَذَرْنِى وَٱلْمُكَذِّبِينَ أُو۟لِى
ٱلنَّعْمَةِ وَمَهِّلْهُمْ قَلِيلًا ﴿١١﴾

Leave Me [to deal] with the one whom I have created alone, and to whom I have granted extensive wealth, and children always present with him [for support], and made his way [in this life] smooth, and what a smoothness, and yet, he greedily desires that I should give him more. Nay, surely, he stubbornly sets himself against Our messages, and I shall constrain him to a hard ascent [through his stubbornness].

ذَرْنِى وَمَنْ خَلَقْتُ وَحِيدًا ﴿١١﴾
وَجَعَلْتُ لَهُۥ مَالًا مَّمْدُودًا ﴿١٢﴾ وَبَنِينَ
شُهُودًا ﴿١٣﴾ وَمَهَّدتُّ لَهُۥ تَمْهِيدًا ﴿١٤﴾
ثُمَّ يَطْمَعُ أَنْ أَزِيدَ ﴿١٥﴾ كَلَّآ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ
كَانَ لِـَٔايَٰتِنَا عَنِيدًا ﴿١٦﴾ سَأُرْهِقُهُۥ صَعُودًا ﴿١٧﴾

Lo! He reflected and considered; how self-destructive was he when he considered! And, how [more and more] self-destructive was he when he considered! Then he looked around, then he frowned, and had a gloomy face, and in the end he turned his back and demonstrated his haughtiness, and said, "This is merely [olden day] traditional magic; this is only what is said by a human being." [74:11-25]

إِنَّهُۥ فَكَّرَ وَ قَدَّرَ ﴿١٨﴾ فَقُتِلَ كَيْفَ
قَدَّرَ ﴿١٩﴾ ثُمَّ قُتِلَ كَيْفَ قَدَّرَ ﴿٢٠﴾ ثُمَّ نَظَرَ
﴿٢١﴾ ثُمَّ عَبَسَ وَ بَسَرَ ﴿٢٢﴾ ثُمَّ أَدْبَرَ
وَ ٱسْتَكْبَرَ ﴿٢٣﴾ فَقَالَ إِنْ هَٰذَآ إِلَّا سِحْرٌ
يُؤْثَرُ ﴿٢٤﴾ إِنْ هَٰذَآ إِلَّا قَوْلُ ٱلْبَشَرِ ﴿٢٥﴾

Since the earliest Quranic revelations concentrated on worshipping the One God and the responsibility of the haves towards the have-nots, Islam's early opponents were those who had been benefitting from the status quo and thus would be hurt by the message of Muhammad. The Quran revealed in Mecca portrayed the earliest opponents of the message as leading persons in that city's tribal and commercial society, who enjoyed wealth and clan strength [e.g. 68:10-23; 69:28-37; 70:24-5; 74:12-26, 40-48; 76:8-9; 83:1-6, 14; 89:17-26; 90:5-21; 96:6-7; 104: 1-9; 107:1-7; 111:2; also 18:32-46; 19:77-80; 23:55-6; 26:88; 34:4-9]. Their polytheistic beliefs were not merely a matter of faith, but rather a loyalty to their ancestors and traditions, which in a tribal society assured power and privileges [e.g. 15:6; 21:5; 23:25, 70; 34:8, 43, 46; 36:69; 37:36; 43:39; 44:14; 46:7]. They accused Muhammad of madness, magic and lying. It was a conflict between the personal shortsighted benefits of a certain limited time and the wide perspective of Islam which looks to time as a continuum towards eternity and looks to humanity as one. All human beings are created by the One God to Whose command and guidance every human being should submit his/her whole self at all times, and feels his/her accountability and requital in the eternal life to come.

The Quran

And whenever Our messages are recited and conveyed unto them in all their clarity, those who do not look forward to meeting Us say, "Bring us another book different from this Quran, or alter this one." Say, "It is not for me to alter it of my own volition; I only follow what is revealed to me; I fear, if I should rebel against my Lord the suffering of a dreadful Day." Say, "Had God willed it, I would not have recited and conveyed this [Book] unto you, nor would He have brought it to your knowledge. I have dwelt among you a lifetime before it; will you not, then, use your minds." [10:15-16]

وَ إِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ
ءَايَاتُنَا بَيِّنَٰتٍ قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ
لِقَآءَنَا ٱئْتِ بِقُرْءَانٍ غَيْرِ هَٰذَآ أَوْ
بَدِّلْهُ ۚ قُلْ مَا يَكُونُ لِىٓ أَنْ أُبَدِّلَهُۥ مِن
تِلْقَآئِ نَفْسِىٓ ۖ إِنْ أَتَّبِعُ إِلَّا مَا يُوحَىٰٓ
إِلَىَّ ۖ إِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ إِنْ عَصَيْتُ رَبِّى
عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٥﴾ قُل لَّوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ
مَا تَلَوْتُهُۥ عَلَيْكُمْ وَ لَآ أَدْرَىٰكُم بِهِۦ ۖ فَقَدْ
لَبِثْتُ فِيكُمْ عُمُرًا مِّن قَبْلِهِۦٓ ۚ أَفَلَا
تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

وَ مَا كَانَ هَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانُ
أَن يُفْتَرَىٰ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَ لَٰكِن تَصْدِيقَ
ٱلَّذِى بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَ تَفْصِيلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ لَا
رَيْبَ فِيهِ مِن رَّبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾ أَمْ
يَقُولُونَ ٱفْتَرَىٰهُ ۖ قُلْ فَأْتُوا۟ بِسُورَةٍ
مِّثْلِهِۦ وَ ٱدْعُوا۟ مَنِ ٱسْتَطَعْتُم مِّن دُونِ
ٱللَّهِ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾ بَلْ كَذَّبُوا۟
بِمَا لَمْ يُحِيطُوا۟ بِعِلْمِهِۦ وَ لَمَّا يَأْتِهِمْ
تَأْوِيلُهُۥ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ كَذَّبَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۖ
فَٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾

This Quran could not have been devised by anyone save God; it is but a confirmation of what is before it, and it clearly spells out the revelation - let there be no doubt about it - from the Lord of all-being. Or do those who stubbornly deny the truth say, "He has forged it?" Say, "Then produce a 'sura' like it, and call upon whom you can [for your support], apart from God, if what you say is true." Nay, those who considered as false anything that they have not already known, or that no explanation about it has reached them. Thus, those who were before them denounced [the truth] as lies; then behold how was the end of the evildoers. [10:37-39]

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ
ٱفْتَرَىٰهُ ۖ قُلْ فَأْتُوا۟ بِعَشْرِ سُوَرٍ مِّثْلِهِۦ
مُفْتَرَيَٰتٍ وَ ٱدْعُوا۟ مَنِ ٱسْتَطَعْتُم مِّن دُونِ
ٱللَّهِ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿١٣﴾

Or do they say, "He has forged it?" Say, "Then produce ten suras the like of it, forged; and call upon whom you are able [to call upon], apart from God, if what you say is true." [11:13]

وَ إِن كُنتُمْ
فِى رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا۟
بِسُورَةٍ مِّن مِّثْلِهِۦ وَ ٱدْعُوا۟ شُهَدَآءَكُم مِّن
دُونِ ٱللَّهِ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾ فَإِن لَّمْ
تَفْعَلُوا۟ وَ لَن تَفْعَلُوا۟ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱلنَّارَ ٱلَّتِى
وَقُودُهَا ٱلنَّاسُ وَ ٱلْحِجَارَةُ ۖ أُعِدَّتْ
لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

And if you are in doubt about[the divine origin of] what We have sent down, step by step, to our servant and worshipper [Muhammad], then produce a unit 'sura' of the same merit, and call upon that you hold as witness, rather than God, if you are saying the truth. And if you do not -and you will not- then try to keep yourselves safe from the fire, whose fuel is human beings and stones, which awaits all those who stubbornly deny the truth. [2:23-24]

إِنَّآ أَنزَلْنَٰهُ قُرْءَٰنًا عَرَبِيًّا
لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٢﴾

We have sent it down as a Quran in Arabic, so that it might be reachable for your minds. [12:2; see also: 13:37, 16:103; 20:113; 26:195; 39:28; 41:3; 42:7; 43:3; 46:12]

وَ يَوْمَ نَبْعَثُ فِى كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ
شَهِيدًا عَلَيْهِم مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ ۖ وَ جِئْنَا بِكَ

And on the Day when We shall raise up from every community a witness regarding them from among them-

selves; and We have brought you forth to bear witness regarding those [to whom you are conveying your message, and to whom your message may reach afterwards], and We have sent down to you, step by step, this Book, to make all matters clear, and as guidance and grace and good tidings unto all who have submitted themselves to God. God commands justice, the doing of good, and giving to [one's] relatives; and He forbids all that is shameful, and that runs counter to reason, in addition to aggression; He exhorts you so that you may bear this in mind. [16:89-90]

شَهِيدًا عَلَىٰ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ ۚ وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ
ٱلْكِتَٰبَ تِبْيَٰنًا لِّكُلِّ شَىْءٍ وَهُدًى
وَرَحْمَةً وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٨٩﴾ ۞ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِٱلْعَدْلِ وَٱلْإِحْسَٰنِ وَإِيتَآئِ
ذِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ ٱلْفَحْشَآءِ
وَٱلْمُنكَرِ وَٱلْبَغْىِ ۚ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾

Surely, this Quran guides to all that is most upright, and gives the believers who do good deeds the good tidings that theirs shall be a great reward. [17:9]

إِنَّ هَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانَ يَهْدِى لِلَّتِى هِىَ أَقْوَمُ
وَيُبَشِّرُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ٱلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ
ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا كَبِيرًا ﴿٩﴾

Say: "If all human beings and all invisible beings (jinn) would come together in order to produce the like of the Quran, they could not produce its like even if they would be all backing one another [in this purpose]." [17:88]

قُل لَّئِنِ ٱجْتَمَعَتِ ٱلْإِنسُ
وَٱلْجِنُّ عَلَىٰٓ أَن يَأْتُوا۟ بِمِثْلِ هَٰذَا
ٱلْقُرْءَانِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِۦ وَلَوْ كَانَ
بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيرًا ﴿٨٨﴾

And it is a Quran that We have divided [to be gradually revealed] so that you might read it out to people by stages, as We have sent it down successively. [17:106]

وَقُرْءَانًا فَرَقْنَٰهُ لِتَقْرَأَهُۥ عَلَى
ٱلنَّاسِ عَلَىٰ مُكْثٍ وَنَزَّلْنَٰهُ تَنزِيلًا ﴿١٠٦﴾

And thus, indeed, many facets [of guidance] have We given to people in this Quran, but the human being is, above all else, always given to disputation. [18:54, see also: 6:46; 7:58; 17:41, 89; 20:113; 46:27]

وَلَقَدْ صَرَّفْنَا فِى هَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانِ
لِلنَّاسِ مِن كُلِّ مَثَلٍ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ
أَكْثَرَ شَىْءٍ جَدَلًا ﴿٥٤﴾

And those who stubbornly deny the truth said, "Why has the Quran not been sent down upon him all at once?" [It has been revealed gradually] so that in this manner We might strengthen your heart

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا۟ لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ ٱلْقُرْءَانُ جُمْلَةً
وَٰحِدَةً ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ لِنُثَبِّتَ بِهِۦ فُؤَادَكَ ۖ

thereby, and [thus] We have revealed it to you in distinct recitation, and [so that] whatever they bring to you [of argument or interrogation], We convey to you the truth [about it] with the best explanation. [25:32-33]

وَرَتَّلْنَٰهُ تَرْتِيلًا ﴿٣٢﴾ وَلَا يَأْتُونَكَ بِمَثَلٍ
إِلَّا جِئْنَٰكَ بِٱلْحَقِّ وَأَحْسَنَ تَفْسِيرًا ﴿٣٣﴾

Truly it is [the revelation] that has been sent down from the Lord of all being, brought down by the trustworthy Spirit, upon your heart in order to be one of the warners, in a clear Arabic tongue. [26:192-195]

وَإِنَّهُۥ لَتَنزِيلُ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ
﴿١٩٢﴾ نَزَلَ بِهِ ٱلرُّوحُ ٱلْأَمِينُ ﴿١٩٣﴾
عَلَىٰ قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُنذِرِينَ ﴿١٩٤﴾
بِلِسَانٍ عَرَبِيٍّ مُّبِينٍ ﴿١٩٥﴾

And you could never expect that this Book would be brought down to you, but [this has occurred] by grace from your Lord. Hence, never hold up [by any means] to those who have stubbornly denied the truth; and never let them turn you away from God's messages after they have been sent down to you; but [persistently] call [people] to God, and never be [in any way] with those who associate others with God. And never call upon another god beside the One God; there is no god but He; everything is destined to perish but never His [eternal] countenance [and being]; with Him rests all judgement, and unto Him shall you all be brought back. [28:86-88]

وَمَا كُنتَ تَرْجُوٓا۟ أَن يُلْقَىٰٓ إِلَيْكَ
ٱلْكِتَٰبُ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً مِّن رَّبِّكَ ۖ فَلَا
تَكُونَنَّ ظَهِيرًا لِّلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٨٦﴾ وَلَا
يَصُدُّنَّكَ عَنْ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ بَعْدَ إِذْ أُنزِلَتْ
إِلَيْكَ ۖ وَٱدْعُ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ ۖ وَلَا تَكُونَنَّ
مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾ وَلَا تَدْعُ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ
إِلَٰهًا ءَاخَرَ ۘ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ كُلُّ شَىْءٍ
هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُۥ ۚ لَهُ ٱلْحُكْمُ
وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾

And you [O Muhammad] have never recited any book before, nor have you ever written any with your hand, then they who follow might have doubt. Nay but it [this Book] consists of messages to the hearts of those who have had knowledge, and one who stubbornly rejects Our messages is but one who does wrong to his[/her] own self. And they say, "Why have no miraculous signs ever been sent down to him from his Lord?" Say, "Miracles are in the power of God alone; and I am but a plain warner." Is it not enough for them that We have sent down this Book unto you, recited to them. Surely, in that there is

وَمَا كُنتَ تَتْلُوا۟ مِن قَبْلِهِۦ مِن
كِتَٰبٍ وَلَا تَخُطُّهُۥ بِيَمِينِكَ ۖ إِذًا
لَّٱرْتَابَ ٱلْمُبْطِلُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾ بَلْ هُوَ ءَايَٰتٌۢ
بَيِّنَٰتٌ فِى صُدُورِ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْعِلْمَ ۚ
وَمَا يَجْحَدُ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَآ إِلَّا ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾
وَقَالُوا۟ لَوْلَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ ءَايَٰتٌ مِّن
رَّبِّهِۦ ۖ قُلْ إِنَّمَا ٱلْـَٔايَٰتُ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ
وَإِنَّمَآ أَنَا۠ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٥٠﴾ أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِهِمْ
أَنَّآ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ

grace [from Us] and a reminder to people who [deeply think and thus] believe. [29:48-51]

إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَرَحْمَةً وَ ذِكْرَىٰ لِقَوْمٍ
يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

And We have not imparted to him [the Prophet] poetry, nor would it have suited this [message]; it is but a reminder and a Quran that has clearly spelled out [the truth], so that it may warn whoever is living, and that the word [of God] would be fulfilled justly against those who stubbornly deny the truth. [36: 69-70]

وَ مَا عَلَّمْنَٰهُ ٱلشِّعْرَ وَ مَا يَنۢبَغِى لَهُۥٓ ۚ إِنْ هُوَ
إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ وَ قُرْءَانٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٦٩﴾ لِّيُنذِرَ مَن
كَانَ حَيًّا وَ يَحِقَّ ٱلْقَوْلُ عَلَى ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ
﴿٧٠﴾

God has sent down the best of teaching in a Book fully harmonious and consistent within itself, repeating [the truth] in manifold ways and oft-repeated in recitation; [a Book] whereat shiver the skins of all who of their Lord stand in awe, [but] in the end their skins and their hearts do soften at the remembrance of [the grace of] God. Such is God's guidance; He guides therewith one whom He wills [according to the free choice given by God to every human being], whereas one whom God lets go astray [as he /she has decided freely for his/her own-self], can never find any guide. [39:23]

ٱللَّهُ نَزَّلَ
أَحْسَنَ ٱلْحَدِيثِ كِتَٰبًا مُّتَشَٰبِهًا مَّثَانِىَ
تَقْشَعِرُّ مِنْهُ جُلُودُ ٱلَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ
ثُمَّ تَلِينُ جُلُودُهُمْ وَ قُلُوبُهُمْ إِلَىٰ ذِكْرِ
ٱللَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُدَى ٱللَّهِ يَهْدِى بِهِۦ مَن
يَشَآءُ ۚ وَ مَن يُضْلِلِ ٱللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُۥ مِنْ هَادٍ
﴿٢٣﴾

They who stubbornly deny the truth of this reminder when it comes to them; surely, it is a sublime Book. No falsehood can ever attain to it from before it nor from behind it; it is a bestowal from on high by the One who is All-wise, ever due to Him all praise. [41:41-42]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟
بِٱلذِّكْرِ لَمَّا جَآءَهُمْ ۖ وَ إِنَّهُۥ لَكِتَٰبٌ
عَزِيزٌ ﴿٤١﴾ لَّا يَأْتِيهِ ٱلْبَٰطِلُ مِنۢ بَيْنِ
يَدَيْهِ وَ لَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِۦ ۖ تَنزِيلٌ مِّنْ حَكِيمٍ
حَمِيدٍ ﴿٤٢﴾

And so We have revealed unto you a Quran in Arabic in order that you may warn the foremost of all cities and those who dwell around it, warn [them] of the Day of the gathering which is beyond all doubt, when some shall find themselves in paradise, and some in the blazing flame. [42:7]

وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ قُرْءَانًا عَرَبِيًّا
لِّتُنذِرَ أُمَّ ٱلْقُرَىٰ وَ مَنْ حَوْلَهَا وَ تُنذِرَ
يَوْمَ ٱلْجَمْعِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ ۚ فَرِيقٌ فِى
ٱلْجَنَّةِ وَ فَرِيقٌ فِى ٱلسَّعِيرِ ﴿٧﴾

And thus, too [O Muhammad], have We, by Our command, sent inspiration to you; you knew not before what the [divine] book is, nor what the faith [precisely] is [and what it comprehends], but We have caused this [message] to be a light, whereby We guide whom We will of Our servants; and you surely shall guide [people] to the straight way, the way of God, to Whom belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on earth; surely, and unto God all matters end. [42:52-53]

وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَوْحَيْنَآ
إِلَيْكَ رُوحًا مِّنْ أَمْرِنَا ۚ مَا كُنتَ تَدْرِى
مَا ٱلْكِتَٰبُ وَلَا ٱلْإِيمَٰنُ وَلَٰكِن جَعَلْنَٰهُ
نُورًا نَّهْدِى بِهِۦ مَن نَّشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا ۚ
وَإِنَّكَ لَتَهْدِىٓ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٥٢﴾
صِرَٰطِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّذِى لَهُۥ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ أَلَآ إِلَى
ٱللَّهِ تَصِيرُ ٱلْأُمُورُ ﴿٥٣﴾

And they say, "If this Quran was sent down upon some great man of the two great cities [we might believe in it]!" Is it they who distribute your Lord's grace? [Nay,] it is We who distribute their means of livelihood among them in the present worlds life, and raise some of them above others in rank, so that they might avail themselves of one another's service, and [they ought to realize that] your Lord's grace is better than all [the worldly wealth] that they may amass. [43:31-32]

وَقَالُوا۟ لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ هَٰذَا
ٱلْقُرْءَانُ عَلَىٰ رَجُلٍ مِّنَ ٱلْقَرْيَتَيْنِ عَظِيمٍ
﴿٣١﴾ أَهُمْ يَقْسِمُونَ رَحْمَتَ رَبِّكَ ۚ نَحْنُ
قَسَمْنَا بَيْنَهُم مَّعِيشَتَهُمْ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ
ٱلدُّنْيَا ۚ وَرَفَعْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ
دَرَجَٰتٍ لِّيَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُهُم بَعْضًا سُخْرِيًّا ۗ
وَرَحْمَتُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا يَجْمَعُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

And indeed We made this Quran easy to bear in mind; is there any, then, who is willing to take this to heart? [54:17, 22, 32, 40]

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا ٱلْقُرْءَانَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴿١٧﴾

The All-merciful! It is He Who has taught the Quran. He has created the human being; He has imparted unto him [/her] how to [articulate thought and] express himself [/herself] well in speech. [55:1-4]

ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ ﴿١﴾ عَلَّمَ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ ﴿٢﴾
خَلَقَ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ ﴿٣﴾ عَلَّمَهُ ٱلْبَيَانَ ﴿٤﴾

Had We sent down this Quran upon a mountain, you would indeed see it humbling itself, cracking asunder for awe of God. And such parables We propound unto people, so that they might seriously reflect. [59:21]

لَوْ أَنزَلْنَا
هَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانَ عَلَىٰ جَبَلٍ لَّرَأَيْتَهُۥ
خَٰشِعًا مُّتَصَدِّعًا مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَتِلْكَ
ٱلْأَمْثَٰلُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

But nay, by your Lord, they do not [really] believe unless they make you [O Prophet] judge all that about which they may disagree among themselves, and then find in their own selves no uneasiness about your decision, but submit themselves utterly [to the commands of God and the conveyor of His message]. [4:65]

فَلَا
وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا
شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا۟ فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ
حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا۟ تَسْلِيمًا
٦٥

Will they not, then, think over the Quran? Had it been from any but God, they would surely have found within it many a contradiction [or an inconsistency]. [4:82]

أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ ۚ وَلَوْ
كَانَ مِنْ عِندِ غَيْرِ ٱللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا۟ فِيهِ
ٱخْتِلَٰفًا كَثِيرًا ﴿٨٢﴾

And to you We have sent the Book, setting forth the truth, confirming the truth of whatever remains of earlier revealed books, and watching over it; so judge between them [the People of the Book] according to what God has revealed, and follow not their whims, diverging from the truth that has come to you. To each of you We have appointed a law and a way of life. And had God so willed, He would have made you all one single people, but [He willed it otherwise] so as to test you through what He has given you. Vie, then, with one another, in good deeds; unto God you shall return, and He will make you understand all on which you differed.
Hence, judge between them in accordance with what God has revealed, and follow not their whims, and be wary of them lest they tempt you away from any of that [teaching] which God has sent down to you. And if they turn away [from His commandments], then know that it is but God's will to afflict them for some of their evil-doing, and behold, a great many people are indeed iniquitous. Do they seek the judgement of pagan [spiritual and moral] ignorance? But who could be fairer in judgement than God, for people who feel certain about the truth? [5:48-50]

وَأَنزَلْنَآ إِلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ
بِٱلْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ
وَمُهَيْمِنًا عَلَيْهِ ۖ فَٱحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَآ
أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ ۖ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَآءَهُمْ عَمَّا
جَآءَكَ مِنَ ٱلْحَقِّ ۚ لِكُلٍّ جَعَلْنَا مِنكُمْ
شِرْعَةً وَمِنْهَاجًا ۚ وَلَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ
لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً وَلَٰكِن لِّيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِى
مَآ ءَاتَىٰكُمْ ۖ فَٱسْتَبِقُوا۟ ٱلْخَيْرَٰتِ ۚ إِلَى
ٱللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ
فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾ وَأَنِ ٱحْكُم بَيْنَهُم
بِمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَآءَهُمْ
وَٱحْذَرْهُمْ أَن يَفْتِنُوكَ عَنۢ بَعْضِ مَآ أَنزَلَ
ٱللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ ۚ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا۟ فَٱعْلَمْ أَنَّمَا
يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ أَن يُصِيبَهُم بِبَعْضِ ذُنُوبِهِمْ ۗ
وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَفَٰسِقُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾
أَفَحُكْمَ ٱلْجَٰهِلِيَّةِ يَبْغُونَ ۚ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ
مِنَ ٱللَّهِ حُكْمًا لِّقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

Those who follow the Conveyor of God's message, the unlettered Prophet, whom they find mentioned in the Torah and the Gospel that they had: [the Prophet] who enjoins upon them the doing of what is right and forbids them the doing of what is wrong, and makes lawful to them the good things of life and forbids the bad and impure things, and lifts from them their burdens and the shackles that have been [before] upon them. It is those who believe in him, and honor him, and support him and follow the light which is sent down with him, it is they who will attain to success. [7:157]

ٱلَّذِينَ
يَتَّبِعُونَ ٱلرَّسُولَ ٱلنَّبِىَّ ٱلْأُمِّىَّ ٱلَّذِى
يَجِدُونَهُۥ مَكْتُوبًا عِندَهُمْ فِى ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ
وَٱلْإِنجِيلِ يَأْمُرُهُم بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَىٰهُمْ
عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ وَيُحِلُّ لَهُمُ ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ
عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْخَبَٰٓئِثَ وَيَضَعُ عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ
وَٱلْأَغْلَٰلَ ٱلَّتِى كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ فَٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا۟ بِهِۦ وَعَزَّرُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ
وَٱتَّبَعُوا۟ ٱلنُّورَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أُنزِلَ مَعَهُۥٓ ۙ
أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾

Concerning this [message] call you, and go straight in the right course as you have been bidden [by God], and do not follow their caprices. And say, "I believe in whatever book God has sent down; and I have been bidden to observe justice between you. God is our Lord as He is your Lord. To us shall be accounted our deeds, and to you your deeds. Let there be no contention between us and you; God shall bring us all together; and with Him is all journeys' end." [42:15]

فَلِذَٰلِكَ
فَٱدْعُ ۖ وَٱسْتَقِمْ كَمَآ أُمِرْتَ ۖ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ
أَهْوَآءَهُمْ ۖ وَقُلْ ءَامَنتُ بِمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ
مِن كِتَٰبٍ ۖ وَأُمِرْتُ لِأَعْدِلَ بَيْنَكُمُ ۖ
ٱللَّهُ رَبُّنَا وَرَبُّكُمْ ۖ لَنَآ أَعْمَٰلُنَا وَلَكُمْ
أَعْمَٰلُكُمْ ۖ لَا حُجَّةَ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمُ ۖ
ٱللَّهُ يَجْمَعُ بَيْنَنَا ۖ وَإِلَيْهِ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٥﴾

During the Meccan period of the Prophet's life, the Quran represented a book of faith, as well as a challenging wonder of eloquence in presenting its message. It set forth the faith in the One God, and in the accountability of the human being on the Day of Judgement, on which the requital of the good and evil would take place, according to whatever deeds have been forwarded by each individual during the present world's life. The Meccan Quran stresses this faith, and repeatedly reminds the people of God's judgement in the life to come by picturing the blessings of the garden that await the doers of good and the suffering that awaits the evil-doers. It also recalls to mind the earlier messages and experiences of preceding prophets who called their communities to the worship of God alone, and it emphasizes how the conveyors of those messages were patient and persistent, in facing the rejection and aggression of their communities, especially the influential and the wealthy. Also, moral values have always been connected with the faith, and faith and doing good are often inseparable throughout the whole Quran.

In presenting this guidance during the Meccan period, the Quran represented to the Arabs, especially those who were eloquent or had a taste for what is eloquent, a literary

challenge. Although it is in Arabic, its structure and style seemed to the Arabs to be different from both their prose and poetry, yet it combined the clarity of prose and the harmony and impressiveness of poetry, and it surpassed their eloquence and expressiveness in both. Even the early short verses of the Meccan period had their impressiveness and penetration in the Arab hearts and minds, which was even felt by the opponents who said that the Quranic literary style has a magic that attracts the hearts and minds, although they claimed that it did not stem from any divine source. As a challenge, the Quran asked the most eloquent Arabs to produce a book of its like, or at least to write the like of ten suras, or even one, of it [10:38; 11:13; 2:23]. No serious response was recorded to this challenge.

Yet these Arabs continued to make unfavorable remarks about the gradual revelation of the Quran [e.g. 25:32-3; also 17:106; 25:5], forgetting that it is not a poem or any other literary work that has to be produced at a certain time in its totality, but a Book of guidance to the people in their ongoing life with its various aspects. Thus, its guidance would be more effective when it is in response to the events of the real life whenever they occur, instead of just theoretically stating abstracts. Furthermore, the Quran is the word of God revealed to a prophet who is a human being, and however strong the divine inspiration and support may be, it may be beyond a human's abilities to be spiritually, psychologically and intellectually exposed to the whole book at once. The Quran was revealed gradually, to be more absorbable and effective, and it uses various facets such as in its factual statements, dialogues, stories, allegories etc. in order to maintain the attraction of the readers and listeners and thus reach its goals. The Quranic essence can be easily understood by the common person, even if its sophisticated expressions may be grasped only by intelligent and deep thinking people. Its presentation of the moral values is concise and sharp: *"God commands justice, the doing of good, and giving to [one's] relatives; and He forbids all that is shameful, and that runs counter to reason, in addition to aggression..."* [16:90].

The lasting spiritual influence of the Quran is beyond any quick literary encounter; its reader or listener is penetrated with the Quranic representation of God, the All-mighty, All-knowing, All-wise, All-merciful, All-forgiving, All-clement, and Most Gracious. One may initially stand in awe of God: *"[but] in the end their skins and their hearts do soften at the remembrance of [the grace of] God..."* [39:23] Yet, as previously stated, all these spiritual, moral, and literary influences of the Quran, and its challenge to the Arabs - especially their wise and eloquent persons - were met by a crude rejection based merely on class and wealth distinction: *"And they say, 'If this Quran was sent down upon some great man of the two great cities [we might believe in it]!' Is it they who distribute your Lord's grace?"* [43:31-32]. The influential people cared only about their privileges and interests, regardless of the actual content and form of the message that they were opposing.

In Medina, the Quran introduced its basic laws, and it pointed out its theological and practical stand towards the People of the Book. The common grounds and the continuation of God's message in its different stages were stressed, and the Muslims were instructed to observe justice and to always remind themselves and the People of the Book that they worship the One God: *"To each of you We have appointed a law and a way to follow. And had God so willed, He would have made you all one single people, but [He willed it otherwise] so as to test you through what He has given you. Vie, then, with one*

another, in good deeds; unto God you shall return..." [5:48], "*And say, 'I believe in whatever book God has sent down; and I have been bidden to observe justice between you. God is our Lord as He is your Lord. To us shall be accounted our deeds, and to you your deeds. Let there be no contention between us and you; God shall bring us all together; and with Him is all journeys' end'*" [42:15].

In the Quran, God states that He Himself keeps the Quran secure and protects its integrity through time. Over centuries, it has been proved that the Quran has stayed invulnerable in its words and in its concepts.

" *It is We who have sent down this reminder, and it is We who shall guard it.*" [15:9]

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا ٱلذِّكْرَ وَ إِنَّا لَهُۥ لَحَٰفِظُونَ ﴿٩﴾

The Open Proclamation; Escalation of Confrontation and Persecution

And warn the nearest of your clan, and spread the wings of your kindness and tenderness over all of the believers who may follow you. But if they disobey you, say [to these], "I am quit of that which you do." And place your trust in the Almighty, the Most Gracious who sees you when you stand [in worship and for your message], and when you go about among those who prostrate themselves [before Him]; and He alone is All-hearing, All-knowing. [26:214-220]

وَ أَنذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ ٱلْأَقْرَبِينَ ﴿٢١٤﴾
وَ ٱخْفِضْ جَنَاحَكَ لِمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ
ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢١٥﴾ فَإِنْ عَصَوْكَ فَقُلْ إِنِّى
بَرِىٓءٌ مِّمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢١٦﴾ وَ تَوَكَّلْ عَلَى
ٱلْعَزِيزِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ ﴿٢١٧﴾ ٱلَّذِى يَرَىٰكَ حِينَ
تَقُومُ ﴿٢١٨﴾ وَ تَقَلُّبَكَ فِى ٱلسَّٰجِدِينَ
﴿٢١٩﴾ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿٢٢٠﴾

Hence, proclaim openly all that you have been bidden [to convey], and leave alone all those who associate others with God; We suffice you against all who deride [this message], who set up another deity alongside with God and in time they will come to know [the truth]. And well do We know that your chest [O Muhammad] is straitened by what they say; but extol your Lord's glory and be of those who prostrate themselves [before Him in worship], and worship your Lord until certainty comes to you. [15:94-99]

فَٱصْدَعْ بِمَا تُؤْمَرُ
وَ أَعْرِضْ عَنِ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٩٤﴾ إِنَّا
كَفَيْنَٰكَ ٱلْمُسْتَهْزِءِينَ ﴿٩٥﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ
يَجْعَلُونَ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا ءَاخَرَ ۚ فَسَوْفَ
يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾ وَ لَقَدْ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ يَضِيقُ
صَدْرُكَ بِمَا يَقُولُونَ ﴿٩٧﴾ فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ
رَبِّكَ وَ كُن مِّنَ ٱلسَّٰجِدِينَ ﴿٩٨﴾ وَ ٱعْبُدْ
رَبَّكَ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَكَ ٱلْيَقِينُ ﴿٩٩﴾

And drive not away those who call on their Lord at morning and evening, seeking His countenance [and only His acceptance]. You are in no way

وَ لَا تَطْرُدِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ
رَبَّهُم بِٱلْغَدَوٰةِ وَ ٱلْعَشِىِّ يُرِيدُونَ

accountable for what they may do, nor are they in any way accountable for what you may do, and so when you drive them away, you would be among the wrong-doers.

Thus do We try people through one another, that they might ask: "Are these the ones that God has been gracious to from among us?" Does not God know best those who are grateful [to Him]? [6:52-53]

وَجْهَهُۥ ۖ مَا عَلَيْكَ مِنْ حِسَابِهِم مِّن
شَىْءٍ وَمَا مِنْ حِسَابِكَ عَلَيْهِم مِّن شَىْءٍ
فَتَطْرُدَهُمْ فَتَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾
وَكَذَٰلِكَ فَتَنَّا بَعْضَهُم بِبَعْضٍ لِّيَقُولُوٓا۟
أَهَٰٓؤُلَآءِ مَنَّ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِم مِّنۢ بَيْنِنَآ ۗ
أَلَيْسَ ٱللَّهُ بِأَعْلَمَ بِٱلشَّٰكِرِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾

And patiently keep yourself by the side of those who appeal to their Lord morning and evening, seeking His countenance; and let not your eyes turn away from them, seeking the attraction of this world's life; nor obey any whose heart We have let in negligence of remembering Us, as such a person follows [only] his[/her] own whims and his[/her] behavior exceeds [all] bounds [of reason and moderation].

And say, "The truth is from your Lord; let, then, any who wills, believe in it, and let one who wills reject it." Surely, for all who have wronged their own-selves, We have readied a fire whose billowing folds will encompass them from all sides; and if they call for relief, they will be given water like hot thick stinking liquid that shall scald their faces; how awful a drink, and how evil a place to rest! Those who attain to faith and do righteous deeds; surely, We do never fail to reward any who does good. [18:28-30]

وَٱصْبِرْ
نَفْسَكَ مَعَ ٱلَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُم بِٱلْغَدَوٰةِ
وَٱلْعَشِىِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُۥ ۖ وَلَا تَعْدُ
عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ
ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُۥ عَن
ذِكْرِنَا وَٱتَّبَعَ هَوَىٰهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُۥ فُرُطًا
﴿٢٨﴾ وَقُلِ ٱلْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّكُمْ ۖ فَمَن شَآءَ
فَلْيُؤْمِن وَمَن شَآءَ فَلْيَكْفُرْ ۚ إِنَّآ أَعْتَدْنَا
لِلظَّٰلِمِينَ نَارًا أَحَاطَ بِهِمْ سُرَادِقُهَا ۚ
وَإِن يَسْتَغِيثُوا۟ يُغَاثُوا۟ بِمَآءٍ كَٱلْمُهْلِ
يَشْوِى ٱلْوُجُوهَ ۚ بِئْسَ ٱلشَّرَابُ
وَسَآءَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا ﴿٢٩﴾ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟
وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ إِنَّا لَا نُضِيعُ أَجْرَ
مَنْ أَحْسَنَ عَمَلًا ﴿٣٠﴾

Do people think that they will be left to say, "We have attained to faith," and not be put to the test? We certainly did test those who were before them, and so assuredly will God mark out those who prove themselves true, and assuredly will He mark out those who have been lying. Or do those who do evil deeds think that they can escape; ill they judge! Whoever looks forward

أَحَسِبَ ٱلنَّاسُ أَن يُتْرَكُوٓا۟
أَن يَقُولُوٓا۟ ءَامَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ ﴿٢﴾
وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۖ فَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ
ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا۟ وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ ٱلْكَٰذِبِينَ
﴿٣﴾ أَمْ حَسِبَ ٱلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ
أَن يَسْبِقُونَا ۚ سَآءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ ﴿٤﴾ مَن

[with hope and awe] to meeting God, behold, the end set by God is bound to come, and He alone is the All-hearing, the All-knowing. [29:2-5]

كَانَ يَرْجُوا۟ لِقَآءَ ٱللَّهِ فَإِنَّ أَجَلَ ٱللَّهِ
لَـَٔاتٍ ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿٥﴾

He frowned and turned away, that the blind man came to him. Yet how can you know [O Muhammad]; he might perhaps [be quite willing to] attain to purity or might remember and benefit from this remembrance. While the one who believes himself in no need [for any help or guidance], to him did you give your whole attention. And you are not accountable for his failure to attain to purity. But he who came unto you eagerly, and in awe [of God]; from him you look away. No indeed, this is a reminder. [80:1-11]

عَبَسَ وَتَوَلَّىٰٓ ﴿١﴾ أَن جَآءَهُ
ٱلْأَعْمَىٰ ﴿٢﴾ وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ لَعَلَّهُۥ يَزَّكَّىٰٓ
﴿٣﴾ أَوْ يَذَّكَّرُ فَتَنفَعَهُ ٱلذِّكْرَىٰٓ ﴿٤﴾ أَمَّا
مَنِ ٱسْتَغْنَىٰ ﴿٥﴾ فَأَنتَ لَهُۥ تَصَدَّىٰ
﴿٦﴾ وَمَا عَلَيْكَ أَلَّا يَزَّكَّىٰ ﴿٧﴾ وَأَمَّا مَن
جَآءَكَ يَسْعَىٰ ﴿٨﴾ وَهُوَ يَخْشَىٰ ﴿٩﴾
فَأَنتَ عَنْهُ تَلَهَّىٰ ﴿١٠﴾ كَلَّآ إِنَّهَا تَذْكِرَةٌ
﴿١١﴾

Surely, those who persecute believing men and believing women, and then have not repented, there awaits them hell's suffering, and there awaits them the suffering of burning. They who attain to faith and do righteous deeds shall have gardens underneath which rivers flow; that is the great achievement. Surely, your Lord's grip is extremely mighty. Surely, it is He who originates, and brings again, and He is the All-knowing, the All-affectionate, Lord of the Throne, the All-glorious, the doer of whatever He wills. [85:10-16]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ فَتَنُوا۟
ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَتُوبُوا۟
فَلَهُمْ عَذَابُ جَهَنَّمَ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابُ ٱلْحَرِيقِ
﴿١٠﴾ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟
ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ لَهُمْ جَنَّٰتٌ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا
ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْكَبِيرُ ﴿١١﴾ إِنَّ
بَطْشَ رَبِّكَ لَشَدِيدٌ ﴿١٢﴾ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ يُبْدِئُ
وَيُعِيدُ ﴿١٣﴾ وَهُوَ ٱلْغَفُورُ ٱلْوَدُودُ ﴿١٤﴾
ذُو ٱلْعَرْشِ ٱلْمَجِيدُ ﴿١٥﴾ فَعَّالٌ لِّمَا
يُرِيدُ ﴿١٦﴾

Glory to Him, who moved His worshipper by night from the Inviolable House of Worship [in Mecca] to the Remote House of Worship [in Jerusalem] , the environs of which We have blessed, so that We might show him some of Our signs; surely, He is the All-hearing, the All- seeing. [17:1]

سُبْحَٰنَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَسْرَىٰ بِعَبْدِهِۦ لَيْلًا مِّنَ
ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ إِلَى ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْأَقْصَا
ٱلَّذِى بَٰرَكْنَا حَوْلَهُۥ لِنُرِيَهُۥ مِنْ ءَايَٰتِنَآ ۚ
إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْبَصِيرُ ﴿١﴾

Indeed, he saw him [this angel] another time by the lote-tree of the

وَلَقَدْ رَءَاهُ نَزْلَةً أُخْرَىٰ
﴿١٣﴾ عِندَ سِدْرَةِ ٱلْمُنتَهَىٰ ﴿١٤﴾ عِندَهَا

farthest limit, near unto the garden of promised final reproach, with the lote-tree that is veiled by a veil [of nameless splendor]. The eyesight swerved not, nor did it sweep astray. Truly did he see some of his Lord's greatest signs. [53:13-18]

جَنَّةُ ٱلْمَأْوَىٰٓ ﴿١٥﴾ إِذْ يَغْشَى ٱلسِّدْرَةَ
مَا يَغْشَىٰ ﴿١٦﴾ مَا زَاغَ ٱلْبَصَرُ وَمَا
طَغَىٰ ﴿١٧﴾ لَقَدْ رَأَىٰ مِنْ ءَايَٰتِ رَبِّهِ
ٱلْكُبْرَىٰٓ ﴿١٨﴾

Muhammad started by conveying his message to selected individuals who were friends or relatives that were close to him, and when they believed in his message they, in their turn, presented it to others whom they brought to the Prophet if they responded positively. Such a person to person conveyance of the message cannot by any means be called a "secret" phase in the development of the message, since in a society like that of Mecca, the conveyance of the message to individuals could not be kept hidden, and the earliest verses of the Quran revealed in Mecca recorded the hostile reactions of the leading and wealthy persons from the Prophet's tribe of Quraysh.

After some time during which the faith of Islam attracted strong personalities such as 'Umar ibn al-Khattab and Hamza ibn 'Abdel-Muttalib, the uncle of the Prophet, a phase of an open conveyance of the message to the public was declared by the Quran, beginning with the calling of the nearest clan of the Prophet as a whole to worship the One God. It is clear from the different historical reports that the open proclamation of Islam to Quraysh as a whole occurred after three years from the beginning of the revelation; but it is not clear whether inviting the nearest clan had a relatively earlier date and could present a separate phase in the development of the message, or whether it could be considered as part of the public proclamation of the message with no considerable difference in time.

As soon as the message of Islam was presented publicly, the physical and moral attacks against the Prophet and the followers of Islam escalated, and the revelation successively urged them to maintain their patience and steadfastness. It reminded them of the examples of the previous conveyors of God's message and the rejection and attacks that they had to face with faith and firmness. Those who attained to faith were promised the great rewards of God in the eternal life to come, and those who stubbornly rejected it and suppressed the believers were told about the severe suffering that would await them in the end. The requital in the life to come was repeatedly and significantly stressed during those hard years of persecution, and this has to be understood in the historical circumstantial context, and not only as a theological matter.

When the persecution escalated and became unbearable for some believers, the Prophet advised them in the fifth year of his message to leave the land of oppression and injustice, and go to Abyssinia (now Ethiopia) where there was a king known for his justice. In giving such advice, the Prophet proved his wide perspective and universal attitude which does not acknowledge geographic, ethnic or religious borders for the faith in God, the Lord of all being and all the universe. In general, the severe persecution by Quraysh leaders concentrated on the believers who did not enjoy strong tribal situation or relations. They dealt, for example, with Muhammad himself with certain considerations because of

their respect for his uncle Abu Talib, who although he shared the beliefs of his people, never, during all his life, withdrew his protection for his nephew on all grounds. However, these considerations did not by any means give absolute immunity from any harm to the Prophet or to his Companions who had some tribal status. The Prophet and his nearest clan were put under economic and social siege: none was allowed to sell to them or buy from them or marry from or into their clan . This continued for more than a year until some wise eminent persons in Quraysh worked to end it in the 10th year of the message.

The most difficult and pressuring circumstances that the Prophet faced during these years of persecution were the death, in the tenth year of his message, of his two close moral supporters: his wife Khadija and his uncle Abu Talib. Shortly after this God's spiritual support came to the Prophet through carrying him to Jerusalem by night "the Night Journey/ al-Isra'" and elevating him through the heavens "the Ascension/ al-Mi 'raj": *"so that We might show him some of Our signs; surely, He is the All-hearing"* [17:1], *"Truly did he see some of his Lord's greatest signs"* [53:18].

After the death of Abu Talib, some hostile enemies of Islam from Quraysh thought it might be a suitable time to get rid of Muhammad, who was weakened by the loss of his uncle's protection. When he knew of the conspiracy to kill him, the Prophet thought of migration. The meeting of some people from Yathrib and the increasing acceptance of Islam there during the last period of the Prophet's stay in Mecca, determined the destination, and thus Yathrib became the base of Islam in Arabia and the first Islamic state initiated as a city-state.

The Prophet's Migration from Makka (Mecca) to Yathrib "al-Madina" [622 C.E]

And say; "O my Lord! Lead me in [whatever I may do] with a truthful and sincere ingoing, and lead me out [of whatever I may do] with a truthful and sincere outgoing; and grant me from You supporting power." [17:80]

وَقُل رَّبِّ أَدْخِلْنِى
مُدْخَلَ صِدْقٍ وَأَخْرِجْنِى مُخْرَجَ صِدْقٍ
وَٱجْعَل لِّى مِن لَّدُنكَ سُلْطَٰنًا نَّصِيرًا ﴿٨٠﴾

Behold, those whom the angels gather in death, while they are wronging their own-selves, will be asked [by the angels], "Under what circumstances were you [during your life on earth]?" They say, "We were weak and oppressed on earth". They [the angels] say, "Was not God's earth wide enough for you to move [from your place] to another place on it?" Such people's end is hell, and how evil a journey's end.
But excepted are the oppressed - be they men,

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ
تَوَفَّىٰهُمُ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ ظَالِمِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ
قَالُوا۟ فِيمَ كُنتُمْ قَالُوا۟ كُنَّا مُسْتَضْعَفِينَ
فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ قَالُوٓا۟ أَلَمْ تَكُنْ أَرْضُ ٱللَّهِ
وَٰسِعَةً فَتُهَاجِرُوا۟ فِيهَا ۚ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ
مَأْوَىٰهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۖ وَسَآءَتْ مَصِيرًا ﴿٩٧﴾

women or children - who cannot help it nor find a way of deliverance; and these may God pardon their wrongdoing; and God is All-pardoning, All-forgiving.
And whoever forsakes his [/her] home [and property] for the cause of God, shall find on earth many refuges and plenty, and whoever goes forth from his [/her] home migrating for the cause of God and the conveyor of His message, and then death overtakes him [/her], his [/her] reward is with God, and God is indeed All-forgiving, Most Gracious. [4:97-100]

إِلَّا ٱلْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ ٱلرِّجَالِ وَ ٱلنِّسَآءِ
وَ ٱلْوِلْدَٰنِ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ حِيلَةً وَ لَا
يَهْتَدُونَ سَبِيلًا ﴿٩٨﴾ فَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ عَسَى
ٱللَّهُ أَن يَعْفُوَ عَنْهُمْ ۚ وَ كَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَفُوًّا
غَفُورًا ﴿٩٩﴾ ۞ وَ مَن يُهَاجِرْ فِى سَبِيلِ
ٱللَّهِ يَجِدْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مُرَٰغَمًا كَثِيرًا
وَسَعَةً ۚ وَ مَن يَخْرُجْ مِنۢ بَيْتِهِۦ مُهَاجِرًا
إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَ رَسُولِهِۦ ثُمَّ يُدْرِكْهُ ٱلْمَوْتُ
فَقَدْ وَقَعَ أَجْرُهُۥ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَ كَانَ ٱللَّهُ
غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿١٠٠﴾

And when those who stubbornly denied the truth were scheming against you, to constrain you, or to kill you, or to drive you away; they scheme and God schemes, and God is above all schemers. [8:30]

وَ إِذْ يَمْكُرُ بِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لِيُثْبِتُوكَ أَوْ
يَقْتُلُوكَ أَوْ يُخْرِجُوكَ ۚ وَ يَمْكُرُونَ
وَيَمْكُرُ ٱللَّهُ ۖ وَ ٱللَّهُ خَيْرُ ٱلْمَٰكِرِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾

And those who have attained to faith, and have forsaken their homes [and properties for the cause of God] and are struggling with their possessions and their lives in God's cause, and those who have sheltered and supported them -those all are responsible for and the supporters of one another. But as for those who have come to believe without having migrated [to join you], you have no [general responsibility about them [as a part of your entity] until they migrate [to you]. But if they ask you for support to defend against a threat to the faith, it is your duty to support them, except against a people with whom you have a bond, and God sees all that you do.
And those who stubbornly deny the truth are supporters of one another, and unless you see them and deal with them in this way, oppression and great corruption will always occur on earth.

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَ هَاجَرُوا۟ وَ جَٰهَدُوا۟
بِأَمْوَٰلِهِمْ وَ أَنفُسِهِمْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ
وَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَاوَوا۟ وَّ نَصَرُوٓا۟ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ بَعْضُهُمْ
أَوْلِيَآءُ بَعْضٍ ۚ وَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَ لَمْ
يُهَاجِرُوا۟ ۚ مَا لَكُم مِّن وَلَٰيَتِهِم مِّن شَىْءٍ
حَتَّىٰ يُهَاجِرُوا۟ ۚ وَ إِنِ ٱسْتَنصَرُوكُمْ فِى
ٱلدِّينِ فَعَلَيْكُمُ ٱلنَّصْرُ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ قَوْمٍ
بَيْنَكُمْ وَ بَيْنَهُم مِّيثَٰقٌ ۗ وَ ٱللَّهُ بِمَا
تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٧٢﴾ وَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟
بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَآءُ بَعْضٍ ۚ إِلَّا تَفْعَلُوهُ تَكُن
فِتْنَةٌ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَ فَسَادٌ كَبِيرٌ ﴿٧٣﴾

And those who have attained to faith, and have forsaken their homes [and properties for the cause of God] and have struggled for God's cause, and those who have sheltered them and supported [the faith and the immigrants who escaped persecution] - it is they, they who are truly believers, and theirs shall be [God's] forgiveness and generous provision. And those who henceforth come to believe, and forsake their homes [and properties for the cause of God] and struggle with you [in God's cause] - these belong to you; although those related by blood may be responsible for one another according to God's [laws in His] Book; surely God has full knowledge of everything. [8:72-75]

وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَهَاجَرُواْ وَجَٰهَدُواْ فِى
سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَاوَواْ وَّنَصَرُوٓاْ
أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَقًّا ۚ لَّهُم مَّغْفِرَةٌ
وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٧٤﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ مِنۢ
بَعْدُ وَهَاجَرُواْ وَجَٰهَدُواْ مَعَكُمْ
فَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ مِنكُمْ ۚ وَأُوْلُواْ ٱلْأَرْحَامِ
بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلَىٰ بِبَعْضٍ فِى كِتَٰبِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٥﴾

If you do not support him [the Prophet], [know that] God has [already and always] supported him when those who have stubbornly denied the truth drove him away, [and he, being] one of two who were [hiding and resting] in the cave, [and] the Conveyor of God's message said to his companion, "Grieve not; surely, God is with us." And thereupon God sent down His [gift of] inner peace, and supported him with forces that you could not see, and brought utterly low the case of those who have stubbornly denied the truth, and God's word is always supreme, and God is All-mighty, All-wise. [9:40]

إِلَّا تَنصُرُوهُ
فَقَدْ نَصَرَهُ ٱللَّهُ إِذْ أَخْرَجَهُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ
ثَانِىَ ٱثْنَيْنِ إِذْ هُمَا فِى ٱلْغَارِ إِذْ يَقُولُ
لِصَٰحِبِهِۦ لَا تَحْزَنْ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَعَنَا ۖ
فَأَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُۥ عَلَيْهِ وَأَيَّدَهُۥ
بِجُنُودٍ لَّمْ تَرَوْهَا وَجَعَلَ كَلِمَةَ ٱلَّذِينَ
كَفَرُواْ ٱلسُّفْلَىٰ ۗ وَكَلِمَةُ ٱللَّهِ هِىَ
ٱلْعُلْيَا ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٤٠﴾

And the first and foremost of those who have forsaken their homes [and properties for the cause of God] and those who have supported [the faith and the immigrants who escaped persecution], and those who follow them in the best way [in their direction] - God is well- pleased with them, and well pleased are they with Him. And for them has He readied gardens underneath which rivers flow; therein to abide beyond the

وَٱلسَّٰبِقُونَ
ٱلْأَوَّلُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُهَٰجِرِينَ وَٱلْأَنصَارِ
وَٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّبَعُوهُم بِإِحْسَٰنٍ رَّضِىَ ٱللَّهُ
عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُواْ عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ
تَجْرِى تَحْتَهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ

count of time; this is the achievement supreme. [9:100]

أَبَدًا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿١٠٠﴾

Such [war-gains] are due to the poor among those who were driven from their homes and their possessions seeking God's bounty and [His] goodly acceptance, and supporting the cause of God and the Conveyor of His Message: it is they who have proved to be true [to their commitment]. And [this is also due] to those who before them had homes [in the place to which the former migrated] and embraced the faith, and who show their affection to all that migrated to them [in search of refuge], and have no ill feeling about whatever the others may have been given, but they rather give them preference over themselves, even though they feel a private need, and those who are saved from the covetousness of their own selves, it is they who attain to success. [59:8-9]

لِلْفُقَرَآءِ ٱلْمُهَٰجِرِينَ ٱلَّذِينَ
أُخْرِجُوا۟ مِن دِيَٰرِهِمْ وَأَمْوَٰلِهِمْ يَبْتَغُونَ
فَضْلًا مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَرِضْوَٰنًا وَيَنصُرُونَ ٱللَّهَ
وَرَسُولَهُۥٓ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلصَّٰدِقُونَ ﴿٨﴾
وَٱلَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُو ٱلدَّارَ وَٱلْإِيمَٰنَ مِن
قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا
يَجِدُونَ فِى صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِّمَّآ أُوتُوا۟
وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ
خَصَاصَةٌ ۚ وَمَن يُوقَ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِۦ
فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٩﴾

After 13 years of conveying the message in Mecca and being confronted with fierce resistance and suppression, Prophet Muhammad had to leave his home city with its hostilities to Yathrib, "Medina," so as to get away from those who continuously escalated the confrontations and plotted to kill him. Migration in a tribal society is a very serious and risky affair, since one's status and existence have a basis only within the tribe to which he/she is related. A person related to a tribe may go to another area or tribe for some time, but he/she cannot live there permanently. In the tribal life, a permanent living with another tribe would not be understood by either the tribe to whom one originally belongs, or the other with which one chooses to live. So if this was the case with a common individual, how was it with Muhammad, whose tribe actually considered him the most serious enemy and conspired to kill him? It was an enormous blessing from God that the Prophet by chance met and talked to some people from Yathrib - a city in the north of Mecca near the land trade route between Hijaz and Syria. Those Yathribites from the tribe of "al-Khazraj" came to Mecca looking for supporters in their tribal war against their cohabitators "al-Aws," who had been able to defeat them four or five years before the Prophet's migration. Muhammad's message was able to reach other Arab people who might not be geographically and tribally very close to Quraysh, the Prophet's tribe.

The Prophet's migration, *hijra*, was a further significant milestone in the development of the message of Islam, since it initiated another basis for human relations, rather than the tribe, in a tribal society. The "emigrants" from Mecca and the "supporters" in

Yathrib, which began to be called "al-Madina", "the city (of the Prophet)" formed one community related to one another by faith only, and had one leader whose headquarters was in Medina although he and his tribe belonged to Mecca. Medina became a base for a differently structured society and city-state. Individuals from other tribes in different places in Arabia were required to move to this base to strengthen it and to benefit from its support [8:72], something which was definitely not welcomed by the non-Muslim inhabitants of Medina. However, those who joined one another in that doctrinal brotherhood of Islam established an ideological state which was unique in a tribal society and in most of the world at that time.

The Prophet's constitutional document which he declared in Medina after his arrival, considered the population of the city with its tribal, regional, ethnic and religious differences as one entity with common objectives and interests and with mutual rights and obligations. The emigrants from Mecca, whatever the clans to which they were related and their original homelands might have been, the supporters from Medina whatever their tribes might be, the Jews of Medina, any believer who might come in the future to settle in Medina as the Islamic base in Arabia, and any other comers and settlers, all represented one political entity with one political leadership. That population and ideological state embraced Arabs from different tribes and regions, as well as Muslims of non-Arab origins such as Bilal the Abyssinian and Salman the Persian.

This serious and remarkable development was initiated by the migration of two persons: the Prophet and his Companion Abu Bakr, who together took some unknown route from Mecca to Medina, and who hid and rested once in a cave which could be - and almost was - discovered by those who were following them, and there "*the Conveyor of God's message said to his companion, "Grieve not; surely, God is with us". And thereupon God sent down His [gift of] inner peace, and supported him with forces that you could not see, and brought utterly low the case of those who have stubbornly denied the truth, and God's word is always supreme, and God is All-mighty, All-wise*" [9:40].

The hijra set a precedent so that migration and moving about the earth became an Islamic principle for those who need to escape religious or other pressures on their human dignity, since one can always find "many refuges and plenty" on earth, and any human being who accepts oppression and humiliation while he/she is able to move to another place, is actually choosing "hell" in this world and "hell" in the life to come "*and how evil a journey's end*" [4:97-100].

Thus, Medina established a new stage in the history of Islam and of the whole world, as faith superseded all geographical, ethnical and tribal barriers in forming the Muslim entity that included other faiths within it, and thus universality was conceptually and materially instituted and developed: "*And those who henceforth come to believe, and forsake their homes [and properties for the cause of God] and struggle with you [in God's cause] - these belong to you*" [8:75].

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُدَٰفِعُ عَنِ
ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ
خَوَّانٍ كَفُورٍ ﴿٣٨﴾ أُذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقَٰتَلُونَ
بِأَنَّهُمْ ظُلِمُواْ ۚ وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ نَصْرِهِمْ
لَقَدِيرٌ ﴿٣٩﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُواْ مِن دِيَٰرِهِم
بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ إِلَّآ أَن يَقُولُواْ رَبُّنَا ٱللَّهُ ۗ
وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ ٱللَّهِ ٱلنَّاسَ بَعْضَهُم بِبَعْضٍ
لَّهُدِّمَتْ صَوَٰمِعُ وَبِيَعٌ وَصَلَوَٰتٌ وَمَسَٰجِدُ
يُذْكَرُ فِيهَا ٱسْمُ ٱللَّهِ كَثِيرًا ۗ وَلَيَنصُرَنَّ
ٱللَّهُ مَن يَنصُرُهُۥٓ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَقَوِىٌّ عَزِيزٌ
﴿٤٠﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ إِن مَّكَّنَّٰهُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ
أَقَامُواْ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَوُاْ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ
وَأَمَرُواْ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَوْاْ عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ ۗ
وَلِلَّهِ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلْأُمُورِ ﴿٤١﴾

Assuredly God will defend those who have attained to faith; surely God loves not any who betrays trust and is ungrateful [for the good that has been offered to him/her]. Permission [to fight back] is given to those who have been wronged and are suffering [the woes of] injustice; surely, God in His exalted power is quite able to support them. Those who have been driven from their homes in defiance of all right, for no other reason than saying, "Our Lord is God." And had not God enabled people to defend themselves against one another, there would have been destroyed monasteries and churches and synagogues, and mosques, wherein God's name is abundantly extolled. Assuredly, God will support one who supports His [cause]; for verily, God is the Most Powerful, the All-mighty.
Those who if We firmly establish them [and enable them to seize power] in the land, keep up prayer and render purifying welfare dues (zakat), and enjoin the doing of what is right and forbid the doing of what is wrong; with God rests the final outcome of all events. [22:38-41]

وَقَٰتِلُواْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّذِينَ
يُقَٰتِلُونَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوٓاْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا
يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿١٩٠﴾ وَٱقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ
ثَقِفْتُمُوهُمْ وَأَخْرِجُوهُم مِّنْ حَيْثُ
أَخْرَجُوكُمْ ۚ وَٱلْفِتْنَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنَ ٱلْقَتْلِ ۚ
وَلَا تُقَٰتِلُوهُمْ عِندَ ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ
حَتَّىٰ يُقَٰتِلُوكُمْ فِيهِ ۖ فَإِن قَٰتَلُوكُمْ
فَٱقْتُلُوهُمْ ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ جَزَآءُ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ
﴿١٩١﴾ فَإِنِ ٱنتَهَوْاْ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ

And fight in the way of God against those who have [initially] waged war against you, but do not commit aggression; surely, God loves not aggressors. And fight them wherever you may come upon them, and drive them away from wherever they drove you away, for [the] oppression [that they heavily initiated] is even worse than killing. But fight not against them near the Inviolable House of Worship unless they fight against you there first; but if they [initiated the] fight against you, [it becomes inevitable that you fight against them and do not be reluctant to] kill them, such is the requital for those who have initially profaned the sanctity [of the Inviolable House]. But if they desist, God is

All-forgiving, Most-Gracious. And fight against them until there is no more oppression and the matter of faith is [left free from any human interference and pertains] to God alone, and if they desist, then all hostility shall cease, save against those who have been [willfully and initially] evil transgressors. [2:190-193]

رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٩٢﴾ وَ قَٰتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّىٰ لَا تَكُونَ
فِتْنَةٌ وَ يَكُونَ ٱلدِّينُ لِلَّهِ ۖ فَإِنِ ٱنتَهَوْا۟
فَلَا عُدْوَٰنَ إِلَّا عَلَى ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٩٣﴾

Fighting is ordained for you, even though it be hateful to you; but it may well be that you hate a thing while it is good for you, and it may well be that you love a thing while it is bad for you; and God knows, whereas you do not know. [2:216]

كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ
ٱلْقِتَالُ وَ هُوَ كُرْهٌ لَّكُمْ ۖ وَ عَسَىٰٓ أَن
تَكْرَهُوا۟ شَيْـًٔا وَ هُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۖ وَ عَسَىٰٓ
أَن تُحِبُّوا۟ شَيْـًٔا وَ هُوَ شَرٌّ لَّكُمْ ۗ وَ ٱللَّهُ
يَعْلَمُ وَ أَنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢١٦﴾

Hence, let them fight in God's cause all who are willing to give up the life of this world for the life to come, and unto one who fights for God's cause and either is killed or prevails, We shall in time grant a mighty reward. And how could you refuse to fight in the way of God, and for the utterly helpless and oppressed men, women and children who are crying, "O our Lord! Lead us forth out of this land whose people are oppressors, and raise for us out of Your grace a supporter, and raise for us out of Your grace a defender." Those who have attained to faith fight in the way of God, and those who stubbornly deny the truth fight for the powers of evil and tyranny. Fight, then, against these allies of Satan; surely, Satan's guile is ever feeble. [4:74-76]

فَلْيُقَٰتِلْ فِى سَبِيلِ
ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَشْرُونَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا
بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۚ وَ مَن يُقَٰتِلْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ
فَيُقْتَلْ أَوْ يَغْلِبْ فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا
عَظِيمًا ﴿٧٤﴾ وَ مَا لَكُمْ لَا تُقَٰتِلُونَ فِى
سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَ ٱلْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ ٱلرِّجَالِ
وَ ٱلنِّسَآءِ وَ ٱلْوِلْدَٰنِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ
رَبَّنَآ أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْ هَٰذِهِ ٱلْقَرْيَةِ ٱلظَّالِمِ
أَهْلُهَا وَ ٱجْعَل لَّنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ وَلِيًّا
وَ ٱجْعَل لَّنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ نَصِيرًا ﴿٧٥﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا۟ يُقَٰتِلُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ
وَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ يُقَٰتِلُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ
ٱلطَّٰغُوتِ ۖ فَقَٰتِلُوٓا۟ أَوْلِيَآءَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ ۚ
إِنَّ كَيْدَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ كَانَ ضَعِيفًا ﴿٧٦﴾

Battle of Badr [2 A.H. / 624 C.E.]

As your Lord brought you forth from your home for the rightful cause, although some of the believers were averse to it. They would argue with you about

كَمَآ أَخْرَجَكَ
رَبُّكَ مِنۢ بَيْتِكَ بِٱلْحَقِّ وَ إِنَّ فَرِيقًا مِّنَ
ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ لَكَٰرِهُونَ ﴿٥﴾ يُجَٰدِلُونَكَ فِى

the truth after it had become obvious, just as if they were being driven into death with their eyes wide open.

And when God promised you that one of the two [enemy] hosts would fall to you, and you would have liked to seize the one with no armed power, whereas it was God's will to prove the truth to be true according to His words, and to wipe out those who have stubbornly denied the truth, so that He might prove the truth to be true and the false to be false, however hateful this might be to those who were lost in evil-doing.

When you were calling upon your Lord for succor, and He answered you, "I shall provide you with a thousand angels following one another." And God has made this only as good tidings for you and that your hearts might be at rest; and no [real] succor can come except from God [and by His leave]; surely God is All-mighty, All-wise.

And [remember] when He caused some sleepiness [and inner tranquility] to enfold you as an assurance from Him, and sent down upon you water from the skies so as to purify you thereby and take away from you Satan's defilement, and so as to strengthen your hearts and make steady your feet.

When your Lord inspired the angels, "I am with you; so give firmness unto those who have attained to faith. I shall cast dreadfulness into the hearts of the stubborn deniers of the truth; strike, then, their necks and strike every finger of them as well." This because they stubbornly confronted [the message] of God and the Conveyor of it; and for any who confronts God and the Conveyor of His message, God is severe in retribution. [8:5-13]

ٱلْحَقِّ بَعْدَ مَا تَبَيَّنَ كَأَنَّمَا يُسَاقُونَ إِلَى
ٱلْمَوْتِ وَهُمْ يَنظُرُونَ ﴿٦﴾ وَإِذْ يَعِدُكُمُ
ٱللَّهُ إِحْدَى ٱلطَّآئِفَتَيْنِ أَنَّهَا لَكُمْ
وَتَوَدُّونَ أَنَّ غَيْرَ ذَاتِ ٱلشَّوْكَةِ تَكُونُ لَكُمْ
وَيُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ أَن يُحِقَّ ٱلْحَقَّ بِكَلِمَٰتِهِۦ
وَيَقْطَعَ دَابِرَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٧﴾ لِيُحِقَّ ٱلْحَقَّ
وَيُبْطِلَ ٱلْبَٰطِلَ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ ٱلْمُجْرِمُونَ ﴿٨﴾
إِذْ تَسْتَغِيثُونَ رَبَّكُمْ فَٱسْتَجَابَ لَكُمْ أَنِّى
مُمِدُّكُم بِأَلْفٍ مِّنَ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ مُرْدِفِينَ ﴿٩﴾
وَمَا جَعَلَهُ ٱللَّهُ إِلَّا بُشْرَىٰ وَلِتَطْمَئِنَّ
بِهِۦ قُلُوبُكُمْ ۚ وَمَا ٱلنَّصْرُ إِلَّا مِنْ عِندِ
ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١٠﴾ إِذْ
يُغَشِّيكُمُ ٱلنُّعَاسَ أَمَنَةً مِّنْهُ وَيُنَزِّلُ
عَلَيْكُم مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً لِّيُطَهِّرَكُم بِهِۦ
وَيُذْهِبَ عَنكُمْ رِجْزَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ وَلِيَرْبِطَ
عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتَ بِهِ ٱلْأَقْدَامَ ﴿١١﴾
إِذْ يُوحِى رَبُّكَ إِلَى ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ أَنِّى
مَعَكُمْ فَثَبِّتُوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ۚ سَأُلْقِى فِى
قُلُوبِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ٱلرُّعْبَ فَٱضْرِبُوا۟
فَوْقَ ٱلْأَعْنَاقِ وَٱضْرِبُوا۟ مِنْهُمْ كُلَّ بَنَانٍ
﴿١٢﴾ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ شَآقُّوا۟ ٱللَّهَ
وَرَسُولَهُۥ ۚ وَمَن يُشَاقِقِ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ
فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ شَدِيدُ ٱلْعِقَابِ ﴿١٣﴾

O you who have attained to faith! When you meet those who stubbornly deny the truth coming in their forces to confront you, do not turn to them [escape the fight]; and whoever on such a day turns his

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِذَا لَقِيتُمُ
ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ زَحْفًا فَلَا تُوَلُّوهُمُ ٱلْأَدْبَارَ
﴿١٥﴾ وَمَن يُوَلِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ دُبُرَهُۥٓ إِلَّا

back to them, unless it be with the intention to [maneuver and] carry on fighting [in better situation] or to join another part [of the believers' forces], shall heavily burden himself with God's condemnation, and his abode shall be hell, and how vile a journey's end. [8:15-16]

مُتَحَرِّفًا لِّقِتَالٍ أَوْ مُتَحَيِّزًا إِلَىٰ فِئَةٍ فَقَدْ
بَآءَ بِغَضَبٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَمَأْوَىٰهُ جَهَنَّمُ ۖ
وَبِئْسَ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٦﴾

And fight against them [those who initiated war against you] until there is no more oppression and the whole matter of faith is [left entirely free and pertains to] God alone, and if they desist, behold, God sees all that they do. But if they turn away, be sure that God is your Lord Supreme, the best to have supreme power and the best to support. [8:39-40]

وَقَٰتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّىٰ لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ
وَيَكُونَ ٱلدِّينُ كُلُّهُۥ لِلَّهِ ۚ فَإِنِ ٱنتَهَوْا۟ فَإِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٣٩﴾ وَإِن
تَوَلَّوْا۟ فَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَوْلَىٰكُمْ ۚ نِعْمَ
ٱلْمَوْلَىٰ وَنِعْمَ ٱلنَّصِيرُ ﴿٤٠﴾

Battle of Uhud [3 A.H./ 625 C.E.]

And when you did set out from your home at early morning to place the believers in battle array, and God is always All-hearing, All- knowing; when two groups from among you were about to lose heart, although [they believe that] God can support them, and it is in God that the believers must place their trust. And God did succor you at Badr, when you were utterly weak; so be always conscious of God, in order that you might be grateful. [3:121-123]

وَإِذْ
غَدَوْتَ مِنْ أَهْلِكَ تُبَوِّئُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ مَقَٰعِدَ
لِلْقِتَالِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٢١﴾ إِذْ
هَمَّت طَّآئِفَتَانِ مِنكُمْ أَن تَفْشَلَا وَٱللَّهُ
وَلِيُّهُمَا ۗ وَعَلَى ٱللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ
ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٢٢﴾ وَلَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ ٱللَّهُ
بِبَدْرٍ وَأَنتُمْ أَذِلَّةٌ ۖ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿١٢٣﴾

And God has been true in His promise towards you when you, [in the beginning] by His leave, were going through wiping them out, until when you lost heart and had a conflict about the matter and disobeyed, after He had brought you within view of that [victory] for which you were longing. Among you, there were those who cared [only] about this world's [gains], and those who cared about the life to come. Then He

وَلَقَدْ صَدَقَكُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَعْدَهُۥٓ إِذْ تَحُسُّونَهُم
بِإِذْنِهِۦ ۖ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا فَشِلْتُمْ وَتَنَٰزَعْتُمْ
فِى ٱلْأَمْرِ وَعَصَيْتُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ مَآ أَرَىٰكُم مَّا
تُحِبُّونَ ۖ مِنكُم مَّن يُرِيدُ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَمِنكُم
مَّن يُرِيدُ ٱلْءَاخِرَةَ ۖ ثُمَّ صَرَفَكُمْ عَنْهُمْ

turned you from them [without defeating them] in order that He might test you [by the defeat, and how might you learn from its lessons]; and now He has pardoned you, and God is limitless in His bounty unto the believers.

When you were going up thoughtlessly, while at your rear the Conveyor of [God's] message was calling out to you; so He requited you with grief after grief, lest you should [only] grieve for what you had missed, or for what had befallen you [instead of facing both together and the situation as a whole], and God is aware of all that you do.

Then He sent down upon you, after distress, a sense of security, a slumber [out of inner calm] that enfolded some of you, whereas others who cared mainly for themselves, harbored wrong thoughts about God-thoughts inherited from the period of ignorance [before Islam] - saying "Have we any part [in the ultimate reckoning] whatsoever in the matter?" Say: "Verily, all the matter [and power of decision] is entirely to God"; but they were concealing within themselves that which they reveal not to you, saying [to themselves], "If we had had a part [or any power of decision] in the matter, we would never have been killed here." Say: "Even if you had been in your homes, those whose death here had been set in this way would have sallied forth to where they were destined finally to lie down [in graves]; and [all that has happened to you] that God might test what is within your innate selves and let what you have in your hearts become clear and pure [not confused or confusing]; and God is well aware of anything that may be within the innate self."

Those of you who turned away on the day when the two parties confronted one another, Satan caused them to slip through some of what they themselves had earned; but God has pardoned them; God is All- forgiving, All-clement. [3:152-155]

لِيَبْتَلِيَكُمْ ۖ وَلَقَدْ عَفَا عَنكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ ذُو
فَضْلٍ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٥٢﴾ ۞ إِذْ
تُصْعِدُونَ وَلَا تَلْوُۥنَ عَلَىٰٓ أَحَدٍ
وَالرَّسُولُ يَدْعُوكُمْ فِىٓ أُخْرَىٰكُمْ فَأَثَٰبَكُمْ
غَمًّۢا بِغَمٍّ لِّكَيْلَا تَحْزَنُوا۟ عَلَىٰ مَا فَاتَكُمْ
وَلَا مَآ أَصَابَكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ خَبِيرٌۢ بِمَا
تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٥٣﴾ ثُمَّ أَنزَلَ عَلَيْكُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ
الْغَمِّ أَمَنَةً نُّعَاسًا يَغْشَىٰ طَآئِفَةً مِّنكُمْ ۖ
وَطَآئِفَةٌ قَدْ أَهَمَّتْهُمْ أَنفُسُهُمْ يَظُنُّونَ
بِاللَّهِ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ ظَنَّ الْجَٰهِلِيَّةِ ۖ
يَقُولُونَ هَل لَّنَا مِنَ الْأَمْرِ مِن شَىْءٍ ۗ قُلْ
إِنَّ الْأَمْرَ كُلَّهُۥ لِلَّهِ ۗ يُخْفُونَ فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِم
مَّا لَا يُبْدُونَ لَكَ ۖ يَقُولُونَ لَوْ كَانَ لَنَا
مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَىْءٌ مَّا قُتِلْنَا هَٰهُنَا ۗ قُل لَّوْ
كُنتُمْ فِى بُيُوتِكُمْ لَبَرَزَ الَّذِينَ كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ
الْقَتْلُ إِلَىٰ مَضَاجِعِهِمْ ۖ وَلِيَبْتَلِىَ اللَّهُ
مَا فِى صُدُورِكُمْ وَلِيُمَحِّصَ مَا فِى
قُلُوبِكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌۢ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ
﴿١٥٤﴾ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَوَلَّوْا۟ مِنكُمْ يَوْمَ الْتَقَى
الْجَمْعَانِ إِنَّمَا اسْتَزَلَّهُمُ الشَّيْطَٰنُ
بِبَعْضِ مَا كَسَبُوا۟ ۖ وَلَقَدْ عَفَا اللَّهُ
عَنْهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿١٥٥﴾

هُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَخۡرَجَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ مِنۡ أَهۡلِ
ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ مِن دِيَٰرِهِمۡ لِأَوَّلِ ٱلۡحَشۡرِۚ مَا
ظَنَنتُمۡ أَن يَخۡرُجُواْۖ وَظَنُّوٓاْ أَنَّهُم
مَّانِعَتُهُمۡ حُصُونُهُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ فَأَتَىٰهُمُ ٱللَّهُ
مِنۡ حَيۡثُ لَمۡ يَحۡتَسِبُواْۖ وَقَذَفَ فِى
قُلُوبِهِمُ ٱلرُّعۡبَ يُخۡرِبُونَ بُيُوتَهُم
بِأَيۡدِيهِمۡ وَأَيۡدِى ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ فَٱعۡتَبِرُواْ
يَٰٓأُوْلِى ٱلۡأَبۡصَٰرِ ﴿٢﴾ وَلَوۡلَآ أَن كَتَبَ
ٱللَّهُ عَلَيۡهِمُ ٱلۡجَلَآءَ لَعَذَّبَهُمۡ فِى ٱلدُّنۡيَاۖ
وَلَهُمۡ فِى ٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ عَذَابُ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿٣﴾

It is He who turned out of their homes through such an earlier gathering, those who had stubbornly rejected [and fought against] the truth from among the People of the Book. You did not think [O believers] that they would leave, and they thought that their strongholds would protect them against God; but God came upon them from whence they had not reckoned, and He cast terror in their hearts; [and thus] they destroyed their homes by their own hands and by the believers' hands as well. Learn a lesson, then, O you who have sight.
And had it not been that God had ordained their banishment, He would indeed have imposed [yet greater] suffering on them in this world, and in the life to come there awaits them suffering through fire. [59:2-3]

أَلَمۡ تَرَ
إِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ نَافَقُواْ يَقُولُونَ لِإِخۡوَٰنِهِمُ
ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ مِنۡ أَهۡلِ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ لَئِنۡ
أُخۡرِجۡتُمۡ لَنَخۡرُجَنَّ مَعَكُمۡ وَلَا نُطِيعُ فِيكُمۡ
أَحَدًا أَبَدًا وَإِن قُوتِلۡتُمۡ لَنَنصُرَنَّكُمۡ
وَٱللَّهُ يَشۡهَدُ إِنَّهُمۡ لَكَٰذِبُونَ ﴿١١﴾ لَئِنۡ
أُخۡرِجُواْ لَا يَخۡرُجُونَ مَعَهُمۡ وَلَئِن
قُوتِلُواْ لَا يَنصُرُونَهُمۡ وَلَئِن نَّصَرُوهُمۡ
لَيُوَلُّنَّ ٱلۡأَدۡبَٰرَ ثُمَّ لَا يُنصَرُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ لَأَنتُمۡ
أَشَدُّ رَهۡبَةً فِى صُدُورِهِم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِۚ ذَٰلِكَ
بِأَنَّهُمۡ قَوۡمٞ لَّا يَفۡقَهُونَ ﴿١٣﴾ لَا يُقَٰتِلُونَكُمۡ
جَمِيعًا إِلَّا فِى قُرٗى مُّحَصَّنَةٍ أَوۡ مِن
وَرَآءِ جُدُرِۭۚ بَأۡسُهُم بَيۡنَهُمۡ شَدِيدٞۚ
تَحۡسَبُهُمۡ جَمِيعٗا وَقُلُوبُهُمۡ شَتَّىٰۚ ذَٰلِكَ

Have you not regarded the hypocrites, how they speak to their truth-denying brethren from among the People of the Book, "If you are driven away, we shall assuredly go forth with you, and shall never obey anyone against you; and if war is waged against you, we shall come assuredly to your support." But God bears witness that they are truly liars.
If these are indeed driven away, they will not go forth with them; and if war is waged against these, they [the hypocrites] will not come to their support, and if they [try to] support them, they will surely turn their backs, and in the end they can never get assistance.
You [O believers] surely arouse in their hearts a fear more intense then [their fear of] God, since they are people who do not really comprehend.
Never will they [the truth-denying among the People of the Book] fight you altogether, other than from within fortified strongholds or from behind walls; mighty is their valor among

themselves; you think them united, while [in fact] their hearts are at odds [with one another], since they are people who do not use their minds. [59:11-14]

بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَّا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

You will surely find that of all people, the most hostile to those [who believe in this Book] are the Jews and those who associate others with God, and you will surely find that of all people they who say, "We are Christians" come closest to feeling affection for those who believe [in this Book]; this is because there are priests and monks among them, and because they are not given to arrogance. And when they hear what has been sent down to the Conveyor [of God's message], you see their eyes overflow with tears because of what they recognize of its truth. They say, "Our Lord! We do believe; let us be then with all who bear witness to the truth." [5:82-83]

لَتَجِدَنَّ أَشَدَّ ٱلنَّاسِ
عَدَٰوَةً لِّلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱلْيَهُودَ وَ ٱلَّذِينَ
أَشْرَكُواْ ۖ وَ لَتَجِدَنَّ أَقْرَبَهُم مَّوَدَّةً لِّلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُواْ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوٓاْ إِنَّا نَصَٰرَىٰ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ
بِأَنَّ مِنْهُمْ قِسِّيسِينَ وَ رُهْبَانًا وَ أَنَّهُمْ لَا
يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾ ۞ وَ إِذَا سَمِعُواْ مَآ
أُنزِلَ إِلَى ٱلرَّسُولِ تَرَىٰٓ أَعْيُنَهُمْ تَفِيضُ
مِنَ ٱلدَّمْعِ مِمَّا عَرَفُواْ مِنَ ٱلْحَقِّ ۖ
يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَآ ءَامَنَّا فَٱكْتُبْنَا مَعَ
ٱلشَّٰهِدِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾

The Tribal Confederates "al-'Ahzab" and Banu Qurayza [5 A.H./ 626 C.E.]

O you who have attained to faith! Remember the blessings of God on you when [enemy] hosts came down upon you, then We set loose against them a storm and forces that you could not see; and God knows all that you do. When they came upon you from above you, and from below you, and when [your] eyes swerved and [your] hearts reached [your] throats, and [terrible] thoughts might sometimes come to your minds about God [and His support]; there and then were the believers tried and shaken with a shock severe. And when the hypocrites and those with hearts diseased [by weakness of faith or by the quest for only material gains] said [to one another,] "God and the Conveyor of His message have promised us only delusion." [33:9-12]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ
ٱذْكُرُواْ نِعْمَةَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ جَآءَتْكُمْ
جُنُودٌ فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِيحًا وَ جُنُودًا لَّمْ
تَرَوْهَا ۚ وَ كَانَ ٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرًا
﴿٩﴾ إِذْ جَآءُوكُم مِّن فَوْقِكُمْ وَ مِنْ أَسْفَلَ
مِنكُمْ وَ إِذْ زَاغَتِ ٱلْأَبْصَٰرُ وَ بَلَغَتِ
ٱلْقُلُوبُ ٱلْحَنَاجِرَ وَ تَظُنُّونَ بِٱللَّهِ
ٱلظُّنُونَا ﴿١٠﴾ هُنَالِكَ ٱبْتُلِىَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ
وَ زُلْزِلُواْ زِلْزَالًا شَدِيدًا ﴿١١﴾ وَ إِذْ
يَقُولُ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقُونَ وَ ٱلَّذِينَ فِى قُلُوبِهِم
مَّرَضٌ مَّا وَعَدَنَا ٱللَّهُ وَ رَسُولُهُۥٓ إِلَّا
غُرُورًا ﴿١٢﴾

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِى
رَسُولِ ٱللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ
يَرْجُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَ ٱلْيَوْمَ ٱلْأَخِرَ وَ ذَكَرَ ٱللَّهَ
كَثِيرًا ﴿٢١﴾ وَ لَمَّا رَءَا ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ
ٱلْأَحْزَابَ قَالُواْ هَٰذَا مَا وَعَدَنَا ٱللَّهُ
وَرَسُولُهُۥ وَ صَدَقَ ٱللَّهُ وَ رَسُولُهُۥ ۖ وَ مَا
زَادَهُمْ إِلَّآ إِيمَٰنًا وَ تَسْلِيمًا ﴿٢٢﴾ مِّنَ
ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ رِجَالٌ صَدَقُواْ مَا عَٰهَدُواْ
ٱللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ ۖ فَمِنْهُم مَّن قَضَىٰ نَحْبَهُۥ
وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَنتَظِرُ ۖ وَ مَا بَدَّلُواْ تَبْدِيلًا
﴿٢٣﴾ لِّيَجْزِىَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ بِصِدْقِهِمْ
وَيُعَذِّبَ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ إِن شَآءَ أَوْ يَتُوبَ
عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا
﴿٢٤﴾ وَ رَدَّ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ بِغَيْظِهِمْ لَمْ
يَنَالُواْ خَيْرًا ۚ وَ كَفَى ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ
ٱلْقِتَالَ ۚ وَ كَانَ ٱللَّهُ قَوِيًّا عَزِيزًا ﴿٢٥﴾
وَ أَنزَلَ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَٰهَرُوهُم مِّنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ
مِن صَيَاصِيهِمْ وَ قَذَفَ فِى قُلُوبِهِمُ ٱلرُّعْبَ
فَرِيقًا تَقْتُلُونَ وَ تَأْسِرُونَ فَرِيقًا ﴿٢٦﴾
وَ أَوْرَثَكُمْ أَرْضَهُمْ وَ دِيَٰرَهُمْ وَ أَمْوَٰلَهُمْ
وَ أَرْضًا لَّمْ تَطَـُٔوهَا ۚ وَ كَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ
شَىْءٍ قَدِيرًا ﴿٢٧﴾

Surely, in the Conveyor of God's message you have a good example for whoever looks forward [with hope and awe] to God and the Last Day, and remembers God frequently.
And when the believers saw the [tribal] confederates (al-ahzab), they said, "This is what God and the Conveyor of His message have promised us; and God and the Conveyor of His message have spoken truly," and this but increased their faith and their submission to God. Among those who have attained to faith are men who have [always] been true to what they have committed themselves to before God, and among those some have fulfilled their commitment until they died, while some are still awaiting, but they have never changed in the least. [All are tested] so that God may reward the truthful for their truthfulness, and cause the hypocrites to suffer - if that be His will - or [if they repent], accept their repentance, and God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious.
And God sent back in their rage those who have stubbornly denied the truth; they attained no gain, and God has spared the believers fighting [in this confrontation]; surely God is All-powerful, All-mighty. And He brought down those of the People of the Book who supported them [the attacking tribal confederates] from their strongholds and cast terror in their hearts; some of them you killed, and some others you made captive. And He made you heirs to their lands, and their houses, and their possessions, and [other] lands [that follow] on which you have never set foot; and God has power over everything. [33:21-27]

Al-Hudaybiya [6 A.H./ 628 C.E.]

إِنَّا فَتَحْنَا لَكَ فَتْحًا مُّبِينًا ﴿١﴾ لِّيَغْفِرَ

Surely, [O Muhammad], We have granted you a manifest victory, so that God might show his forgiveness

of all your faults that came out early or late, and bestow upon you the full measure of His blessings, and guide you on a straight way, and [make it obvious] that God will support you with [His] mighty support. It is He who has sent down inner peace upon the hearts of the believers, so that they might grow deeper and more firm in their faith, seeing that God's are all the forces of the heavens and the earth, and God is All-knowing, All-wise. [48:1-4]

لِّيَغْفِرَ لَكَ ٱللَّهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِن ذَنۢبِكَ وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ
وَيُتِمَّ نِعْمَتَهُۥ عَلَيْكَ وَيَهْدِيَكَ صِرَٰطًا
مُّسْتَقِيمًا ﴿٢﴾ وَيَنصُرَكَ ٱللَّهُ نَصْرًا
عَزِيزًا ﴿٣﴾ هُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنزَلَ ٱلسَّكِينَةَ فِى
قُلُوبِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ لِيَزْدَادُوٓا۟ إِيمَٰنًا مَّعَ
إِيمَٰنِهِمْ ۗ وَلِلَّهِ جُنُودُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿٤﴾

Those who pledge their commitment to you, do surely pledge their commitment to God; God's hand is over their hands. Hence, one who breaks [his/her pledge], breaks it only to his [/her] own hurt, whereas one who keeps on fulfilling what he [/she] has pledged unto God, He will grant him [/her] a reward supreme. [48:10]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ
يُبَايِعُونَكَ إِنَّمَا يُبَايِعُونَ ٱللَّهَ يَدُ ٱللَّهِ
فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ ۚ فَمَن نَّكَثَ فَإِنَّمَا يَنكُثُ
عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِۦ ۖ وَمَنْ أَوْفَىٰ بِمَا عَٰهَدَ
عَلَيْهُ ٱللَّهَ فَسَيُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١٠﴾

Say unto those bedouins who stayed behind, "In time you will be called upon [to fight] against people of great prowess in war; you will have to fight against them or they will surrender [voluntarily]. And then, if you pay heed [to this call in time], God will grant you a goodly reward; but if you turn away as you turned away before, He will cause you to suffer a grievous suffering." [48:16]

قُل لِّلْمُخَلَّفِينَ
مِنَ ٱلْأَعْرَابِ سَتُدْعَوْنَ إِلَىٰ قَوْمٍ أُو۟لِى
بَأْسٍ شَدِيدٍ تُقَٰتِلُونَهُمْ أَوْ يُسْلِمُونَ ۖ
فَإِن تُطِيعُوا۟ يُؤْتِكُمُ ٱللَّهُ أَجْرًا حَسَنًا ۖ
وَإِن تَتَوَلَّوْا۟ كَمَا تَوَلَّيْتُم مِّن قَبْلُ
يُعَذِّبْكُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٦﴾

Well-pleased has God been with the believers when they pledged [assuredly] to you their commitment under the tree, as He knew what was in their hearts, and so He sent down inner peace upon them, and rewarded them with a victory shortly coming, and many war-gains which they would achieve, and God is indeed All-mighty, All-wise. God has promised you many war-gains which you shall achieve, and He has granted you some of these in advance, and has restrained the people's hands from you, so that this might be a sign to the believers, and that

لَّقَدْ رَضِىَ ٱللَّهُ عَنِ
ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ يُبَايِعُونَكَ تَحْتَ ٱلشَّجَرَةِ
فَعَلِمَ مَا فِى قُلُوبِهِمْ فَأَنزَلَ ٱلسَّكِينَةَ
عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَثَٰبَهُمْ فَتْحًا قَرِيبًا ﴿١٨﴾
وَمَغَانِمَ كَثِيرَةً يَأْخُذُونَهَا ۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ
عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٩﴾ وَعَدَكُمُ ٱللَّهُ مَغَانِمَ
كَثِيرَةً تَأْخُذُونَهَا فَعَجَّلَ لَكُمْ هَٰذِهِۦ وَكَفَّ
أَيْدِىَ ٱلنَّاسِ عَنكُمْ وَلِتَكُونَ ءَايَةً
لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَيَهْدِيَكُمْ صِرَٰطًا مُّسْتَقِيمًا ﴿٢٠﴾

He might guide you all on a straight way.
And there are yet other [gains] which are still beyond your grasp, but what God has encompassed in His knowledge, and God has power over everything.
And if those who have stubbornly denied the truth had fought against you, they would have turned their backs, and had found none who might support or defend them; such is God's way that has ever been before, and never will you find any change in God's way.And it is He who, in the valley of Mecca, restrained their hands from you, and your hands from them, after He had enabled you to prevail over them, and God sees all that you do.
It was they who have stubbornly rejected the truth and barred you from the Inviolable House of Worship and prevented your offering from reaching its destination [for sacrifice and distribution on the poor]. And had it not been for the believing men and the believing women [in Mecca] whom you had not known before and thus [who] you might have trampled [in your military action] and so you might have felt self- blame and shame [of killing Muslims] even if you did not know; and in this way God encompasses with His grace whomever He wills. Had these been discernible [to you from the evil aggressors], We would have caused those who have stubbornly denied the truth grievous suffering [at your hands].
As those who are bent to deny stubbornly the truth harbored in their hearts an impetuosity - the impetuosity developed [by their way of life that was an outcome] of ignorance [before Islam], God sent down His [gift of] inner peace upon the Conveyor of His message and the believers, and bound them to what God consciousness really means, and they were most worthy of it since it became their essential character. And God has full knowledge of all things.
Indeed, God has shown the truth in the vision of the Conveyor of His message: [foretelling]

وَ أُخْرَىٰ لَمْ تَقْدِرُوا عَلَيْهَا قَدْ
أَحَاطَ ٱللَّهُ بِهَا ۚ وَ كَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ
شَيْءٍ قَدِيرًا ﴿٢١﴾ وَ لَوْ قَٰتَلَكُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا لَوَلَّوُا ٱلْأَدْبَٰرَ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُونَ وَلِيًّا
وَ لَا نَصِيرًا ﴿٢٢﴾ سُنَّةَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّتِى قَدْ
خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلُ ۖ وَ لَن تَجِدَ لِسُنَّةِ ٱللَّهِ
تَبْدِيلًا ﴿٢٣﴾ وَ هُوَ ٱلَّذِى كَفَّ أَيْدِيَهُمْ
عَنكُمْ وَ أَيْدِيَكُمْ عَنْهُم بِبَطْنِ مَكَّةَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ
أَنْ أَظْفَرَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ وَ كَانَ ٱللَّهُ بِمَا
تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرًا ﴿٢٤﴾ هُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
وَ صَدُّوكُمْ عَنِ ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ وَ ٱلْهَدْىَ
مَعْكُوفًا أَن يَبْلُغَ مَحِلَّهُۥ ۚ وَ لَوْلَا رِجَالٌ
مُّؤْمِنُونَ وَ نِسَآءٌ مُّؤْمِنَٰتٌ لَّمْ تَعْلَمُوهُمْ
أَن تَطَـُٔوهُمْ فَتُصِيبَكُم مِّنْهُم مَّعَرَّةٌۢ بِغَيْرِ
عِلْمٍ ۖ لِّيُدْخِلَ ٱللَّهُ فِى رَحْمَتِهِۦ مَن
يَشَآءُ ۚ لَوْ تَزَيَّلُوا لَعَذَّبْنَا ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
مِنْهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿٢٥﴾ إِذْ جَعَلَ ٱلَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا فِى قُلُوبِهِمُ ٱلْحَمِيَّةَ حَمِيَّةَ
ٱلْجَٰهِلِيَّةِ فَأَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُۥ عَلَىٰ
رَسُولِهِۦ وَ عَلَى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَ أَلْزَمَهُمْ
كَلِمَةَ ٱلتَّقْوَىٰ وَ كَانُوٓا أَحَقَّ بِهَا
وَ أَهْلَهَا ۚ وَ كَانَ ٱللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمًا
﴿٢٦﴾ لَّقَدْ صَدَقَ ٱللَّهُ رَسُولَهُ ٱلرُّءْيَا

that you shall assuredly enter the Inviolable House of Worship, if God so wills, in full security, with your heads shaved or your hair cut short [to show humility to God], without any fear, and He has always known what you do not know, and He has ordained [for you] besides, another victory soon to come.
It is He who has sent forth the Conveyor of His message with the guidance and the faith of truth, so as to make it prevail over every [false] one; and God suffices as a witness [to the truth]. [48:18-28]

بِٱلْحَقِّ ۖ لَتَدْخُلُنَّ ٱلْمَسْجِدَ ٱلْحَرَامَ إِن
شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ ءَامِنِينَ مُحَلِّقِينَ رُءُوسَكُمْ
وَمُقَصِّرِينَ لَا تَخَافُونَ ۖ فَعَلِمَ مَا لَمْ
تَعْلَمُوا۟ فَجَعَلَ مِن دُونِ ذَٰلِكَ فَتْحًا قَرِيبًا
﴿٢٧﴾ هُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُۥ بِٱلْهُدَىٰ
وَدِينِ ٱلْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُۥ عَلَى ٱلدِّينِ كُلِّهِۦ ۚ
وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ شَهِيدًا ﴿٢٨﴾

RETURN TO MECCA [8 A.H./ 630 C.E.]

When the succour of God and [His] victory come, and you see people accept the faith in God and His message in multitudes, extol your Lord's limitless glory and praise Him, and seek His forgiveness; He is ever the acceptor of repentance. [110:1-3]

إِذَا جَآءَ نَصْرُ ٱللَّهِ وَٱلْفَتْحُ ﴿١﴾
وَرَأَيْتَ ٱلنَّاسَ يَدْخُلُونَ فِى دِينِ ٱللَّهِ
أَفْوَاجًا ﴿٢﴾ فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ
وَٱسْتَغْفِرْهُ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ تَوَّابًۢا ﴿٣﴾

HUNAYN [8 A.H./ 630 C.E.]

God has supported you on many battlefields, and on the day of Hunayn, when you were pleased with your great numbers, and they proved of no avail whatsoever to you, and the earth, despite all its vastness, became [too] narrow for you, and you turned back, retreating. Then God sent down upon the Conveyor of His message and upon the believers inner peace from Him, and He sent down [upon you] high forces which you could not see, and caused those who had stubbornly denied the truth to suffer, and such is the recompense of all who stubbornly deny the truth. Then God thereafter turns in His mercy unto whom He wills, and God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious. [9:25-27]

لَقَدْ
نَصَرَكُمُ ٱللَّهُ فِى مَوَاطِنَ كَثِيرَةٍ وَيَوْمَ
حُنَيْنٍ ۙ إِذْ أَعْجَبَتْكُمْ كَثْرَتُكُمْ فَلَمْ تُغْنِ
عَنكُمْ شَيْـًٔا وَضَاقَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْأَرْضُ بِمَا
رَحُبَتْ ثُمَّ وَلَّيْتُم مُّدْبِرِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾ ثُمَّ أَنزَلَ
ٱللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُۥ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِۦ وَعَلَى
ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَأَنزَلَ جُنُودًا لَّمْ تَرَوْهَا
وَعَذَّبَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ جَزَآءُ
ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٢٦﴾ ثُمَّ يَتُوبُ ٱللَّهُ مِنۢ بَعْدِ
ذَٰلِكَ عَلَىٰ مَن يَشَآءُ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٌ
رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٢٧﴾

لَوْ
كَانَ عَرَضًا قَرِيبًا وَ سَفَرًا قَاصِدًا
لَّاتَّبَعُوكَ وَ لَٰكِنۢ بَعُدَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلشُّقَّةُ ۚ
وَسَيَحْلِفُونَ بِٱللَّهِ لَوِ ٱسْتَطَعْنَا لَخَرَجْنَا
مَعَكُمْ يُهْلِكُونَ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَ ٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ إِنَّهُمْ
لَكَٰذِبُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

Were it a gain near at hand, and an easy journey, they would have surely followed you, but the distance was too far for them. And yet, they will swear by God [when you come back,] "Had we been able to make it, we would certainly have gone out with you;" [and so] they are destroying their own selves, and God knows that they are truly liars. [9:42]

وَ مِمَّنْ
حَوْلَكُم مِّنَ ٱلْأَعْرَابِ مُنَٰفِقُونَ ۛ وَ مِنْ
أَهْلِ ٱلْمَدِينَةِ ۛ مَرَدُوا۟ عَلَى ٱلنِّفَاقِ لَا
تَعْلَمُهُمْ ۖ نَحْنُ نَعْلَمُهُمْ ۚ سَنُعَذِّبُهُم مَّرَّتَيْنِ
ثُمَّ يُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عَذَابٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٠١﴾
وَءَاخَرُونَ ٱعْتَرَفُوا۟ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ خَلَطُوا۟
عَمَلًا صَٰلِحًا وَءَاخَرَ سَيِّئًا عَسَى ٱللَّهُ
أَن يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ
﴿١٠٢﴾

And among the bedouins who dwell around you there are hypocrites; and among the people of Medina (the Prophet's City) there are those who have grown bold in [their] hypocrisy. You do not always know them [O Muhammad, but] We know them. We shall cause them to have a double suffering [in this world], and then they will be given over to awesome suffering [in the life to come]. And there are others who have become conscious of their evil deeds; they have mixed righteous deeds with evil ones; and it may well be that God will accept their repentance; and God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious. [9:101-102]

لَّقَد تَّابَ ٱللَّهُ
عَلَى ٱلنَّبِىِّ وَ ٱلْمُهَٰجِرِينَ وَ ٱلْأَنصَارِ
ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّبَعُوهُ فِى سَاعَةِ ٱلْعُسْرَةِ مِنۢ بَعْدِ
مَا كَادَ يَزِيغُ قُلُوبُ فَرِيقٍ مِّنْهُمْ ثُمَّ تَابَ
عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ بِهِمْ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١١٧﴾

God has turned indeed in His mercy unto the Prophet and those who have forsaken their homes [and properties for the cause of God, al-muhajirun], and those who have sheltered them and supported the faith and the emigrants [al-ansar] - [all] those who followed him [the Prophet] in the hard time, then He has turned unto them in His mercy, for He is All-clement, Most Gracious. [9:117]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ قَٰتِلُوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ
يَلُونَكُم مِّنَ ٱلْكُفَّارِ وَ لْيَجِدُوا۟ فِيكُمْ
غِلْظَةً ۚ وَ ٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَعَ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٢٣﴾

O you have attained to faith! Fight against those who are near you from those who have stubbornly denied the truth, and let them find you firm and unyielding; and know that God is with those who are

conscious of Him. [9:123]

And fight against those who - despite having the Book [aforetime] - do not [truly] believe either in God or in the Last Day, nor consider forbidden that which God and the Conveyor of His Message have forbidden, nor follow the religion of truth [which God has enjoined upon them] until they agree to the payment of the exemption tax [of defence obligations, jizya] by those who afford it, and acknowledge their subjection [to the Islamic state]. [9:29]

قَٰتِلُوا۟
ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَلَا بِٱلْيَوْمِ
ٱلْءَاخِرِ وَلَا يُحَرِّمُونَ مَا حَرَّمَ ٱللَّهُ
وَرَسُولُهُۥ وَلَا يَدِينُونَ دِينَ ٱلْحَقِّ مِنَ
ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ حَتَّىٰ يُعْطُوا۟
ٱلْجِزْيَةَ عَن يَدٍ وَهُمْ صَٰغِرُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾

The Hypocrites

And there are people who say, "We do not believe in God and the Last Day," while they are not really believers. They try to deceive God and those who have attained to faith, while they are deceiving none but their own selves and they are not aware. In their hearts is a [moral] disease, and so God lets their disease increase; and grievous suffering awaits them because of their persistent lying.
And when they are told, "Do not spread corruption on earth," they say, "We are but improving!" Truly, it is they who are spreading corruption, but they are not aware.
And when they are told, "Believe as other people believe," they say, "Shall we believe as the weak-minded believe?" Truly it is they who are weak-minded, but they know it not.
And when they meet those who have attained to faith, they say, "We believe;" but when they become alone with their Satans they say, "We are with you; we were only mocking."
God will requite them for their mockery, and will leave them for a while blindly wandering through their arrogance.
It is they who have taken error at the price of guidance; and neither has their deal brought

وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن
يَقُولُ ءَامَنَّا بِٱللَّهِ وَبِٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ وَمَا
هُم بِمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٨﴾ يُخَٰدِعُونَ ٱللَّهَ
وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَمَا يَخْدَعُونَ إِلَّآ
أَنفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٩﴾ فِى قُلُوبِهِم
مَّرَضٌ فَزَادَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ مَرَضًا ۖ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ
أَلِيمٌۢ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَكْذِبُونَ ﴿١٠﴾ وَإِذَا
قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا تُفْسِدُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ قَالُوٓا۟
إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُصْلِحُونَ ﴿١١﴾ أَلَآ إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ
ٱلْمُفْسِدُونَ وَلَٰكِن لَّا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١٢﴾
وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ ءَامِنُوا۟ كَمَآ ءَامَنَ ٱلنَّاسُ
قَالُوٓا۟ أَنُؤْمِنُ كَمَآ ءَامَنَ ٱلسُّفَهَآءُ ۗ أَلَآ
إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ ٱلسُّفَهَآءُ وَلَٰكِن لَّا يَعْلَمُونَ
﴿١٣﴾ وَإِذَا لَقُوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ قَالُوٓا۟
ءَامَنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَوْا۟ إِلَىٰ شَيَٰطِينِهِمْ
قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُسْتَهْزِءُونَ
﴿١٤﴾ ٱللَّهُ يَسْتَهْزِئُ بِهِمْ وَيَمُدُّهُمْ فِى
طُغْيَٰنِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ
ٱشْتَرَوُا۟ ٱلضَّلَٰلَةَ بِٱلْهُدَىٰ فَمَا رَبِحَت

them gain, nor have they had guidance. Their parable is of people who kindle a fire, but as soon as it provides light around them, God takes away their light and leaves them in utter darkness, wherein they cannot see; [they are] deaf, dumb, blind, and they cannot turn back. [2:8-18]

تِجَٰرَتُهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا۟ مُهْتَدِينَ ﴿١٦﴾ مَثَلُهُمْ
كَمَثَلِ ٱلَّذِى ٱسْتَوْقَدَ نَارًا فَلَمَّآ أَضَآءَتْ
مَا حَوْلَهُۥ ذَهَبَ ٱللَّهُ بِنُورِهِمْ وَتَرَكَهُمْ
فِى ظُلُمَٰتٍ لَّا يُبْصِرُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ صُمٌۢ بُكْمٌ
عُمْىٌ فَهُمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

Then He sent down upon you, after distress, a sense of security, a slumber [out of inner calm] that enfolded some of you, whereas others who cared mainly for themselves, harbored wrong thoughts about God-thoughts inherited from the period of ignorance [before Islam] - saying "Have we any part [in the ultimate reckoning] whatsoever in the matter?" Say: "Verily, all the matter [and power of decision] is entirely to God"; but they were concealing within themselves that which they reveal not to you, saying [to themselves], "If we had had a part [or any power of decision] in the matter, we would never have been killed here." Say: "Even if you had been in your homes, those whose death here had been set in this way would have sallied forth to where they were destined finally to lie down [in graves]; and [all that has happened to you] that God might test what is within your innate selves and let what you have in your hearts become clear and pure [not confused or confusing]; and God is well aware of anything that may be within the innate self." Those of you who turned away on the day when the two parties confronted one another, Satan caused them to slip through some of what they themselves had earned; but God has pardoned them; God is All- forgiving, All-clement.

O you who have attained to faith! Be not like those who have stubbornly denied the truth and have said about their brethren [who die] after having set out for a journey in the land or gone forth to war, "Had they but remained

ثُمَّ أَنزَلَ عَلَيْكُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ
ٱلْغَمِّ أَمَنَةً نُّعَاسًا يَغْشَىٰ طَآئِفَةً مِّنكُمْ ۖ
وَطَآئِفَةٌ قَدْ أَهَمَّتْهُمْ أَنفُسُهُمْ يَظُنُّونَ
بِٱللَّهِ غَيْرَ ٱلْحَقِّ ظَنَّ ٱلْجَٰهِلِيَّةِ ۖ
يَقُولُونَ هَل لَّنَا مِنَ ٱلْأَمْرِ مِن شَىْءٍ ۗ قُلْ
إِنَّ ٱلْأَمْرَ كُلَّهُۥ لِلَّهِ ۗ يُخْفُونَ فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِم
مَّا لَا يُبْدُونَ لَكَ ۖ يَقُولُونَ لَوْ كَانَ لَنَا
مِنَ ٱلْأَمْرِ شَىْءٌ مَّا قُتِلْنَا هَٰهُنَا ۗ قُل لَّوْ
كُنتُمْ فِى بُيُوتِكُمْ لَبَرَزَ ٱلَّذِينَ كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ
ٱلْقَتْلُ إِلَىٰ مَضَاجِعِهِمْ ۖ وَلِيَبْتَلِىَ ٱللَّهُ
مَا فِى صُدُورِكُمْ وَلِيُمَحِّصَ مَا فِى
قُلُوبِكُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌۢ بِذَاتِ ٱلصُّدُورِ
﴿١٥٤﴾ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ تَوَلَّوْا۟ مِنكُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْتَقَى
ٱلْجَمْعَانِ إِنَّمَا ٱسْتَزَلَّهُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ
بِبَعْضِ مَا كَسَبُوا۟ ۖ وَلَقَدْ عَفَا ٱللَّهُ
عَنْهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿١٥٥﴾ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا
ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تَكُونُوا۟ كَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟
وَقَالُوا۟ لِإِخْوَٰنِهِمْ إِذَا ضَرَبُوا۟ فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ أَوْ كَانُوا۟ غُزًّى لَّوْ كَانُوا۟ عِندَنَا

with us, they would not have died or been killed," for God causes such [thoughts] to become an anguish in their hearts, since it is God who grants life and deals death, and God sees all that you do. And if indeed you are killed or you die in God's cause, then surely forgiveness from God and His grace are surely better than all that one may amass [in this world's life]; and indeed if you die or you are killed, it is unto God that you shall be gathered. [3:154-8]

مَا مَاتُوا۟ وَمَا قُتِلُوا۟ لِيَجْعَلَ ٱللَّهُ ذَٰلِكَ
حَسْرَةً فِى قُلُوبِهِمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ يُحْىِۦ
وَيُمِيتُ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ
﴿١٥٦﴾ وَلَئِن قُتِلْتُمْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ أَوْ
مُتُّمْ لَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَرَحْمَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا
يَجْمَعُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾ وَلَئِن مُّتُّمْ أَوْ قُتِلْتُمْ
لَإِلَى ٱللَّهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿١٥٨﴾

And is it that when an affliction has befallen you after you had inflicted twice as much [on your enemies] you say, "How has this come about?" Say, "It has come from your own selves;" surely, God has the power to will everything.
And all that befell you on the day when two hosts met in battle happened by God's leave, so that He might mark out the true believers and mark out those who were hypocrites, who when they were told, "Come, fight in God's cause" said, "If only we knew there would be a fight we would indeed follow you." They were that day nearer to a stubborn denial of the truth than to [true] faith, uttering with their mouths that which there was not in their hearts, while God knew full well what they were trying to conceal.
Those who, having themselves held back [from fighting], said to their brethren, "Had they [who were killed] but listened to us, they would not have been killed." Say, "Then avert death from yourselves if you speak truly." [3:165-8]

أَوَلَمَّآ
أَصَٰبَتْكُم مُّصِيبَةٌ قَدْ أَصَبْتُم مِّثْلَيْهَا قُلْتُمْ
أَنَّىٰ هَٰذَا ۖ قُلْ هُوَ مِنْ عِندِ أَنفُسِكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٦٥﴾ وَمَآ
أَصَٰبَكُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْتَقَى ٱلْجَمْعَانِ فَبِإِذْنِ
ٱللَّهِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٦٦﴾ وَلِيَعْلَمَ
ٱلَّذِينَ نَافَقُوا۟ ۚ وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا۟
قَٰتِلُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ أَوِ ٱدْفَعُوا۟ ۖ
قَالُوا۟ لَوْ نَعْلَمُ قِتَالًا لَّٱتَّبَعْنَٰكُمْ ۗ هُمْ
لِلْكُفْرِ يَوْمَئِذٍ أَقْرَبُ مِنْهُمْ لِلْإِيمَٰنِ ۚ
يَقُولُونَ بِأَفْوَٰهِهِم مَّا لَيْسَ فِى قُلُوبِهِمْ ۗ
وَٱللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَكْتُمُونَ ﴿١٦٧﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ
قَالُوا۟ لِإِخْوَٰنِهِمْ وَقَعَدُوا۟ لَوْ أَطَاعُونَا
مَا قُتِلُوا۟ ۗ قُلْ فَٱدْرَءُوا۟ عَنْ أَنفُسِكُمُ
ٱلْمَوْتَ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿١٦٨﴾

Have you seen those who have been told, "Curb your hands and keep up prayers and render the purifying [welfare] dues," then as soon as fighting [in God's cause] is ordained for them, there are some of them that fear people as they fear God or more, and they say, "Our Lord! Why have You

أَلَمْ
تَرَ إِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ قِيلَ لَهُمْ كُفُّوٓا۟ أَيْدِيَكُمْ
وَأَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتُوا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ فَلَمَّا
كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْقِتَالُ إِذَا فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ
يَخْشَوْنَ ٱلنَّاسَ كَخَشْيَةِ ٱللَّهِ أَوْ أَشَدَّ

ordained fighting for us? Would You have granted us a delay for a little while?" Say, "The enjoyment of this world's life is little, and the life to come is better for one who is conscious of God, and none of you shall be wronged by even a single date thread."

Wherever you may be, death will overtake you, even though you may be in strongly built high towers. And when something good happens to them, they say, "This is from God;" but when something evil befalls them they say, "This is from you [O Muhammad]." Say, "All is from God [as He allows it to happen through His laws to test people]." How is it with these people? They almost do not understand what they are told.

Whatever good happens to you is from God, and whatever befalls you is from yourself [as every human being is granted his/her free will by God]. And We have sent you [O Muhammad] as a Conveyor [of Our message] to all people, and none can bear witness [thereto] as God does. Whoever obeys the Conveyor of the message, he[/she] actually obeys God thereby.

And they say, "We do pay heed unto you [O Muhammad]" but when they go out leaving you, some of them devise in the dark of night what is different from that which they have been saying [with their mouths] while God records what they devise in the dark of night. Leave them, then, alone, and place your trust in God, and God suffices to be trusted as a guardian.

Will they not, then, think over the Quran? Had it been from any but God, they would surely have found within it many a contradiction [or an inconsistency].

And when there comes to them some matter, be it of security or fear, they spread it, whereas if they would but refer it to the Conveyor of God's message and to those from among the believers who have been entrusted with authority by them, such of them who investi-

خَشْيَةَ ۚ وَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا لِمَ كَتَبْتَ عَلَيْنَا
ٱلْقِتَالَ لَوْلَآ أَخَّرْتَنَآ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ
قَرِيبٍ ۗ قُلْ مَتَٰعُ ٱلدُّنْيَا قَلِيلٌ وَٱلْءَاخِرَةُ
خَيْرٌ لِّمَنِ ٱتَّقَىٰ وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا
﴿٧٧﴾ أَيْنَمَا تَكُونُوا۟ يُدْرِككُّمُ ٱلْمَوْتُ
وَلَوْ كُنتُمْ فِى بُرُوجٍ مُّشَيَّدَةٍ ۗ وَإِن تُصِبْهُمْ
حَسَنَةٌ يَقُولُوا۟ هَٰذِهِۦ مِنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ
وَإِن تُصِبْهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَقُولُوا۟ هَٰذِهِۦ مِنْ
عِندِكَ ۚ قُلْ كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ فَمَالِ
هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ ٱلْقَوْمِ لَا يَكَادُونَ يَفْقَهُونَ
حَدِيثًا ﴿٧٨﴾ مَّآ أَصَابَكَ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنَ
ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَمَآ أَصَابَكَ مِن سَيِّئَةٍ فَمِن
نَّفْسِكَ ۚ وَأَرْسَلْنَٰكَ لِلنَّاسِ رَسُولًا ۚ
وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ شَهِيدًا ﴿٧٩﴾ مَّن يُطِعِ
ٱلرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ ٱللَّهَ ۖ وَمَن تَوَلَّىٰ
فَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَٰكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا ﴿٨٠﴾
وَيَقُولُونَ طَاعَةٌ فَإِذَا بَرَزُوا۟ مِنْ عِندِكَ
بَيَّتَ طَآئِفَةٌ مِّنْهُمْ غَيْرَ ٱلَّذِى تَقُولُ ۖ
وَٱللَّهُ يَكْتُبُ مَا يُبَيِّتُونَ ۖ فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ
وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ وَكِيلًا
﴿٨١﴾ أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ ۚ وَلَوْ
كَانَ مِنْ عِندِ غَيْرِ ٱللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا۟ فِيهِ
ٱخْتِلَٰفًا كَثِيرًا ﴿٨٢﴾ وَإِذَا جَآءَهُمْ أَمْرٌ
مِّنَ ٱلْأَمْنِ أَوِ ٱلْخَوْفِ أَذَاعُوا۟ بِهِۦ ۖ
وَلَوْ رَدُّوهُ إِلَى ٱلرَّسُولِ وَإِلَىٰٓ أُو۟لِى

gate the matter would have directly known [the facts] about it from them. And but for God's bounty and grace towards you, all but a few of you would have followed Satan. [4:77-83]

ٱلْأَمْرِ مِنْهُمْ لَعَلِمَهُ ٱلَّذِينَ يَسْتَنۢبِطُونَهُۥ
مِنْهُمْ ۗ وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ
وَرَحْمَتُهُۥ لَٱتَّبَعْتُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٨٣﴾

How, then, could you be of two views about the hypocrites, seeing that God [Himself] has caused them to fall in what they have earned. Do you seek to guide those whom God has let go astray, and one whom God lets go astray, you can never find [for him/her] the way.They wish that you should deny the truth, as they deny it, and thus you would be all the same. Do not, therefore, take supporters from among them until they leave [the domain of evil] for the cause of God. And if they should ever turn against you [openly], then [stand up to their hostility and] seize them and fight against them wherever you may find them; and [in any case] never take from among them a supporter or defendant. Except those who have a relation with people with whom you have a bond, or those who approach you with hearts that feel uncomfortable fighting against you or their own people, and had God willed, He could have turned them against you, and they would have fought you; thus, if they keep themselves aloof from you and do not fight you, but offer you peace, then God does not allow you in any way to fight against them.

Others you will find who would wish to be safe from you as well as safe from their people; but whenever they come upon a chance for causing disturbance [in your front], they plunge in to it. If they do not keep aloof from you and do not offer you peace and hold back their hands, then [face firmly their hypocrisy and] seize them and fight against them whenever you may come across them; and against these we have clearly authorized you [to fight]. [4:88-91]

فَمَا لَكُمْ فِى ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ
فِئَتَيْنِ وَٱللَّهُ أَرْكَسَهُم بِمَا كَسَبُوٓا۟ ۚ
أَتُرِيدُونَ أَن تَهْدُوا۟ مَنْ أَضَلَّ ٱللَّهُ ۖ
وَمَن يُضْلِلِ ٱللَّهُ فَلَن تَجِدَ لَهُۥ سَبِيلًا ﴿٨٨﴾
وَدُّوا۟ لَوْ تَكْفُرُونَ كَمَا كَفَرُوا۟ فَتَكُونُونَ
سَوَآءً ۖ فَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا۟ مِنْهُمْ أَوْلِيَآءَ حَتَّىٰ
يُهَاجِرُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا۟
فَخُذُوهُمْ وَٱقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ وَجَدتُّمُوهُمْ ۖ
وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا۟ مِنْهُمْ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا
﴿٨٩﴾ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ إِلَىٰ قَوْمٍۭ بَيْنَكُمْ
وَبَيْنَهُم مِّيثَٰقٌ أَوْ جَآءُوكُمْ حَصِرَتْ
صُدُورُهُمْ أَن يُقَٰتِلُوكُمْ أَوْ يُقَٰتِلُوا۟
قَوْمَهُمْ ۚ وَلَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ لَسَلَّطَهُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ
فَلَقَٰتَلُوكُمْ ۚ فَإِنِ ٱعْتَزَلُوكُمْ فَلَمْ يُقَٰتِلُوكُمْ
وَأَلْقَوْا۟ إِلَيْكُمُ ٱلسَّلَمَ فَمَا جَعَلَ ٱللَّهُ
لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سَبِيلًا ﴿٩٠﴾ سَتَجِدُونَ
ءَاخَرِينَ يُرِيدُونَ أَن يَأْمَنُوكُمْ وَيَأْمَنُوا۟
قَوْمَهُمْ كُلَّ مَا رُدُّوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱلْفِتْنَةِ أُرْكِسُوا۟
فِيهَا ۚ فَإِن لَّمْ يَعْتَزِلُوكُمْ وَيُلْقُوٓا۟ إِلَيْكُمُ
ٱلسَّلَمَ وَيَكُفُّوٓا۟ أَيْدِيَهُمْ فَخُذُوهُمْ
وَٱقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ ثَقِفْتُمُوهُمْ ۚ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكُمْ
جَعَلْنَا لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَٰنًا مُّبِينًا ﴿٩١﴾

إِنَّ
ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ثُمَّ كَفَرُوا۟ ثُمَّ ءَامَنُوا۟ ثُمَّ
كَفَرُوا۟ ثُمَّ ٱزْدَادُوا۟ كُفْرًا لَّمْ يَكُنِ ٱللَّهُ
لِيَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ وَلَا لِيَهْدِيَهُمْ سَبِيلًۢا ﴿١٣٧﴾
بَشِّرِ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ بِأَنَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا
﴿١٣٨﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يَتَّخِذُونَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ أَوْلِيَآءَ
مِن دُونِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۚ أَيَبْتَغُونَ عِندَهُمُ
ٱلْعِزَّةَ فَإِنَّ ٱلْعِزَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا ﴿١٣٩﴾
وَقَدْ نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِى ٱلْكِتَٰبِ أَنْ إِذَا
سَمِعْتُمْ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ يُكْفَرُ بِهَا وَيُسْتَهْزَأُ
بِهَا فَلَا تَقْعُدُوا۟ مَعَهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَخُوضُوا۟
فِى حَدِيثٍ غَيْرِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّكُمْ إِذًا مِّثْلُهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ جَامِعُ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ وَٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ فِى
جَهَنَّمَ جَمِيعًا ﴿١٤٠﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يَتَرَبَّصُونَ
بِكُمْ فَإِن كَانَ لَكُمْ فَتْحٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ قَالُوٓا۟ أَلَمْ
نَكُن مَّعَكُمْ وَإِن كَانَ لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ نَصِيبٌ
قَالُوٓا۟ أَلَمْ نَسْتَحْوِذْ عَلَيْكُمْ وَنَمْنَعْكُم مِّنَ
ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۚ فَٱللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ يَوْمَ
ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۚ وَلَن يَجْعَلَ ٱللَّهُ لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ
عَلَى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَبِيلًا ﴿١٤١﴾ إِنَّ
ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ يُخَٰدِعُونَ ٱللَّهَ وَهُوَ خَٰدِعُهُمْ
وَإِذَا قَامُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ قَامُوا۟
كُسَالَىٰ يُرَآءُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ
ٱللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿١٤٢﴾ مُّذَبْذَبِينَ بَيْنَ ذَٰلِكَ
لَآ إِلَىٰ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ وَلَآ إِلَىٰ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ ۚ وَمَن
يُضْلِلِ ٱللَّهُ فَلَن تَجِدَ لَهُۥ سَبِيلًا ﴿١٤٣﴾
يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تَتَّخِذُوا۟
ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ أَوْلِيَآءَ مِن دُونِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۚ
أَتُرِيدُونَ أَن تَجْعَلُوا۟ لِلَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ سُلْطَٰنًا

Those who come to believe, and then stubbornly deny the truth, and again come to believe, and again stubbornly deny the truth, and thereafter grow stubborn in their denial of the truth, they will have no means for God to forgive them, nor to guide them [against their will] to any [right] way.

Let the hypocrites know that grievous suffering awaits them. Those who take the deniers of the truth as their patrons and supporters; in preference to the believers; do they seek power and high standing with them? But all power and supremacy belong to God [alone].

And He has enjoined upon you in this Book that whenever you hear people stubbornly deny the truth of God's messages and mock at them, you avoid their company until they plunge into some other talk, or else you will surely become like them. God will gather the hypocrites with those who stubbornly deny the truth in hell.

Those who but wait upon you, and if a victory comes to you from God, say, "Were we not on your side?" But if those who deny the truth get a share, they say, "Did we not guard your interest and defend you against the believers [in Muhammad]?" God will judge between you all on the Day of Resurrection; and God will never grant those who deny the truth any way over the believers.

The hypocrites seek to deceive God, while it is He who causes them to be deceived [by their own selves]. And when they rise to pray, they rise reluctantly, showing off to the people, but seldom do they remember God [sincerely].

They are wavering all the time between these and those, while they are [truly] neither to these nor to those; and any whom God lets go astray, you can never find for him[/her] any [right] way.

O you have attained to faith! Do not take those who stubbornly reject the truth as patrons and supporters in preference to the believers; do you desire to place before God

clear evidence against yourselves?
Surely the hypocrites shall be in the lowest depth of the fire; and you will find none who could support them; save those who repent and live righteously and hold fast to God[’s guidance] and are sincere in their faith in God alone, as these are together with the believers, and in time God will grant to all believers a mighty reward. [4:137-146]

مُبِينًا ﴿١٤٤﴾ إِنَّ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ فِى ٱلدَّرْكِ
ٱلْأَسْفَلِ مِنَ ٱلنَّارِ وَ لَن تَجِدَ لَهُمْ نَصِيرًا
﴿١٤٥﴾ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ تَابُوا۟ وَ أَصْلَحُوا۟
وَ ٱعْتَصَمُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَ أَخْلَصُوا۟ دِينَهُمْ لِلَّهِ
فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ مَعَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۚ وَ سَوْفَ يُؤْتِ
ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١٤٦﴾

Were it a gain near at hand, and an easy journey, they would have surely followed you, but the distance was too far for them. And yet, they will swear by God [when you come back,] “Had we been able to make it, we would certainly have gone out with you;” [and so] they are destroying their own selves, and God knows that they are truly liars. May God pardon you [O Prophet]! Why did you grant them permission [to stay] before it had become obvious to you who was truthful and [before] you came to know the liar?
Those who [truly] believe in God and the Last Day do not ask to be exempted from struggling with their possessions and their lives [in God’s cause], and God has full knowledge of those who are conscious of Him. They only ask you for exemption those who do not [truly] believe in God and the Last Day and whose hearts have fallen into doubt, and so in their doubts they hesitate to go forth [confronting the enemy]. And had they been [truly] willing to go forth [with you], they would surely have some preparation for it; but God was averse that they move forward [to the battle], and so He caused them to hold back, and it was said to them, “Stay back with those who stay back!” Had they gone forth with you [O believers], they would have added to you but confusion and trouble, and would have run through you to and fro, seeking to stir up discord among you, and among you are those who might listen to them; and God has full

لَوْ كَانَ عَرَضًا قَرِيبًا وَ سَفَرًا قَاصِدًا
لَّٱتَّبَعُوكَ وَ لَٰكِنۢ بَعُدَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلشُّقَّةُ ۚ
وَ سَيَحْلِفُونَ بِٱللَّهِ لَوِ ٱسْتَطَعْنَا لَخَرَجْنَا
مَعَكُمْ يُهْلِكُونَ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَ ٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ إِنَّهُمْ
لَكَٰذِبُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾ عَفَا ٱللَّهُ عَنكَ لِمَ أَذِنتَ
لَهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكَ ٱلَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا۟
وَ تَعْلَمَ ٱلْكَٰذِبِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾ لَا يَسْتَـْٔذِنُكَ ٱلَّذِينَ
يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَ ٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ أَن
يُجَٰهِدُوا۟ بِأَمْوَٰلِهِمْ وَ أَنفُسِهِمْ ۗ وَ ٱللَّهُ
عَلِيمٌۢ بِٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٤٤﴾ إِنَّمَا يَسْتَـْٔذِنُكَ
ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَ ٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ
وَ ٱرْتَابَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ فَهُمْ فِى رَيْبِهِمْ
يَتَرَدَّدُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾ ۞ وَ لَوْ أَرَادُوا۟
ٱلْخُرُوجَ لَأَعَدُّوا۟ لَهُۥ عُدَّةً وَ لَٰكِن كَرِهَ
ٱللَّهُ ٱنۢبِعَاثَهُمْ فَثَبَّطَهُمْ وَ قِيلَ ٱقْعُدُوا۟ مَعَ
ٱلْقَٰعِدِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾ لَوْ خَرَجُوا۟ فِيكُم مَّا
زَادُوكُمْ إِلَّا خَبَالًا وَ لَأَوْضَعُوا۟ خِلَٰلَكُمْ
يَبْغُونَكُمُ ٱلْفِتْنَةَ وَ فِيكُمْ سَمَّٰعُونَ لَهُمْ ۗ

knowledge of the evildoers. Even before they had already sought to stir up discord among you, and tried all ways to confuse you [about the reality], until the truth came out, and God's will became manifest, however hateful this might have been to them.

And among them there were those who said, "Grant me permission [to stay home] and do not put me to such a hard test!" Lo! They had already failed in the test and fallen into[the] temptation [of evil]; and surely hell will encompass all who stubbornly deny the truth.

If something good befalls you [O Prophet], it grieves them; but should an affliction befall you, they say, "We have already taken our precautions beforehand," and will turn away, rejoicing. Say, "Nought shall visit us but what God has decreed! He is our Lord Supreme; and in God let the believers place their trust." Say, "Are you awaiting aught to come to us but one of the two best ends, while we are awaiting that God shall inflict chastisement upon you from Himself or at our hands; so await, we are waiting with you."

Say, "Spend what you may spend willingly or unwillingly [pretending that it is for God's cause]; it shall never be accepted from you; you are surely iniquitous people!"

And nothing prevented that their spending [claimed to be in the cause of God] from being accepted except that they stubbornly reject God and the Conveyor of His message and that they never come to prayer without reluctance and that they never spend [for the cause of God] without resentment.

Let not, then, their wordly possessions or [their reliance on the support of] their children stir your admiration, God but wants to chastise them by these means in this world's life [through His testing], and to cause their souls to leave while they are stubbornly denying the truth. And they swear by God they do indeed belong to you, but they do not belong to you; they are merely people ridden by fear! If they

وَ ٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌۢ بِٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾ لَقَدِ ٱبْتَغَوُا۟
ٱلْفِتْنَةَ مِن قَبْلُ وَ قَلَّبُوا۟ لَكَ ٱلْأُمُورَ
حَتَّىٰ جَآءَ ٱلْحَقُّ وَ ظَهَرَ أَمْرُ ٱللَّهِ وَ هُمْ
كَٰرِهُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾ وَ مِنْهُم مَّن يَقُولُ ٱئْذَن لِّى
وَ لَا تَفْتِنِّىٓ ۚ أَلَا فِى ٱلْفِتْنَةِ سَقَطُوا۟ ۗ
وَ إِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ لَمُحِيطَةٌۢ بِٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾ إِن
تُصِبْكَ حَسَنَةٌ تَسُؤْهُمْ ۖ وَ إِن تُصِبْكَ
مُصِيبَةٌ يَقُولُوا۟ قَدْ أَخَذْنَآ أَمْرَنَا مِن قَبْلُ
وَ يَتَوَلَّوا۟ وَّ هُمْ فَرِحُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾ قُل لَّن
يُصِيبَنَآ إِلَّا مَا كَتَبَ ٱللَّهُ لَنَا هُوَ
مَوْلَىٰنَا ۚ وَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ
ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ قُلْ هَلْ تَرَبَّصُونَ بِنَآ
إِلَّآ إِحْدَى ٱلْحُسْنَيَيْنِ ۖ وَ نَحْنُ نَتَرَبَّصُ
بِكُمْ أَن يُصِيبَكُمُ ٱللَّهُ بِعَذَابٍ مِّنْ عِندِهِۦٓ
أَوْ بِأَيْدِينَا ۖ فَتَرَبَّصُوٓا۟ إِنَّا مَعَكُم
مُّتَرَبِّصُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾ قُلْ أَنفِقُوا۟ طَوْعًا أَوْ
كَرْهًا لَّن يُتَقَبَّلَ مِنكُمْ ۖ إِنَّكُمْ كُنتُمْ قَوْمًا
فَٰسِقِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾ وَ مَا مَنَعَهُمْ أَن تُقْبَلَ مِنْهُمْ
نَفَقَٰتُهُمْ إِلَّآ أَنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ
وَبِرَسُولِهِۦ وَ لَا يَأْتُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ إِلَّا وَ هُمْ
كُسَالَىٰ وَ لَا يُنفِقُونَ إِلَّا وَ هُمْ كَٰرِهُونَ
﴿٥٤﴾ فَلَا تُعْجِبْكَ أَمْوَٰلُهُمْ وَ لَآ أَوْلَٰدُهُمْ
إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُم بِهَا فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ
ٱلدُّنْيَا وَ تَزْهَقَ أَنفُسُهُمْ وَ هُمْ كَٰفِرُونَ
﴿٥٥﴾ وَ يَحْلِفُونَ بِٱللَّهِ إِنَّهُمْ لَمِنكُمْ وَ مَا
هُم مِّنكُمْ وَ لَٰكِنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ يَفْرَقُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

لَوْ يَجِدُونَ مَلْجَـًٔا أَوْ مَغَـٰرَٰتٍ أَوْ مُدَّخَلًا
لَّوَلَّوْا۟ إِلَيْهِ وَهُمْ يَجْمَحُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾ وَمِنْهُم
مَّن يَلْمِزُكَ فِى ٱلصَّدَقَـٰتِ فَإِنْ أُعْطُوا۟
مِنْهَا رَضُوا۟ وَإِن لَّمْ يُعْطَوْا۟ مِنْهَآ إِذَا هُمْ
يَسْخَطُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ رَضُوا۟ مَآ
ءَاتَىٰهُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُۥ وَقَالُوا۟ حَسْبُنَا
ٱللَّهُ سَيُؤْتِينَا ٱللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ وَرَسُولُهُۥٓ
إِنَّآ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ رَٰغِبُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

could but find a place of refuge or a cavern, or a crevice [in the earth], they would turn towards it in haste.
And among them are some who find fault with you [O Prophet] concerning [the distribution of] the charity; if they are given a share they are well-pleased; but if they are given none then they become angry. And yet [it would be but for their own good] if they were to content themselves with what God and the Conveyor of His message have brought them, and said, "God is enough for us! God will bring us of His bounty and the Conveyor of His message; surely, unto God alone do we turn with hope." [9:42-59]

يَحْذَرُ ٱلْمُنَـٰفِقُونَ أَن تُنَزَّلَ عَلَيْهِمْ
سُورَةٌ تُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا فِى قُلُوبِهِمْ ۚ قُلِ
ٱسْتَهْزِءُوٓا۟ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ مُخْرِجٌ مَّا تَحْذَرُونَ
﴿٦٤﴾ وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُمْ لَيَقُولُنَّ إِنَّمَا كُنَّا
نَخُوضُ وَنَلْعَبُ ۚ قُلْ أَبِٱللَّهِ وَءَايَـٰتِهِۦ
وَرَسُولِهِۦ كُنتُمْ تَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾ لَا
تَعْتَذِرُوا۟ قَدْ كَفَرْتُم بَعْدَ إِيمَـٰنِكُمْ ۚ إِن
نَّعْفُ عَن طَآئِفَةٍ مِّنكُمْ نُعَذِّبْ طَآئِفَةً
بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟ مُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾ ٱلْمُنَـٰفِقُونَ
وَٱلْمُنَـٰفِقَـٰتُ بَعْضُهُم مِّنۢ بَعْضٍ ۚ يَأْمُرُونَ
بِٱلْمُنكَرِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ ٱلْمَعْرُوفِ
وَيَقْبِضُونَ أَيْدِيَهُمْ ۚ نَسُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ فَنَسِيَهُمْ ۚ
إِنَّ ٱلْمُنَـٰفِقِينَ هُمُ ٱلْفَـٰسِقُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾ وَعَدَ
ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُنَـٰفِقِينَ وَٱلْمُنَـٰفِقَـٰتِ وَٱلْكُفَّارَ
نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خَـٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ هِىَ حَسْبُهُمْ ۚ

The hypocrites are watching out that a [Quranic] sura be revealed and makes known what is in their hearts, let them [watch for or] mock it, God will bring forth what they are watching for. And if you ask them [about what they said or did] they will answer, "We were merely going through an aimless talk and playing [with words]! Say, "Were you then mocking at God and the Conveyor of His message? Make no [insensible] excuses; you have actually denied the truth after [having stated] your belief in it!" If We forgive some of you [according to what We know about their innate feelings and circumstances], We shall make others suffer as they were lost in evil.
The hypocrites, both men and women, share the same character and responsibility; they enjoin the doing of what is wrong [and evil] and forbid the doing of what is right [and virtuous], and withhold their hands from doing [good]. They are oblivious of God, and so He is oblivious of them; the hypocrites are truly iniquitous. God has promised the hypocrites, be they men or women, as well as those who stubbornly deny the truth [openly], the fire of hell, therein to abide; that is their lot [which they deserve]; and God has rejected them, and

long-lasting suffering awaits them. [9:64-68]

وَ لَعَنَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ ۖ وَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّقِيمٌ ﴿٦٨﴾

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا
ٱلنَّبِيُّ جَٰهِدِ ٱلْكُفَّارَ وَ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ
وَ ٱغْلُظْ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ وَ مَأْوَىٰهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۖ
وَ بِئْسَ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿٧٣﴾ يَحْلِفُونَ بِٱللَّهِ مَا
قَالُوا۟ وَ لَقَدْ قَالُوا۟ كَلِمَةَ ٱلْكُفْرِ وَ كَفَرُوا۟
بَعْدَ إِسْلَٰمِهِمْ وَ هَمُّوا۟ بِمَا لَمْ يَنَالُوا۟ ۚ
وَ مَا نَقَمُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ أَنْ أَغْنَىٰهُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَ رَسُولُهُۥ
مِن فَضْلِهِۦ ۚ فَإِن يَتُوبُوا۟ يَكُ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ ۖ
وَ إِن يَتَوَلَّوْا۟ يُعَذِّبْهُمُ ٱللَّهُ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا
فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا وَ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۚ وَ مَا لَهُمْ فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ مِن وَلِىٍّ وَ لَا نَصِيرٍ ﴿٧٤﴾ ۞
وَ مِنْهُم مَّنْ عَٰهَدَ ٱللَّهَ لَئِنْ ءَاتَىٰنَا مِن
فَضْلِهِۦ لَنَصَّدَّقَنَّ وَ لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ
﴿٧٥﴾ فَلَمَّآ ءَاتَىٰهُم مِّن فَضْلِهِۦ بَخِلُوا۟ بِهِۦ
وَ تَوَلَّوا۟ وَّ هُم مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾ فَأَعْقَبَهُمْ
نِفَاقًا فِى قُلُوبِهِمْ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يَلْقَوْنَهُۥ بِمَآ
أَخْلَفُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ مَا وَعَدُوهُ وَ بِمَا كَانُوا۟
يَكْذِبُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾ أَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ
سِرَّهُمْ وَ نَجْوَىٰهُمْ وَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلَّٰمُ
ٱلْغُيُوبِ ﴿٧٨﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يَلْمِزُونَ
ٱلْمُطَّوِّعِينَ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِى ٱلصَّدَقَٰتِ
وَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَجِدُونَ إِلَّا جُهْدَهُمْ
فَيَسْخَرُونَ مِنْهُمْ ۙ سَخِرَ ٱللَّهُ مِنْهُمْ وَ لَهُمْ
عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٩﴾ ٱسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ أَوْ لَا تَسْتَغْفِرْ

O Prophet! Strive hard against the stubborn deniers of the truth and the hypocrites, and be hard with them; and their abode shall be hell, and how horrible a journey's end. They swear by God that they have said nothing [wrong]; yet they indeed said what means a denial of the truth, and have thus denied the truth after [having stated] their self-submission to God, and they tried what they never reached. And they had no reason to be hostile unless it was that God had enriched them and [caused] the Conveyor of His message [to enrich them] out of His bounty! Hence, if they repent, it will be for their own good, but if they turn away, God will cause them to suffer grievous suffering in this world's life and in the life to come, and none on earth will be for them a protector or supporter. And among them are those who vow before God: "If He may indeed grant us out of His bounty, we shall most certainly spend in charity and shall most certainly be among the the righteous!" But when He has granted them out of His bounty, they were miserly in dealing with it, and turned away in stubbornness [from what they vowed]. And so He lets hypocrisy develop in their hearts as a result until the Day on which they meet Him, since they have failed to fulfill the vow which they had made before God and had gone on lying. Do they not know that God knows their secret and what they talk about confidentially with one another, and that God fully knows all that is beyond the reach of human perception.

Those who find fault with the believers who volunteer to give freely in charity or those who are unable to offer more than [the little] they can afford; and those [hypocrites] deride them [all]; God will cause their derision to rebound on their own selves, and grievous suffering awaits them. Whether you pray [unto God] for their forgiveness or do not pray, if you may

pray for their forgiveness seventy times, God will not forgive them, as they stubbornly deny God and the Conveyor of His message; and God does not grant His guidance to an iniquitous folk.

Those who were left behind rejoiced in their place separate from the Conveyor of God['s message], hating to strive with their possessions and their lives in God's cause and saying [to others], "Do not go forth to war in this heat!" Say, "The fire of hell is far hotter" if they really know. Let them, then, laugh a little, and [later] they will weep much, in return for what they have earned. Hence [O Prophet], if God brings you back to them, and they ask your leave to go forth [to war with you], say, "Never shall you go forth with me, nor shall you fight an enemy together with me! You were well-pleased to stay back on that first occasion; stay back, then, with those who remain behind." And never shall you pray over any of them who has died, and never shall you stand by his grave; they stubbornly denied God and the Conveyor of His message and they died in their iniquity. And let no admiration for their possessions and their children come to you; God but wants to chastise them by this means in [testing them during the life of] this world, and to cause their souls to leave while they are stubbornly denying the truth.

And when a [Quranic] sura has been revealed, saying, "Believe in God and strive hard [for His cause] with the Conveyor of His message," those who have been well able [to go to war] ask you for permission to be exempted, saying, "Allow us to stay with those who remain behind." They have been well-pleased to be with those who were left behind and their hearts [by going on with their evil-doing] have been sealed, and so they cannot really comprehend. [9:73-87]

لَهُمْ إِن تَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ سَبْعِينَ مَرَّةً
فَلَن يَغْفِرَ ٱللَّهُ لَهُمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا۟
بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِى
ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلْفَٰسِقِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾ فَرِحَ ٱلْمُخَلَّفُونَ
بِمَقْعَدِهِمْ خِلَٰفَ رَسُولِ ٱللَّهِ وَكَرِهُوٓا۟ أَن
يُجَٰهِدُوا۟ بِأَمْوَٰلِهِمْ وَأَنفُسِهِمْ فِى سَبِيلِ
ٱللَّهِ وَقَالُوا۟ لَا تَنفِرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْحَرِّ ۗ قُلْ
نَارُ جَهَنَّمَ أَشَدُّ حَرًّا ۚ لَّوْ كَانُوا۟ يَفْقَهُونَ
﴿٨١﴾ فَلْيَضْحَكُوا۟ قَلِيلًا وَلْيَبْكُوا۟ كَثِيرًا
جَزَآءًۢ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾ فَإِن
رَّجَعَكَ ٱللَّهُ إِلَىٰ طَآئِفَةٍ مِّنْهُمْ
فَٱسْتَـْٔذَنُوكَ لِلْخُرُوجِ فَقُل لَّن تَخْرُجُوا۟
مَعِىَ أَبَدًا وَلَن تُقَٰتِلُوا۟ مَعِىَ عَدُوًّا ۖ
إِنَّكُمْ رَضِيتُم بِٱلْقُعُودِ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ فَٱقْعُدُوا۟
مَعَ ٱلْخَٰلِفِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾ وَلَا تُصَلِّ عَلَىٰٓ أَحَدٍ
مِّنْهُم مَّاتَ أَبَدًا وَلَا تَقُمْ عَلَىٰ قَبْرِهِۦٓ ۖ
إِنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ وَمَاتُوا۟
وَهُمْ فَٰسِقُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾ وَلَا تُعْجِبْكَ أَمْوَٰلُهُمْ
وَأَوْلَٰدُهُمْ ۚ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ أَن يُعَذِّبَهُم بِهَا
فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا وَتَزْهَقَ أَنفُسُهُمْ وَهُمْ كَٰفِرُونَ
﴿٨٥﴾ وَإِذَآ أُنزِلَتْ سُورَةٌ أَنْ ءَامِنُوا۟
بِٱللَّهِ وَجَٰهِدُوا۟ مَعَ رَسُولِهِ ٱسْتَـْٔذَنَكَ
أُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلطَّوْلِ مِنْهُمْ وَقَالُوا۟ ذَرْنَا نَكُن
مَّعَ ٱلْقَٰعِدِينَ ﴿٨٦﴾ رَضُوا۟ بِأَن يَكُونُوا۟
مَعَ ٱلْخَوَالِفِ وَطُبِعَ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ فَهُمْ لَا
يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿٨٧﴾

وَجَآءَ ٱلْمُعَذِّرُونَ مِنَ ٱلْأَعْرَابِ لِيُؤْذَنَ

And there came [to the Prophet] the bedouins who had excuses to bring

لَهُمْ وَ قَعَدَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَ رَسُولَهُۥ ۚ
سَيُصِيبُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِنْهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ
﴿٩٠﴾ لَّيْسَ عَلَى ٱلضُّعَفَآءِ وَ لَا عَلَى
ٱلْمَرْضَىٰ وَ لَا عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَجِدُونَ مَا
يُنفِقُونَ حَرَجٌ إِذَا نَصَحُوا۟ لِلَّهِ
وَرَسُولِهِۦ ۚ مَا عَلَى ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ مِن سَبِيلٍ
وَ ٱللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٩١﴾ وَ لَا عَلَى
ٱلَّذِينَ إِذَا مَآ أَتَوْكَ لِتَحْمِلَهُمْ قُلْتَ لَآ
أَجِدُ مَآ أَحْمِلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ تَوَلَّوا۟ وَّ أَعْيُنُهُمْ
تَفِيضُ مِنَ ٱلدَّمْعِ حَزَنًا أَلَّا يَجِدُوا۟ مَا
يُنفِقُونَ ﴿٩٢﴾ ۞ إِنَّمَا ٱلسَّبِيلُ عَلَى
ٱلَّذِينَ يَسْتَـْٔذِنُونَكَ وَ هُمْ أَغْنِيَآءُ ۚ رَضُوا۟
بِأَن يَكُونُوا۟ مَعَ ٱلْخَوَالِفِ وَ طَبَعَ ٱللَّهُ
عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ فَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾
يَعْتَذِرُونَ إِلَيْكُمْ إِذَا رَجَعْتُمْ إِلَيْهِمْ ۚ قُل
لَّا تَعْتَذِرُوا۟ لَن نُّؤْمِنَ لَكُمْ قَدْ نَبَّأَنَا
ٱللَّهُ مِنْ أَخْبَارِكُمْ ۚ وَ سَيَرَى ٱللَّهُ عَمَلَكُمْ
وَ رَسُولُهُۥ ثُمَّ تُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عَـٰلِمِ ٱلْغَيْبِ
وَ ٱلشَّهَـٰدَةِ فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ
﴿٩٤﴾ سَيَحْلِفُونَ بِٱللَّهِ لَكُمْ إِذَا ٱنقَلَبْتُمْ
إِلَيْهِمْ لِتُعْرِضُوا۟ عَنْهُمْ ۖ فَأَعْرِضُوا۟ عَنْهُمْ
إِنَّهُمْ رِجْسٌ ۖ وَ مَأْوَىٰهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ جَزَآءًۢ

forth so as to be granted permission to be exempted [from going to war], while those who have been used to telling lies before God and the Conveyor of His message remained back; a grievous suffering will befall those of them who are bent [in their hearts] on stubbornly denying the truth. It will not be held against the weak, not the sick, nor those who cannot spend [on equipment of war] if they sincerely put forth [their circumstances] to God and the Conveyor of message; there is no cause to blame the good-doers, and God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious. Nor held against those who when they came to you [O Prophet] requesting that you provide them with mounts and you told them, "I cannot find what I may mount you on" they turned away, their eyes overflowing with tears of sorrow, for they had no means to spend on their equipment [for fighting]. But it is right to hold responsible those who ask your permission to be exempted [from going to war] while they are rich [fully able]; they are well-pleased to be with those who were left behind, and as a result of their deliberate evil-doing God has let their hearts be sealed, and so, they do not really know [what they are doing to their own selves].

They will give you excuses when you come back to them [after the battle]; say, do not bring out [insensible] excuses, for we shall not believe you; God has already told us your real situation; and God will surely see your work, and the Conveyor of His message also; and in the end you will be brought before Him who knows all that is beyond the perception of any of His creation, as well as what can be reached by any of them, and then He will tell you whatever you were doing [in your previous life]. They will swear to you [O believers] by God when you will come back to them [after the war] that you may overlook them [and what they did]; so overlook them anyhow, for they are an abomination, and in hell is their end, a requital for what they were doing [in this

world's life]. They will swear to you so that you may feel satisfied with them, but even if you should be satisfied with them, God shall never grant His goodly acceptance to the iniquitous folk. [9:90-96]

بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٩٥﴾ يَحْلِفُونَ لَكُمْ
لِتَرْضَوْا عَنْهُمْ ۖ فَإِن تَرْضَوْا عَنْهُمْ فَإِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ لَا يَرْضَىٰ عَنِ ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلْفَٰسِقِينَ ﴿٩٦﴾

And the [hypocrites] who have established a [separate] mosque in order to cause mischief and disbelief, and to develop a split among the believers, and to provide an outpost for all who have been fighting against God and the Conveyor of His message from the beginning; and they will certainly swear [to you], "We had but the best of intentions," while God attests that they are truly liars. Never stand there [in this mosque, for prayer]! Only a mosque established on [the foundation of] God-consciousness from the very first day is worthy for you to stand in; therein are men desirous of growing in purity, and God loves those who purify themselves. Which, then, is the better: one who has established his building on [the foundation of] God-consciousness and [has always been seeking] His goodly acceptance, or one who has established his building on the edge of a crumbling slope that will tumble with him into the fire of hell? And God does not grace with His guidance [such as deliberately choose to be] evildoing people. [9:107-109]

وَٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّخَذُوا مَسْجِدًا ضِرَارًا وَكُفْرًا
وَتَفْرِيقًۢا بَيْنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَإِرْصَادًا لِّمَنْ
حَارَبَ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ مِن قَبْلُ ۚ
وَلَيَحْلِفُنَّ إِنْ أَرَدْنَآ إِلَّا ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ ۖ
وَٱللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّهُمْ لَكَٰذِبُونَ ﴿١٠٧﴾ لَا تَقُمْ
فِيهِ أَبَدًا ۚ لَّمَسْجِدٌ أُسِّسَ عَلَى ٱلتَّقْوَىٰ
مِنْ أَوَّلِ يَوْمٍ أَحَقُّ أَن تَقُومَ فِيهِ ۚ فِيهِ
رِجَالٌ يُحِبُّونَ أَن يَتَطَهَّرُوا ۚ وَٱللَّهُ
يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُطَّهِّرِينَ ﴿١٠٨﴾ أَفَمَنْ أَسَّسَ
بُنْيَٰنَهُۥ عَلَىٰ تَقْوَىٰ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ وَرِضْوَٰنٍ
خَيْرٌ أَم مَّنْ أَسَّسَ بُنْيَٰنَهُۥ عَلَىٰ شَفَا
جُرُفٍ هَارٍ فَٱنْهَارَ بِهِۦ فِى نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ ۗ
وَٱللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٠٩﴾

And when the hypocrites and those with hearts diseased [by weakness of faith or by the quest for only material gains] said [to one another,] "God and the Conveyor of His message have promised us only delusion." And when some of them said, "O you people of Yathrib! You cannot withstand [the enemy] now, hence go back [to your homes]"; whereupon some of them asked leave of the Prophet, saying, "Our homes are exposed [to danger if we stay here]," while they were not really exposed; they want only to flee. And if their city had been invaded and

وَإِذْ
يَقُولُ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقُونَ وَٱلَّذِينَ فِى قُلُوبِهِم
مَّرَضٌ مَّا وَعَدَنَا ٱللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُۥٓ إِلَّا
غُرُورًا ﴿١٢﴾ وَإِذْ قَالَت طَّآئِفَةٌ مِّنْهُمْ
يَٰٓأَهْلَ يَثْرِبَ لَا مُقَامَ لَكُمْ فَٱرْجِعُوا ۚ
وَيَسْتَـْٔذِنُ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمُ ٱلنَّبِىَّ يَقُولُونَ إِنَّ
بُيُوتَنَا عَوْرَةٌ وَمَا هِىَ بِعَوْرَةٍ ۖ إِن
يُرِيدُونَ إِلَّا فِرَارًا ﴿١٣﴾ وَلَوْ دُخِلَتْ
عَلَيْهِم مِّنْ أَقْطَارِهَا ثُمَّ سُئِلُوا ٱلْفِتْنَةَ

they were confronted in all directions, and they had been asked to plot [with the enemy against the believers], they would have done so without much delay, although they had already vowed before God that they would never turn backs, and a vow made to God must surely be answered. Say: "Whether you flee from [any cause of] natural death [at a certain time] or from being killed [in a battle field], you will never gain from your flight, and your enjoyment of life [whatever it might be] will not be for more than a little while."
Say: "Who is that who can keep you away from God, if it be His will to cause you harm or show you mercy?" There can find none to protect them rather than God, and none to support them, God is indeed aware of those who of you who hinder others [from struggling in His way], and who say to their brethren, "Come to us [to meet the enemy]," while they themselves join battle but seldom, skimpy in offering you any help ;but when danger approaches, you see them looking to you with their eyes rolling [of fear] like [the eyes of] one who is overshadowed by death; but as soon as the danger passes, they flay you with sharp tongues, skimping on any good [that they are able to offer]. They have never [truly] attained to faith, and so God causes all their works to fail, and this is effortless for God. They think that the [tribal] confederates have not really withdrawn; and should the confederates return, these [hypocrites] would rather like to be in the desert [safe] among the bedouins, asking for news about you [O believers, from far away]; and if they were among you, they would fight but little. [33:12-20]

لَأَتَوْهَا وَمَا تَلَبَّثُوا بِهَآ إِلَّا يَسِيرًا
(١٤) وَلَقَدْ كَانُوا عَٰهَدُوا ٱللَّهَ مِن قَبْلُ
لَا يُوَلُّونَ ٱلْأَدْبَٰرَ ۚ وَكَانَ عَهْدُ ٱللَّهِ
مَسْـُٔولًا (١٥) قُل لَّن يَنفَعَكُمُ ٱلْفِرَارُ إِن
فَرَرْتُم مِّنَ ٱلْمَوْتِ أَوِ ٱلْقَتْلِ وَإِذًا لَّا
تُمَتَّعُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا (١٦) قُلْ مَن ذَا ٱلَّذِى
يَعْصِمُكُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ إِنْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ سُوٓءًا أَوْ
أَرَادَ بِكُمْ رَحْمَةً ۚ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ لَهُم مِّن
دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا (١٧) ۞ قَدْ
يَعْلَمُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُعَوِّقِينَ مِنكُمْ وَٱلْقَآئِلِينَ
لِإِخْوَٰنِهِمْ هَلُمَّ إِلَيْنَا ۖ وَلَا يَأْتُونَ
ٱلْبَأْسَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا (١٨) أَشِحَّةً عَلَيْكُمْ ۚ
فَإِذَا جَآءَ ٱلْخَوْفُ رَأَيْتَهُمْ يَنظُرُونَ
إِلَيْكَ تَدُورُ أَعْيُنُهُمْ كَٱلَّذِى يُغْشَىٰ عَلَيْهِ
مِنَ ٱلْمَوْتِ ۖ فَإِذَا ذَهَبَ ٱلْخَوْفُ
سَلَقُوكُم بِأَلْسِنَةٍ حِدَادٍ أَشِحَّةً عَلَى
ٱلْخَيْرِ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَمْ يُؤْمِنُوا۟ فَأَحْبَطَ
ٱللَّهُ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ ۚ وَكَانَ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ
يَسِيرًا (١٩) يَحْسَبُونَ ٱلْأَحْزَابَ لَمْ
يَذْهَبُوا۟ ۖ وَإِن يَأْتِ ٱلْأَحْزَابُ يَوَدُّوا۟
لَوْ أَنَّهُم بَادُونَ فِى ٱلْأَعْرَابِ يَسْـَٔلُونَ
عَنْ أَنۢبَآئِكُمْ ۖ وَلَوْ كَانُوا۟ فِيكُم مَّا
قَٰتَلُوٓا۟ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا (٢٠)

Those who have attained to faith say "Would that a revelation [allowing us to defend ourselves and our faith] be sent down [for us]?" But now that a revelation has clearly come, and fighting is mentioned therein, you will see those ill-hearted ones

وَيَقُولُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَوْلَا نُزِّلَتْ سُورَةٌ ۚ
فَإِذَآ أُنزِلَتْ سُورَةٌ مُّحْكَمَةٌ وَذُكِرَ فِيهَا
ٱلْقِتَالُ ۙ رَأَيْتَ ٱلَّذِينَ فِى قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ

looking at you [O Muhammad] as one who swoons at death; but yet, far better for them would be obedience [to God's call] and a good say, and whenever a decision is made, it would be for their own good to remain true to God. Then, if you [who are reluctant to fight] turn away [from God's commandment], are you contemplating the spreading of corruption on earth and the breaking of your ties of kinship [as you return to the previous life of evil and injustice, or as you allow it to prevail by your reluctance to defend righteousness and justice]. [47:20-22]

يَنظُرُونَ إِلَيْكَ نَظَرَ ٱلْمَغْشِيِّ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ
ٱلْمَوْتِ ۖ فَأَوْلَىٰ لَهُمْ ﴿٢٠﴾ طَاعَةٌ
وَقَوْلٌ مَّعْرُوفٌ ۚ فَإِذَا عَزَمَ ٱلْأَمْرُ فَلَوْ
صَدَقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ ﴿٢١﴾ فَهَلْ
عَسَيْتُمْ إِن تَوَلَّيْتُمْ أَن تُفْسِدُوا۟ فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ وَتُقَطِّعُوٓا۟ أَرْحَامَكُمْ ﴿٢٢﴾

Those who have turned their backs [to God's message], after the guidance has become clear to them, it was Satan that decked out their deeds fair to them and filled them with false expectations. That is because they said to those who were averse to what God has sent down, "We will follow you in certain matters;" and God knows their hidden thinking. [47:25-26]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱرْتَدُّوا۟ عَلَىٰٓ أَدْبَـٰرِهِم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ
مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ ٱلْهُدَى ۙ ٱلشَّيْطَـٰنُ سَوَّلَ لَهُمْ
وَأَمْلَىٰ لَهُمْ ﴿٢٥﴾ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا۟
لِلَّذِينَ كَرِهُوا۟ مَا نَزَّلَ ٱللَّهُ سَنُطِيعُكُمْ فِى
بَعْضِ ٱلْأَمْرِ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ إِسْرَارَهُمْ ﴿٢٦﴾

Or do those in whose hearts is [moral] disease think that God would not bring to light their malignity. Had we so willed, we could have shown them to you, and had let you know them for sure by their mark; but [even now] you shall certainly recognize them by their kind of speech and tone of voice. And God knows all that you do. [47:29-30]

أَمْ حَسِبَ ٱلَّذِينَ فِى قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ أَن لَّن
يُخْرِجَ ٱللَّهُ أَضْغَـٰنَهُمْ ﴿٢٩﴾ وَلَوْ نَشَآءُ
لَأَرَيْنَـٰكَهُمْ فَلَعَرَفْتَهُم بِسِيمَـٰهُمْ ۚ
وَلَتَعْرِفَنَّهُمْ فِى لَحْنِ ٱلْقَوْلِ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ
أَعْمَـٰلَكُمْ ﴿٣٠﴾

Those of the bedouins who stayed behind would say to you, "We had to be engaged in caring for our possessions and our families, so pray [to God] for our forgiveness!" They say with their tongues what is not in their hearts. Say, "Who is able to avert from you anything that God may have willed, whether it be to bring you a harm or to bring you a benefit." Nay, but God is fully aware of whatever you do. Nay, but you thought that the Conveyor of [God's] message

سَيَقُولُ لَكَ ٱلْمُخَلَّفُونَ مِنَ ٱلْأَعْرَابِ
شَغَلَتْنَآ أَمْوَٰلُنَا وَأَهْلُونَا فَٱسْتَغْفِرْ لَنَا ۚ
يَقُولُونَ بِأَلْسِنَتِهِم مَّا لَيْسَ فِى قُلُوبِهِمْ ۚ
قُلْ فَمَن يَمْلِكُ لَكُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ شَيْـًٔا إِنْ
أَرَادَ بِكُمْ ضَرًّا أَوْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ نَفْعًۢا ۚ بَلْ
كَانَ ٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًۢا ﴿١١﴾ بَلْ
ظَنَنتُمْ أَن لَّن يَنقَلِبَ ٱلرَّسُولُ

and the believers will never come back to their families, and this seemed pleasant to your hearts, and you had evil thinking, and have always been people devoid of all good. [48:11-12]

وَٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَىٰٓ أَهْلِيهِمْ أَبَدًا وَزُيِّنَ ذَٰلِكَ فِى قُلُوبِكُمْ وَظَنَنتُمْ ظَنَّ ٱلسَّوْءِ وَكُنتُمْ قَوْمًۢا بُورًا ﴿١٢﴾

Those who stayed behind before, will surely say to you [O believers] as you go forth to procure gains of war [without serious confrontation], "Now allow us to follow you," [thus] wishing to change the word of God. Say, "You shall never go with us; thus God has declared before." Then they will say, "Nay, but you are jealous of us!" Nay, they can really comprehend but very little.

سَيَقُولُ ٱلْمُخَلَّفُونَ إِذَا ٱنطَلَقْتُمْ إِلَىٰ مَغَانِمَ لِتَأْخُذُوهَا ذَرُونَا نَتَّبِعْكُمْ ۖ يُرِيدُونَ أَن يُبَدِّلُوا۟ كَلَٰمَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ قُل لَّن تَتَّبِعُونَا كَذَٰلِكُمْ قَالَ ٱللَّهُ مِن قَبْلُ ۚ فَسَيَقُولُونَ بَلْ تَحْسُدُونَنَا ۚ بَلْ كَانُوا۟ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿١٥﴾ قُل لِّلْمُخَلَّفِينَ مِنَ ٱلْأَعْرَابِ سَتُدْعَوْنَ إِلَىٰ قَوْمٍ أُو۟لِى بَأْسٍ شَدِيدٍ تُقَٰتِلُونَهُمْ أَوْ يُسْلِمُونَ ۖ فَإِن تُطِيعُوا۟ يُؤْتِكُمُ ٱللَّهُ أَجْرًا حَسَنًا ۖ وَإِن تَتَوَلَّوْا۟ كَمَا تَوَلَّيْتُم مِّن قَبْلُ يُعَذِّبْكُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٦﴾

Say unto those bedouins who stayed behind, "In time you will be called upon [to fight] against people of great prowess in war; you will have to fight against them or they surrender [voluntarily]. And then, if you pay heed [to this call in time], God will grant you a goodly reward; but if you turn away as you turned away before, He will cause you to suffer a grievous suffering." [48:15-16]

أَلَمْ تَرَ

Have you not regarded how the hypocrites speak to their truth-denying brethren from among the People of the Book, "If you are driven away, we shall assuredly go forth with you, and shall never obey anyone against you; and if war is waged against you, we shall assuredly come to your support." But God bears witness that they are truly liars. If these are indeed driven away, they will not go forth with them; and if war is waged against these, they [the hypocrites] will not come to support, and if they [try to] support them, they will surely turn their backs, and in the end they will never be defended. [59:11-12]

إِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ نَافَقُوا۟ يَقُولُونَ لِإِخْوَٰنِهِمُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ لَئِنْ أُخْرِجْتُمْ لَنَخْرُجَنَّ مَعَكُمْ وَلَا نُطِيعُ فِيكُمْ أَحَدًا أَبَدًا وَإِن قُوتِلْتُمْ لَنَنصُرَنَّكُمْ وَٱللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّهُمْ لَكَٰذِبُونَ ﴿١١﴾ لَئِنْ أُخْرِجُوا۟ لَا يَخْرُجُونَ مَعَهُمْ وَلَئِن قُوتِلُوا۟ لَا يَنصُرُونَهُمْ وَلَئِن نَّصَرُوهُمْ لَيُوَلُّنَّ ٱلْأَدْبَٰرَ ثُمَّ لَا يُنصَرُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

When the hypocrites come to you they say, "We bear witness that you are indeed the Conveyor of God's message." And God knows that you are

إِذَا جَآءَكَ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقُونَ قَالُوا۟ نَشْهَدُ إِنَّكَ لَرَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ ۘ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ إِنَّكَ لَرَسُولُهُۥ

indeed the Conveyor of His message, and God bears witness that the hypocrites are truly liars. They have made their oaths [and verbal profession of Islam] as a covering, thus they have made their efforts to turn others away from the way of God; evil indeed is all that they have been doing; this because they [pretended to] profess the faith while [in their own setting] they stubbornly deny the truth, and so [through their bad faith and evil-doing] a seal has been set on their hearts, and thus they cannot really comprehend. And when you see them, their outward appearance may please you, and when they speak you find yourself listening to what they say. But they [do not intend to think about what they hear and] may seem as if they were propped-up timbers, and they [are so suspicious about others and so afraid of being exposed that they] think every shout is [meant to be] against them. They are [real] enemies, so beware of them. [They press one to deservingly say,] "May God destroy them!" How they are perverted [from the right way of thinking and behaving]. And when it is said to them, "Come so that the Conveyor of God's message may pray [to God] for your forgiveness," they turn their heads away, and you see them draw back in arrogance. As for them, whether you do pray for their forgiveness or you do not, God will never forgive them, for God does not grant His guidance [and forgiveness] unto such iniquitous folk. It is they who say [to others], "Do not spend on those who are with the Conveyor of God's message so that they may scatter off;" yet unto God belong the treasures of the heavens and earth, but the hypocrites do not really comprehend. [And] they say, "When we return to the city, those mightiest and most honorable ones will surely bribe out the most abased;" yet all might belongs unto God, and unto the Conveyor of His message, and unto those who have attained to faith, but the hypocrites do not really know. [63:1-8]

وَٱللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ لَكَٰذِبُونَ ۝١
ٱتَّخَذُوٓا۟ أَيْمَٰنَهُمْ جُنَّةً فَصَدُّوا۟ عَن
سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ سَآءَ مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ
۝٢ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ءَامَنُوا۟ ثُمَّ كَفَرُوا۟ فَطُبِعَ
عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ فَهُمْ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ ۝٣ ۞
وَإِذَا رَأَيْتَهُمْ تُعْجِبُكَ أَجْسَامُهُمْ ۖ وَإِن
يَقُولُوا۟ تَسْمَعْ لِقَوْلِهِمْ ۖ كَأَنَّهُمْ خُشُبٌ
مُّسَنَّدَةٌ ۖ يَحْسَبُونَ كُلَّ صَيْحَةٍ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ هُمُ
ٱلْعَدُوُّ فَٱحْذَرْهُمْ ۚ قَٰتَلَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ ۖ أَنَّىٰ
يُؤْفَكُونَ ۝٤ وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا۟
يَسْتَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ رَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ لَوَّوْا۟ رُءُوسَهُمْ
وَرَأَيْتَهُمْ يَصُدُّونَ وَهُم مُّسْتَكْبِرُونَ ۝٥
سَوَآءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ أَسْتَغْفَرْتَ لَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ تَسْتَغْفِرْ
لَهُمْ لَن يَغْفِرَ ٱللَّهُ لَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِى
ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلْفَٰسِقِينَ ۝٦ هُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ
لَا تُنفِقُوا۟ عَلَىٰ مَنْ عِندَ رَسُولِ ٱللَّهِ
حَتَّىٰ يَنفَضُّوا۟ ۗ وَلِلَّهِ خَزَآئِنُ
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ
لَا يَفْقَهُونَ ۝٧ يَقُولُونَ لَئِن رَّجَعْنَآ
إِلَى ٱلْمَدِينَةِ لَيُخْرِجَنَّ ٱلْأَعَزُّ مِنْهَا
ٱلْأَذَلَّ ۚ وَلِلَّهِ ٱلْعِزَّةُ وَلِرَسُولِهِۦ
وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ
۝٨

وَ جَآءَ ٱلْمُعَذِّرُونَ مِنَ ٱلْأَعْرَابِ لِيُؤْذَنَ
لَهُمْ وَ قَعَدَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَ رَسُولَهُۥ ۚ
سَيُصِيبُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِنْهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ
﴿٩٠﴾

And there came [to the Prophet] the bedouins who had excuses to bring out so as to be granted permission to be exempted [from going to war], while those who had been used to telling lies before God and the Conveyor of His message remained back; a grievous suffering will befall those of them who are bent [in their hearts] on stubbornly denying the truth. [9:90]

ٱلْأَعْرَابُ أَشَدُّ كُفْرًا وَ نِفَاقًا
وَ أَجْدَرُ أَلَّا يَعْلَمُوا۟ حُدُودَ مَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ
عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِۦ ۗ وَ ٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ
﴿٩٧﴾ وَ مِنَ ٱلْأَعْرَابِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مَا يُنفِقُ
مَغْرَمًا وَ يَتَرَبَّصُ بِكُمُ ٱلدَّوَآئِرَ ۚ عَلَيْهِمْ
دَآئِرَةُ ٱلسَّوْءِ ۗ وَ ٱللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ
﴿٩٨﴾ وَ مِنَ ٱلْأَعْرَابِ مَن يُؤْمِنُ بِٱللَّهِ
وَ ٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ وَ يَتَّخِذُ مَا يُنفِقُ قُرُبَٰتٍ
عِندَ ٱللَّهِ وَ صَلَوَٰتِ ٱلرَّسُولِ ۚ أَلَآ إِنَّهَا
قُرْبَةٌ لَّهُمْ ۚ سَيُدْخِلُهُمُ ٱللَّهُ فِى رَحْمَتِهِۦٓ ۚ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٩٩﴾

The bedouins are [in many cases] more stubborn in denying the truth and in their hypocrisy [than are settled people in general], and more apt not to know the bounds of what God has sent down to the Conveyor of His message; and God is All-knowing, All-wise. And among the bedouins there are those who consider whatever one may spend [in God's cause] as a loss; and wait for afflictions that encompass you [O believers]; it is they whom affliction shall encompass, and God is All-hearing, All-knowing. And among the bedouins there are [also] those who believe in God and the Last Day, and consider what they spend [in God's cause] as a means of drawing them nearer to God and of being [mentioned] in the prayers of the conveyor of God's message. Surely, it shall [indeed] be a means of nearness [to God] from them; God shall admit them unto His grace; God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious. [9:97-99]

وَ مِمَّنْ
حَوْلَكُم مِّنَ ٱلْأَعْرَابِ مُنَٰفِقُونَ ۛ وَ مِنْ
أَهْلِ ٱلْمَدِينَةِ ۛ مَرَدُوا۟ عَلَى ٱلنِّفَاقِ لَا
تَعْلَمُهُمْ ۖ نَحْنُ نَعْلَمُهُمْ ۚ سَنُعَذِّبُهُم مَّرَّتَيْنِ
ثُمَّ يُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عَذَابٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٠١﴾

And among the bedouins who dwell around you there are hypocrites; and among the people of Medina (the Prophet's City) there are those who have grown bold in [their] hypocrisy. You do not always know them [O Muhammad, but] We know them. We shall cause them to have a double suffering [in this world], and then they will be given over to an awesome suffering [in the life to come]. [9:101]

مَا كَانَ
لِأَهْلِ ٱلْمَدِينَةِ وَ مَنْ حَوْلَهُم مِّنَ
ٱلْأَعْرَابِ أَن يَتَخَلَّفُوا۟ عَن رَّسُولِ ٱللَّهِ
وَلَا يَرْغَبُوا۟ بِأَنفُسِهِمْ عَن نَّفْسِهِۦ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ
بِأَنَّهُمْ لَا يُصِيبُهُمْ ظَمَأٌ وَ لَا نَصَبٌ وَ لَا
مَخْمَصَةٌ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَ لَا يَطَـُٔونَ
مَوْطِئًا يَغِيظُ ٱلْكُفَّارَ وَ لَا يَنَالُونَ مِنْ
عَدُوٍّ نَّيْلًا إِلَّا كُتِبَ لَهُم بِهِۦ عَمَلٌ صَٰلِحٌ ۚ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٢٠﴾
وَ لَا يُنفِقُونَ نَفَقَةً صَغِيرَةً وَ لَا كَبِيرَةً
وَلَا يَقْطَعُونَ وَادِيًا إِلَّا كُتِبَ لَهُمْ لِيَجْزِيَهُمُ
ٱللَّهُ أَحْسَنَ مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٢١﴾

It is not for the people of the city [Medina] and for the bedouins [who live] around them to hold back from following the Conveyor of God['s message], or to care for their own selves more than him [and his message], for whatever they suffer of weariness or hunger in God's cause, and whatever step they take that confounds those who stubbornly deny the truth, and whatever they gain from an enemy, a good deed is thereby recorded to their account; God leaves not to waste the reward of good-doers. And whatever they spend [for God's cause] be it little or much, and whatever land they may go through [in God's cause], will be recorded to their account, so that God might reward them the best for all that they have been doing. [9:120-121]

قُل لِّلْمُخَلَّفِينَ
مِنَ ٱلْأَعْرَابِ سَتُدْعَوْنَ إِلَىٰ قَوْمٍ أُو۟لِى
بَأْسٍ شَدِيدٍ تُقَٰتِلُونَهُمْ أَوْ يُسْلِمُونَ ۖ
فَإِن تُطِيعُوا۟ يُؤْتِكُمُ ٱللَّهُ أَجْرًا حَسَنًا ۖ
وَ إِن تَتَوَلَّوْا۟ كَمَا تَوَلَّيْتُم مِّن قَبْلُ
يُعَذِّبْكُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٦﴾

Say unto those bedouins who stayed behind, "In time you will be called upon [to fight] against people of great prowess in war; you will have to fight against them or they surrender [voluntarily]. And then, if you pay heed [to this call in time], God will grant you a goodly reward; but if you turn away as you turned away before, He will cause you to suffer a grievous suffering." [48:16]

قَالَتِ ٱلْأَعْرَابُ ءَامَنَّا ۖ قُل لَّمْ
تُؤْمِنُوا۟ وَ لَٰكِن قُولُوٓا۟ أَسْلَمْنَا وَ لَمَّا
يَدْخُلِ ٱلْإِيمَٰنُ فِى قُلُوبِكُمْ ۖ وَ إِن
تُطِيعُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَ رَسُولَهُۥ لَا يَلِتْكُم مِّنْ
أَعْمَٰلِكُمْ شَيْـًٔا ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ
﴿١٤﴾ إِنَّمَا ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟
بِٱللَّهِ وَ رَسُولِهِۦ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَرْتَابُوا۟

The bedouins say, "We have attained to faith." Say [unto them, O Muhammad], "You have not [yet] attained to faith; you should [rather] say, 'We have pronounced our declaration of Islam [that we bear witness that there is no God but the One God and that Muhammad is the Conveyor of His message]'; and [true] faith has not yet entered your hearts. And if you [truly] obey God and the Conveyor of His message, he would not let the least of your deeds go to waste; God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious." [True] believers are only those who have attained to faith in God and the Conveyor of

His message, and have left behind all doubt, and have strived hard in God's cause with their possessions and their lives; it is they who are true to their word. [49:14-15]

وَجَٰهَدُوا۟ بِأَمْوَٰلِهِمْ وَأَنفُسِهِمْ فِى سَبِيلِ
ٱللَّهِ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلصَّٰدِقُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

DEBARRING THE POLYTHEISTS FROM PILGRIMAGE AND A GENERAL DISAVOWAL OF THE POLYTHEISTS WHO HAD NOT OBSERVED THEIR TREATIES WITH MUSLIMS [9 A.H./ 631 C.E.]

An acquittal from God and the Conveyor of His message [is herewith announced] unto those who associate others with God, and with whom you [O believers] have made bonds. [Announce unto them:] "Go, then, [freely] about the earth for four months, but know that you can never overpower God, and that, verily, God shall bring disgrace upon those who stubbornly reject the truth."

And a proclamation from God and the Conveyor of His message [is herewith made] unto all people on this day of the greatest pilgrimage that God disavows all who associate others with Him and [so does] the Conveyor of His message. Hence, if you repent, it shall be for your own good, and if you turn away, then know that you can never prevail over God ['s will]; and give unto those who are bent on denying [stubbornly] the truth the tiding of grievous suffering. But excepted are people from among those who associate others with God, with whom you have made a bond and who thereafter have never failed to fulfil any of their obligations towards you, and neither have [they] supported anyone against you: with these observe your bond with them until the end of the term agreed upon. Verily, God loves those who are conscious of Him.

And so, when the sacred months are over, fight against those who associate others with God wherever you may come upon them, and take them captive and besiege them, and lie in wait for them at every expected place. Yet if they repent and take to prayer and render the

بَرَآءَةٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦٓ إِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ
عَٰهَدتُّم مِّنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١﴾ فَسِيحُوا۟ فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّكُمْ
غَيْرُ مُعْجِزِى ٱللَّهِ ۙ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ مُخْزِى
ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٢﴾ وَأَذَٰنٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ
وَرَسُولِهِۦٓ إِلَى ٱلنَّاسِ يَوْمَ ٱلْحَجِّ ٱلْأَكْبَرِ
أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ بَرِىٓءٌ مِّنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ۙ
وَرَسُولُهُۥ ۚ فَإِن تُبْتُمْ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۖ
وَإِن تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّكُمْ غَيْرُ مُعْجِزِى
ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ
﴿٣﴾ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ عَٰهَدتُّم مِّنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ثُمَّ
لَمْ يَنقُصُوكُمْ شَيْـًٔا وَلَمْ يُظَٰهِرُوا۟ عَلَيْكُمْ
أَحَدًا فَأَتِمُّوٓا۟ إِلَيْهِمْ عَهْدَهُمْ إِلَىٰ مُدَّتِهِمْ ۚ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٤﴾ فَإِذَا ٱنسَلَخَ
ٱلْأَشْهُرُ ٱلْحُرُمُ فَٱقْتُلُوا۟ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ
حَيْثُ وَجَدتُّمُوهُمْ وَخُذُوهُمْ
وَٱحْصُرُوهُمْ وَٱقْعُدُوا۟ لَهُمْ كُلَّ مَرْصَدٍ ۚ

purifying [welfare] dues, let them go their way; God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious.
And if one of those who associate others with God seeks your protection, grant him [/her] protection so that he [/she] may [be able to] hear the word of God, and then do convey him [/her] to the place where he [/she] feels secure, since there may be [among them] people who do not know [the truth].
How should there be a bond with those who associate others with God on the part of God and the Conveyor of His message, except those [of them] with whom you have made a bond at the Inviolable House of Worship, and these so long as they are going straight with you do go straight with them; surely, God loves those who are conscious of Him. How [else could it be], while if those [who are hostile to you] were to prevail over you, they would not observe towards you any relationship or promise. They merely seek to satisfy you with their mouths, while their hearts persistently refuse, and most of them are iniquitous. They have sold off God's message for a trifling gain, and have turned away [others] from His way; truly evil is that which they have been doing. They have not repeatedly observed any tie nor obligation in relation to a believer - and they are aggressors.
Yet, if they repent and take to prayer, and offer the purifying [welfare] dues (zakat), they become your brethren in faith, and clearly do We spell out these messages unto people of knowledge.
But if they break their solemn pledges after having made bonds with you, and revile your faith, then fight against these leaders of faithlessness, since they have no [regard for their own] pledges, so that they might desist [from breaking their obligations]. [9:1-12]

فَإِن تَابُوا۟ وَ أَقَامُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَ ءَاتَوُا۟
ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ فَخَلُّوا۟ سَبِيلَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ
رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٥﴾ وَ إِنْ أَحَدٌ مِّنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ
ٱسْتَجَارَكَ فَأَجِرْهُ حَتَّىٰ يَسْمَعَ كَلَٰمَ ٱللَّهِ
ثُمَّ أَبْلِغْهُ مَأْمَنَهُۥ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَّا
يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦﴾ كَيْفَ يَكُونُ لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ عَهْدٌ
عِندَ ٱللَّهِ وَ عِندَ رَسُولِهِۦٓ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ
عَٰهَدتُّمْ عِندَ ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ ۖ فَمَا
ٱسْتَقَٰمُوا۟ لَكُمْ فَٱسْتَقِيمُوا۟ لَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٧﴾ كَيْفَ وَ إِن يَظْهَرُوا۟
عَلَيْكُمْ لَا يَرْقُبُوا۟ فِيكُمْ إِلًّا وَ لَا ذِمَّةً ۚ
يُرْضُونَكُم بِأَفْوَٰهِهِمْ وَ تَأْبَىٰ قُلُوبُهُمْ
وَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ فَٰسِقُونَ ﴿٨﴾ ٱشْتَرَوْا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِ
ٱللَّهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا فَصَدُّوا۟ عَن سَبِيلِهِۦٓ ۚ
إِنَّهُمْ سَآءَ مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩﴾ لَا
يَرْقُبُونَ فِى مُؤْمِنٍ إِلًّا وَ لَا ذِمَّةً ۚ
وَ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُعْتَدُونَ ﴿١٠﴾ فَإِن تَابُوا۟
وَ أَقَامُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَ ءَاتَوُا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ
فَإِخْوَٰنُكُمْ فِى ٱلدِّينِ ۗ وَ نُفَصِّلُ ٱلْـَٔايَٰتِ
لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١١﴾ وَ إِن نَّكَثُوٓا۟ أَيْمَٰنَهُم
مِّنۢ بَعْدِ عَهْدِهِمْ وَ طَعَنُوا۟ فِى دِينِكُمْ
فَقَٰتِلُوٓا۟ أَئِمَّةَ ٱلْكُفْرِ ۙ إِنَّهُمْ لَآ أَيْمَٰنَ
لَهُمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَنتَهُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

It is clear from the Quranic verses that Muslims did not initiate war, nor did they like it. On the contrary, even though they were forced to leave their homes and properties after suffering horrible oppression and persecution, they seemed reluctant to go to war

against those who had driven them out of their homes [see for example the verses 2:216, 4:74-77; 8:7, 15-16]. Quraysh, however, did not forget that Muhammad was able to escape safely from Mecca despite all their plots, and that he found shelter and support in Yathrib. The Prophet, on his part, could not forget that the Inviolable House of Worship established by Ibrahim (Abraham) and Isma'il (Ishmael) was surrounded by idols which were worshiped instead of or associated with God. and that the dominating power in Mecca, where the ancient base of monotheism had been built, supported that existing polytheism and oppressed the believers in the One God and forced them to leave their homes and properties.

Yathrib, the name of which became Medina, "The City (of the Prophet)", after the Prophet's migration to it, enjoined a strategic advantage due to its position to the north of Mecca on the land trade route between Mecca and Syria. The Muslims thought of benefitting from this advantageous position in putting pressure on Quraysh so that they might be deterred from carrying on their suppression of Islam and the Muslims in Mecca, or furthering their hostilities with Medina and attacking the Muslims there. Such an obstruction of a Qurayshi caravan coming from Syria to Mecca lead to a military confrontation between the Muslims and the Qurayshis near the well of Badr, in the year 2 A.H./ 624 C.E., although the caravan was able to escape. However, many of the Muslims did not seem pleased with the confrontation when it became inevitable, but it ended with the Muslims' victory, thus raising their morale.

The Quran states that in the battle of Badr the Muslims were supported by the advent of angels in successive waves, but the verses are not clear as to whether those angels actually fought; they may indicate that their role could have been limited to providing moral support [see the verses 3:126, 8:10]. The words; "strike, then, their necks and strike every finger of them as well," may not necessarily be a command from God to the angels that they should strike, but could be a command from Him carried by the angels to the believers that they themselves should strike their enemies at all points and cause them utter destruction. In this case the role of the angels would only be to strengthen the believers, give them firmness and encourage them to fight their own battle. Such an interpretation is in accordance with God's rule: *"And [know that] had God so willed, He could certainly have inflicted defeat on them [directly]; but [He wills you to struggle] so as to test you [all] by one another"* [47:4].

The Muslim victory in the battle of Badr led to a revenge battle near Mount Uhud in the next year, 3 A.H./ 625 C.E. The Muslims prevailed in the beginning, but then, against the instructions of the Prophet, they rushed to collect the booty left by the escaping Qurayshis from the battle field. A part of the enemy army was thus able to benefit from this disarray and take the Muslims by surprise, attacking them from the back, and in this way the Muslims were defeated. The Quran inspiringly presents to the Muslims the moral and practical lessons of both the earlier victory and the subsequent defeat [3:121-9, 137-160, 165-175, 179].

In his constitutional document, the Prophet secured the rights of the Jews in Medina whom he had expected to be more understanding to his message of worshipping the One

and the Only God than the polytheists of Quraysh in Mecca had been. Muhammad's direction in prayer had been to Jerusalem, and he had stressed the common grounds with all the earlier divine messages in general, and with the message of Ibrahim (Abraham) and the faith of the People of the Book in particular. However, the Jews in Medina thought that there would be no future for someone like Muhammad who had split from his own tribe, and who was thus confronted by its leaders, followed, as usual, by the bulk of its members. Accordingly, they did not see in Islam another torch of monotheism in Arabia that ought to be supported by all monotheists, but instead saw themselves, rather than those Arabs and their Prophet, as the genuine believers in the One God and as the chosen people.

Such egocentrism and arrogance developed hostilities with Muslims and made the Jews, ironically, more sympathetic to and supportive of the polytheists of Quraysh rather than of Muhammad and his message of polytheism. In such a climate a confrontational situation developed between the Muslims and the Jewish tribe of Banu Quaynuqa' in Medina which was forced, after being sieged by the Muslims, to accept banishment from the city after the battle of Badr. The Jewish tribe of Banu al-Nadir faced the same consequences after the battle of Uhud.

Following their victory at the battle of Uhud, the tribe of Quraysh thought that the time was suitable to pursue a more decisive victory which would completely crush Muhammad and the Muslims for good. Thus, they urged some bedouin tribes to direct a collective strike at Medina, in which Quraysh would join. This also presented a chance for the hypocrites and the Jewish tribe of Banu Qurayza to undermine the Muslim front in Medina from within. In this way, the Muslims had to confront a collective attack of tribal confederates, "ahzab," in the year 5 A.H./ 626 C.E. In response, they chose to apply a defensive strategy, since their numbers could not confront the enormous tribal forces in a battle in the open desert outside Medina. To strengthen their defense lines, the Muslims dug a trench in an exposed plain area through the lofty surroundings of Medina, an idea which was suggested by a Persian Muslim, "Salman", for such a technique had not been used by the Arabs before. This meant that the attackers had to remain beyond the trench and wait, since they were not able, in their circumstances, to break through the surrounding hills or the ditch. They had to merely hope that the Muslims might be forced to surrender or come out of the city to confront them under the pressure of siege. However, the Muslims were able to endure the formidable material and moral pressures of the besiege, "*When they came upon you from above you, and from below you, and when [your] eyes swerved and [your] hearts reached [your] throats, and [terrible] thoughts might sometimes come to your minds about God [and His support]; there and then were the believers tried and shaken with a shock severe*" [33:10-11]. In the end, the Muslims prevailed due to their firmness as well as to some material and psychological circumstances that worked against the attackers: "*We let loose against them a storm and hosts that you could not see*" [33:9]

When the Muslims were relieved as the besiegers had to leave, they turned to the Jews of Banu Qurayzah who had backed the attackers from within Medina and forced them to surrender, and thus terminated the last pocket of Jewish existence in Medina. The

military challenges that the Muslims successively experienced increased their self- confidence. Then in the year 6 A.H./ 628 C.E. the Prophet turned to a type of peaceful psycho-political aggressiveness by going with some of his Companions for a religious visit, *'umra,* to the Inviolable House of God in Mecca. It was a very intelligent move which could only have resulted in a win-win situation. If Quraysh had prevented the visitors from entering the Inviolable House of Worship, this would have been a shame for them among all the Arabs who might hear about it, and a reason for sympathizing with Muhammad, if not following him. If Quraysh allowed the Muslims in, they would have been humiliated. As it was, Quraysh obstructed the Muslims from visiting the Ka'ba, and a treaty was made between the two groups at a place south of Mecca called "al-Hudaybiya". In this treaty, Quraysh agreed to a ten-year truce with the Muslims, during which both parties would be able to move securely within the peninsula, and each could invite other tribes into alliance with it. Any tribe had the freedom to join either party, and should not be met by any hostilities from the other because of its decision.

This agreement was, as the Quran described it, *"a manifest victory"* [48:1], although the Muslims had to return without visiting the Ka 'ba that year, but they could come for that religious visit according to the agreement the following year. The Prophet and the Muslims had been recognized by their enemies of Quraysh as a legitimate entity, and their activities in spreading the message of Islam and getting allies and supporters, had been agreed upon. Thus, Islam now had the chance to penetrate the whole peninsula.

However, despite the treaty, in the year 8 A.H./ 630 C.E. "Khuza'a", a tribe that had entered in an alliance with the Prophet, was attacked by Quraysh. This breach of the treaty of Hudaybiya was met by the Prophet's march with the Muslims to Mecca, which they were able to enter with limited fighting at a certain front. The Prophet then declared a general amnesty, and destroyed the idols that had been set around the Ka'ba, returning the House of God established by Abraham and Ishmael to the worship of the One God alone. The Prophet followed this great victory in Mecca by other military operations in order to secure the Islamic existence in Arabia and overcome whatever resistance there might have been from polytheistic tribes, even if this required some effort, as in the battle of Hunayn.

Furthermore, the Prophet moved to secure the northern borders with Byzantine Syria in the year 9 A.H./ 630 C.E. At Tabuk he did not face the Byzantine military confrontation that he had been warned about, but he was able to make treaties with the settling Jewish and Christian tribes at these borders. As the destination of the campaign was far from Medina, the hypocrites and those *"in whose hearts is disease"* or who had weakness in their faith, tried to find excuses or raise doubts, which were exposed by sura number 9, "al-Tawbah / Repentance", and so one of its names has been "The Exposer." In general, fighting against the People of the Book [9:29] cannot be legitimately based merely on religious grounds, as it may be apparently understood from the verse. Instead, the verse should be taken in context with the totality of the Quranic verses related to the "military obligations / *jihad*" [see "the Law of War" in the chapter on "Laws"]. Muhammad Asad has rightfully pointed out that this verse "must be read in the context of the clear-cut Quranic rule that war is permitted only in self-defense [e.g. 2:190-194], [and so] the above

injunction to fight is relevant only in the event of aggression committed against the Muslim community or state, or in the presence of an unmistakable threat of its security" [*The Message of the Quran*, notes 40, and 41 on the verse 9:29], a view which was expressed earlier by Muhammad Abduh. Commenting on this verse the latter declared, "Fighting has been made obligatory in Islam only for the sake of defending the truth and its followers ... All the campaigns of the Prophet were defensive in character, and so were the wars undertaken by the Companions in the earliest period" [*Tafsir al-Manar* X:323] ... The stress on their *"nor forbidding that which God and the Conveyor of His message have forbidden"* must refer to something which is as grave, or almost as grave, as disbelief in God. In the context of an ordinance enjoining war against them, this 'something' can only be referring to unprovoked aggression, for it is this that has been forbidden by God through all the conveyors who were entrusted with conveying His message to humankind. Thus the above verse must be understood as a call to the believers to fight against such - and only such - of the nominal followers of earlier revelations as they deny their own preferred beliefs by committing aggression against the followers of the Quran" [*Tafsir al-Manar* X:338].

After Islam had become secure in the Arabian peninsula, it was logical for Prophet Muhammad to no longer tolerate the polytheistic tribes which broke their agreements with the Muslims, or the polytheistic performances of some pilgrims to the Inviolable House of Worship in Mecca after it had been cleared from idolatry and devoted to the worship of God alone. In the year 9 A.H./ 631 C.E. both tasks were mentioned in Sura 9 (Repentance), which the Prophet asked Abu Bakr to announce during the pilgrimage. The fifth verse in the sura that reads: *"And when the sacred months are over, kill those who associate others with God wherever you may come upon them ..."* should not be taken out of context. Muhammad Asad had indicated that in this verse "The Quran ordains, 'Fight in God's cause against those who wage war against you; but do not commit aggression, for, verily, God does not love aggressors' [2:190], and 'if they do not let you be, and do not offer you peace, and do stay their hands, seize them and kill them wherever you come upon them, and it is against those that We have clearly empowered you [to make war]' [4:91]." He thus deduces that "war is permissible only for self-defense, with the further provision that 'if they desist - behold, God is much-forgiving, a dispenser of grace' [2:192], and 'if they desist, then all hostility shall cease' [2:193] ... A possible conversion to Islam of those with whom the believers are at war, must therefore be considered in conjunction with several fundamental Quranic ordinances: 'There shall be no coercion in matters of faith' [2:256], [which] lays down categorically that any attempt at a forcible conversion of unbelievers is prohibited [and thus] precludes the possibility of the Muslims demanding or expecting that a defeated enemy should embrace Islam as the price of immunity" [*The Message of the Quran,* note 9 on verse 9:5].

This point of view can be supported by the verses which exempted those who fulfilled their obligations from that "acquittal" and its consequences: *"But excepted are people from among those who associate others with God, with whom you have made a bond and who thereafter have never failed to fulfil any of their obligations towards you, and neither have [they] supported anyone against you: with these observe your bond with*

them until the end of term agreed upon" [9:4], "*...except those [of them] with whom you have made a bond at the Inviolable House of Worship, and these so long as they are going straight with you do you go straight with them*" [9:7] .

As a crowning of his message and mission, the Prophet practiced his only pilgrimage, known as the "Farewell Pilgrimage" since he died shortly after in 11 A.H. / 632. C.E. In that Pilgrimage, he gave a speech in which he condensed and stressed the basic principles of Islam, such as the equality of people and care for women.

Hypocrisy is a phenomenon that is known through history. When Islam and Muslims turned from being oppressed in Mecca to having power in Medina, hypocrisy appeared among those who had to accept the prevailing faith without being sincere to it. These hypocrites were mainly among the original residents of Medina who were overwhelmed by the enthusiasm of their fellow-citizens for Islam and the migration of the Prophet to their city in which he became the leader. Besides this, hypocrites emerged among the bedouin opportunists who had no chance to have a settled life that encouraged quiet thinking about the message of Islam, living with the Prophet or listening to him, or socializing with the believers in a daily life [9:101].

The hypocrites pronounce the faith with their tongues to cover their activities in turning people from the right path, and they are not ready to think or change their minds. Their evil intention and arrogance occupy their minds and hearts with one obsession: to see Islam and the Conveyor of God's message defeated and in retreat. However, their hearts are full of fear that their real intentions may be recognized, in spite of their nice appearance and talk [63:1-8]. They cannot dare to openly face hostilities, but only conspire in the darkness. They fear commitment, confrontation, and the contradictions within their own selves. That is why war exposed the hypocrites, and they are content to only pray and pay charity under pressure [4:77-81]. They act only in a hidden way, circulating rumors and doubts in times of crisis or ease, and spreading fear, hopelessness and disarray [3:153-157, 167-8, 173-5; 4:83, 88-89; 9:47-8, 79]. The Prophet himself was not beyond their criticism [e.g. 9:61].

Because the hypocrites are weak, they try to have relations in both conflicting camps at the same time, and use different faces to appease each side [4:91, 137-145]. As the hypocrites are dominated with fear, they do whatever they can, including making false excuses or lies, to avoid any risk in their lives or their possessions, and so the Quran condemns their cowardice and failing morality which are naturally shamefully exposed in war [e.g. 9:42-57, 62-67, 74-7, 81-96; 17:20-1; 48:11-12]. Nevertheless, their greed pushes them to be as keen in looking for gain as they are in avoiding any risk [e.g. 9:42-57; 48:15]. They may establish a mosque to make it a center of conspiracy against Islam [9:107-110]. They offer their alliance to all enemies of Islam [e.g. 5:51-2; 39:11-12]. This is significant in showing how the hypocrites are eager to cover the destructive actions with a religious appearance, and so they may be dangerously and belligerently active behind a deceptive facade, which can even be a mosque.

This moral weakness, fear, obscurity, greed, miserliness, opportunism and conspiratorial attitude make hypocrisy equal to a stubborn denial of the truth, or worse, since it

is more evil and harmful for the person himself/herself and for others [e.g. 4:145; 9:74, 80, 84; 63:1-6]. However, God does not want such a destructive element that undermined Islam and the Muslims from within to be exposed even to the Prophet himself except through their concrete actions, and not to judge anyone merely by conjecture or doubt [9:101; 47:30]. God's justice and grace even opens the doors for hypocrites to repent and turn to righteousness [4:146], since there is always a potential for good in every human being; "*But excepted [from suffering in the lowest depth of fire] shall be they who repent and live righteously and hold fast unto God and grow sincere in their faith in God alone; as these shall be one with those who have attained to faith, and God will grant to all who have attained to faith a mighty reward. Why would God cause you to suffer if you are grateful and attain to faith, and God is always Responsive to Righteousness, All-knowing*" [4:146-7].

The bedouins, according to their circumstances, have no settled life in which to think about concepts and principles or care about permanent or long-term commitments. They continuously move from place to place and live from hand to mouth, and thus they are always ready to attack for any gain, and to keep themselves aloof from any who pays the price. The early Muslims suffered at the hand of the bedouins around Medina; the bedouins were ready to attack the Muslims, betray them if any agreement with them might be made, or make alliances with their enemies. The battle of the Confederates or the Ditch represented a sudden attack on Medina by a tribal alliance developed by Quraysh, to which the Medinese Jewish tribe, Banu Qurayza, was attracted. However, the Quran has talked about uniting the bedouins in the expanding Muslim community and the emerging Islamic state with its central authority under the leadership of the Prophet: "*It is not for the People of the City (Medina) and for the bedouins [who live] around them to hold back from following the Conveyor of God[' s message] or to care for their own selves more than him [as the Conveyor of the message and leader]...*" [9:120].

God's justice does not generalize about the bedouins, even if their majority was as the Quran describes, since in God's sight and in the consideration of His message, every individual has his/her importance and value: "*And among the bedouins there are [also] those who believe in God and the Last Day, and consider what they spend [in God's cause] as a means of drawing them nearer to God and of being [mentioned] in the prayers of the conveyor of God's message. Surely, it shall [indeed] be a means of nearness [to God] from them; God shall admit them unto His grace; God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious*" [9:99; see also the same justice in the Quranic statement about the People of the Book 3:75-6, 113-5; about the hypocrites 4:146, and notice the Quranic statement that true repentance can make all offences forgiven, even the most serious ones, e.g. 39:53, 5:33-4, 58-9; 24:4-5; the individual accountability of every hman being 6:94; 19:80, 95; 34:46; also the potential good in every human being 90:10; 91:7-10. Thus none should be excluded from God's guidance, whatever his/her apparent evil behavior may be 7:164].

Never has God endowed any man with two hearts within him, and never has He made your wives who you may have declared to be "as unlawful to you as your mothers' bodies" [truly] your mothers, and never too has He made your adopted sons [truly] your sons; that is only what you yourselves are saying, the words of your own mouths; but God speaks the truth, and it is He alone who can show you the right way. [As for your adopted children] call them after their true fathers, this is more equitable in the sight of God; and if you know not who their fathers were, they are your brethren in faith, and under your care and your guardianship. There is no blame if you may make a mistake in this respect; [what really matters is] but what your hearts premeditate; and God is indeed All-forgiving, Most Gracious. The Prophet is more caring about and responsible for the believers than their own selves, and his wives are their mothers, and they who are bound by blood are more deservingly responsible for one another according to God's writ than [being bound by the general relationship among] the believers and those who forsake their homes [and their properties for the cause of God], unless you do a favor to those with whom you have had a special relationship; this is written down in the [divine] writ. [33:4-6]

مَّا جَعَلَ ٱللَّهُ
لِرَجُلٍ مِّن قَلْبَيْنِ فِى جَوْفِهِۦ ۚ وَمَا
جَعَلَ أَزْوَٰجَكُمُ ٱلَّٰٓـِٔى تُظَٰهِرُونَ مِنْهُنَّ
أُمَّهَٰتِكُمْ ۚ وَمَا جَعَلَ أَدْعِيَآءَكُمْ
أَبْنَآءَكُمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ قَوْلُكُم بِأَفْوَٰهِكُمْ ۖ
وَٱللَّهُ يَقُولُ ٱلْحَقَّ وَهُوَ يَهْدِى ٱلسَّبِيلَ
﴿٤﴾ ٱدْعُوهُمْ لِءَابَآئِهِمْ هُوَ أَقْسَطُ عِندَ
ٱللَّهِ ۚ فَإِن لَّمْ تَعْلَمُوٓا۟ ءَابَآءَهُمْ فَإِخْوَٰنُكُمْ
فِى ٱلدِّينِ وَمَوَٰلِيكُمْ ۚ وَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ
جُنَاحٌ فِيمَآ أَخْطَأْتُم بِهِۦ وَلَٰكِن مَّا
تَعَمَّدَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ غَفُورًا
رَّحِيمًا ﴿٥﴾ ٱلنَّبِىُّ أَوْلَىٰ بِٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ
مِنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ ۖ وَأَزْوَٰجُهُۥٓ أُمَّهَٰتُهُمْ ۗ
وَأُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلْأَرْحَامِ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلَىٰ بِبَعْضٍ
فِى كِتَٰبِ ٱللَّهِ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ
وَٱلْمُهَٰجِرِينَ إِلَّآ أَن تَفْعَلُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰٓ
أَوْلِيَآئِكُم مَّعْرُوفًا ۚ كَانَ ذَٰلِكَ فِى
ٱلْكِتَٰبِ مَسْطُورًا ﴿٦﴾

O Prophet, say unto your wives, "If you desire [but] the life of this world and its charms, well, then, I shall provide for you and release you with kindliness. But if you desire God and the conveyor of His message and the last abode in the hereafter, then, surely, for the doers of good among you has God readied a mighty reward."
O wives of the Prophet! If any of you were to become guilty of a flagrant shameful deed, double [that of other offenders] would be her

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِىُّ قُل
لِّأَزْوَٰجِكَ إِن كُنتُنَّ تُرِدْنَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ
ٱلدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتَهَا فَتَعَالَيْنَ أُمَتِّعْكُنَّ
وَأُسَرِّحْكُنَّ سَرَاحًا جَمِيلًا ﴿٢٨﴾ وَإِن
كُنتُنَّ تُرِدْنَ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ وَٱلدَّارَ
ٱلْءَاخِرَةَ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ أَعَدَّ لِلْمُحْسِنَٰتِ مِنكُنَّ
أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٢٩﴾ يَٰنِسَآءَ ٱلنَّبِىِّ مَن
يَأْتِ مِنكُنَّ بِفَٰحِشَةٍ مُّبَيِّنَةٍ يُضَٰعَفْ لَهَا

suffering, and that for God effortless. But if any of you devoutly obeys God and the Conveyor of His message and does righteousness, her shall We grant her reward twice over, and We have readied for her a most excellent sustenance [in the life to come].

O wives of the Prophet! You are not like any of the [other] women, if you remain [truly] conscious of God. Hence, be not over-soft in your speech, lest any whose heart is diseased should be moved to desire; but speak in an acceptable way. And abide quietly in your homes, and do not flaunt your charms as they used to be flaunted in the old days of pagan ignorance, and keep up prayer, and render the purifying [welfare] dues, and pay heed unto God and the conveyor of His message as God only wants to keep you safe from all that might be loathsome, O you members of the [Prophet's] household, and purify you to utmost purity. And bear in mind all that is recited in your homes of God's messages and wisdom; God is All-subtle, All-aware. [33:28-34]

ٱلْعَذَابُ ضِعْفَيْنِ ۚ وَكَانَ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ
يَسِيرًا ﴿٣٠﴾ ۞ وَمَن يَقْنُتْ مِنكُنَّ لِلَّهِ
وَرَسُولِهِۦ وَتَعْمَلْ صَٰلِحًا نُّؤْتِهَآ أَجْرَهَا
مَرَّتَيْنِ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لَهَا رِزْقًا كَرِيمًا ﴿٣١﴾
يَٰنِسَآءَ ٱلنَّبِيِّ لَسْتُنَّ كَأَحَدٍ مِّنَ ٱلنِّسَآءِ ۚ
إِنِ ٱتَّقَيْتُنَّ ۚ فَلَا تَخْضَعْنَ بِٱلْقَوْلِ فَيَطْمَعَ
ٱلَّذِى فِى قَلْبِهِۦ مَرَضٌ وَقُلْنَ قَوْلًا
مَّعْرُوفًا ﴿٣٢﴾ وَقَرْنَ فِى بُيُوتِكُنَّ وَلَا
تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ ٱلْجَٰهِلِيَّةِ ٱلْأُولَىٰ ۖ
وَأَقِمْنَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتِينَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ
وَأَطِعْنَ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥٓ ۚ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ
لِيُذْهِبَ عَنكُمُ ٱلرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ ٱلْبَيْتِ
وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا ﴿٣٣﴾ وَٱذْكُرْنَ مَا يُتْلَىٰ
فِى بُيُوتِكُنَّ مِنْ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱلْحِكْمَةِ ۚ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ لَطِيفًا خَبِيرًا ﴿٣٤﴾

And when you [O Muhammad] did say unto the one to whom God has shown favor and to whom you had shown favor, "Hold on to your wife and remain conscious of God!" And you hide within yourself something that God was about to bring to light, fearing people, whereas it was God alone whom you should fear. [But] then, when Zayd had come to the end of his relation with her, We gave her to you in marriage, so that no blame should attach to the believers for [marrying] the spouses of their adopted children when the latter have come to the end of their relation with them, and God's will was done. No blame whatsoever attaches to the Prophet for [having done] what God has ordained for him; [such was] God's way with those that have passed away aforetime, and God's will is always a reckoned destiny; those

وَإِذْ تَقُولُ لِلَّذِىٓ أَنْعَمَ ٱللَّهُ
عَلَيْهِ وَأَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْسِكْ عَلَيْكَ
زَوْجَكَ وَٱتَّقِ ٱللَّهَ وَتُخْفِى فِى نَفْسِكَ
مَا ٱللَّهُ مُبْدِيهِ وَتَخْشَى ٱلنَّاسَ وَٱللَّهُ
أَحَقُّ أَن تَخْشَىٰهُ ۖ فَلَمَّا قَضَىٰ زَيْدٌ مِّنْهَا
وَطَرًا زَوَّجْنَٰكَهَا لِكَىْ لَا يَكُونَ عَلَى
ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ حَرَجٌ فِىٓ أَزْوَٰجِ أَدْعِيَآئِهِمْ
إِذَا قَضَوْا۟ مِنْهُنَّ وَطَرًا ۚ وَكَانَ أَمْرُ ٱللَّهِ
مَفْعُولًا ﴿٣٧﴾ مَّا كَانَ عَلَى ٱلنَّبِىِّ مِنْ
حَرَجٍ فِيمَا فَرَضَ ٱللَّهُ لَهُۥ ۖ سُنَّةَ ٱللَّهِ
فِى ٱلَّذِينَ خَلَوْا۟ مِن قَبْلُ ۚ وَكَانَ أَمْرُ
ٱللَّهِ قَدَرًا مَّقْدُورًا ﴿٣٨﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يُبَلِّغُونَ

who convey God's messages and stand in awe of Him, and hold none but God in awe, and none can take count [of one's doings] as God does. Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but is the Conveyor of God's message and the seal of all prophets; and God has full knowledge of everything. [33:37-40]

رِسَٰلَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ وَيَخْشَوْنَهُۥ وَلَا يَخْشَوْنَ
أَحَدًا إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ ۗ وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ حَسِيبًا
﴿٣٩﴾ مَّا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَآ أَحَدٍ مِّن
رِّجَالِكُمْ وَلَٰكِن رَّسُولَ ٱللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ
ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ ۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمًا ﴿٤٠﴾

O Prophet! We have made lawful to you your wives unto whom you have given their dowries, as well as those whom your right hand has come to possess whom God has bestowed upon you. And [We have made lawful to you] the daughters of your paternal uncles and aunts, and the daughters of your maternal uncles and aunts, who have migrated with you, and any believing woman who offers herself freely to the Prophet and whom the Prophet might be willing to wed - [this last case is but] a privilege for you and not for other believers, [seeing that] We have already made known what We have enjoined upon them with regard to their wives and those whom their right hands may possess, [and this special permission is] in order that you not be burdened; and God is All- forgiving, Most Gracious.

You may put off for a time whomever of them you please, and may take unto you whomever you please; and if you seek out any from whom you have kept away [for a time], you will incur no wrongdoing [thereby]; this will make it more likely that their eyes are gladdened, [those who are with you] and that they do not grieve [those who are not with you], and that all of them may find contentment in whatever you have to give them; and God [alone] knows what is in your hearts, and God is indeed All-knowing, All-clement.

No [other] woman shall henceforth be lawful to you, nor are you [allowed] to supplant [any of] them by other wives, even if their beauty may please you greatly - [none shall be lawful

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِىُّ إِنَّآ
أَحْلَلْنَا لَكَ أَزْوَٰجَكَ ٱلَّٰتِىٓ ءَاتَيْتَ
أُجُورَهُنَّ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ يَمِينُكَ مِمَّآ أَفَآءَ
ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ وَبَنَٰتِ عَمِّكَ وَبَنَٰتِ عَمَّٰتِكَ
وَبَنَٰتِ خَالِكَ وَبَنَٰتِ خَٰلَٰتِكَ ٱلَّٰتِى
هَاجَرْنَ مَعَكَ وَٱمْرَأَةً مُّؤْمِنَةً إِن وَهَبَتْ
نَفْسَهَا لِلنَّبِىِّ إِنْ أَرَادَ ٱلنَّبِىُّ أَن
يَسْتَنكِحَهَا خَالِصَةً لَّكَ مِن دُونِ
ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۖ قَدْ عَلِمْنَا مَا فَرَضْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ
فِىٓ أَزْوَٰجِهِمْ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَٰنُهُمْ لِكَيْلَا
يَكُونَ عَلَيْكَ حَرَجٌ ۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ غَفُورًا
رَّحِيمًا ﴿٥٠﴾ ۞ تُرْجِى مَن تَشَآءُ مِنْهُنَّ
وَتُـْٔوِىٓ إِلَيْكَ مَن تَشَآءُ ۖ وَمَنِ ٱبْتَغَيْتَ
مِمَّنْ عَزَلْتَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكَ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ
أَدْنَىٰٓ أَن تَقَرَّ أَعْيُنُهُنَّ وَلَا يَحْزَنَّ
وَيَرْضَيْنَ بِمَآ ءَاتَيْتَهُنَّ كُلُّهُنَّ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ
مَا فِى قُلُوبِكُمْ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلِيمًا
حَلِيمًا ﴿٥١﴾ لَّا يَحِلُّ لَكَ ٱلنِّسَآءُ مِنۢ بَعْدُ
وَلَآ أَن تَبَدَّلَ بِهِنَّ مِنْ أَزْوَٰجٍ وَلَوْ
أَعْجَبَكَ حُسْنُهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتْ يَمِينُكَ ۗ

to you] beyond those whom your right hand has [already] come to possess. And God keeps watch over everything.

O you who have attained to faith! Do not enter the Prophet's houses, unless you are given permission; [and as for an invitation] to a meal, do not watch for its hour [to press the Prophet implicitly for an invitation]; but whenever you may be invited, enter, and when you have had the meal, dispense and do not linger for mere talk; that hurt the Prophet yet he felt shy of [asking] you [to leave], but God is not shy of [teaching you] what is right.

And [as for the Prophet's wives], whenever you ask them for anything that you may need, ask them from behind something that separates and conceals them from you; this is more protective for the purity of your hearts and theirs. And it can never be proper for you to hurt the Conveyor of God's message, nor to marry his wives after him; that would surely be a heinousness in the sight of God. {And} whether you reveal anything or conceal it, God surely has knowledge of everything.

[However,] nothing may be held against them [the Prophet's wives to appear without any concealment] before their fathers, or their sons, or their brothers, or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or their womenfolk, or such [male] slaves whom their right hands fully possess. And remain [always, O wives of the Prophet] conscious of God, for surely God is witness on everything. [33:50-55]

وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ رَّقِيبًا ﴿٥٢﴾
يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تَدْخُلُوا۟ بُيُوتَ
ٱلنَّبِيِّ إِلَّآ أَن يُؤْذَنَ لَكُمْ إِلَىٰ طَعَامٍ غَيْرَ
نَٰظِرِينَ إِنَىٰهُ وَلَٰكِنْ إِذَا دُعِيتُمْ
فَٱدْخُلُوا۟ فَإِذَا طَعِمْتُمْ فَٱنتَشِرُوا۟ وَلَا
مُسْتَـْٔنِسِينَ لِحَدِيثٍ ۚ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكُمْ كَانَ
يُؤْذِى ٱلنَّبِىَّ فَيَسْتَحْىِۦ مِنكُمْ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ
لَا يَسْتَحْىِۦ مِنَ ٱلْحَقِّ ۚ وَإِذَا
سَأَلْتُمُوهُنَّ مَتَٰعًا فَسْـَٔلُوهُنَّ مِن وَرَآءِ
حِجَابٍ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ أَطْهَرُ لِقُلُوبِكُمْ
وَقُلُوبِهِنَّ ۚ وَمَا كَانَ لَكُمْ أَن تُؤْذُوا۟ رَسُولَ
ٱللَّهِ وَلَآ أَن تَنكِحُوٓا۟ أَزْوَٰجَهُۥ مِنۢ
بَعْدِهِۦٓ أَبَدًا ۚ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكُمْ كَانَ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ
عَظِيمًا ﴿٥٣﴾ إِن تُبْدُوا۟ شَيْـًٔا أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ
فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمًا ﴿٥٤﴾ لَّا
جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِنَّ فِىٓ ءَابَآئِهِنَّ وَلَآ
أَبْنَآئِهِنَّ وَلَآ إِخْوَٰنِهِنَّ وَلَآ أَبْنَآءِ
إِخْوَٰنِهِنَّ وَلَآ أَبْنَآءِ أَخَوَٰتِهِنَّ وَلَا
نِسَآئِهِنَّ وَلَا مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَٰنُهُنَّ ۖ
وَٱتَّقِينَ ٱللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ
شَهِيدًا ﴿٥٥﴾

O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters, and all other believing women as well, that they should draw over themselves some of their outer garments [when in public]: thus it is more likely that they will be better recognized [as decent women], and thus not be annoyed. But [withal] God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious. [33:59]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِىُّ قُل لِّأَزْوَٰجِكَ
وَبَنَاتِكَ وَنِسَآءِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْنِينَ
عَلَيْهِنَّ مِن جَلَٰبِيبِهِنَّ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ أَدْنَىٰٓ أَن
يُعْرَفْنَ فَلَا يُؤْذَيْنَ ۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ غَفُورًا
رَّحِيمًا ﴿٥٩﴾

O Prophet! Why forbid what God has made lawful to you, seeking the good pleasure of your wives? And God is All- forgiving, Most Gracious. God has already enjoined upon you [O believers] the expiation of an oath [that may not be fulfilled for any reason], and God is your Lord supreme, and He alone is All-knowing, All-wise.

And when the Prophet told something in confidence to one of his wives, and as she told of it and God made this known to him, some of it he made known [to others] and held back some of it. And as soon as he let her know it, she said, "Who has told you this?" He said, "It is the All-knowing, the All-aware who has told me."

Should both of you repent to God, as your hearts both have certainly inclined [to what is not right, this would be the best]; but if you back each other against him [Prophet Muhammad], God Himself is his Supporter and Protector, as is Jibril [Gabriel] and all the righteous among the believers, and all [other] angels will be his backers.

Were he to divorce you [O wives of the Prophet], God might well give him in your stead, wives better than you: women [totally] submitting themselves unto God, [truly] believing, fully devoted to Him, turning [unto Him] in repentance [whenever any may have wronged herself], worshipping [Him alone] and continuously seeking God's goodly acceptance to whatever place they may go, be they women previously married or married for the first time. [66:1-5]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِيُّ لِمَ تُحَرِّمُ مَآ أَحَلَّ ٱللَّهُ
لَكَ ۖ تَبْتَغِي مَرْضَاتَ أَزْوَٰجِكَ ۚ وَ ٱللَّهُ
غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١﴾ قَدْ فَرَضَ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ
تَحِلَّةَ أَيْمَٰنِكُمْ ۚ وَ ٱللَّهُ مَوْلَىٰكُمْ ۚ وَ هُوَ
ٱلْعَلِيمُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٢﴾ وَ إِذْ أَسَرَّ ٱلنَّبِيُّ
إِلَىٰ بَعْضِ أَزْوَٰجِهِۦ حَدِيثًا فَلَمَّا نَبَّأَتْ
بِهِۦ وَ أَظْهَرَهُ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ عَرَّفَ بَعْضَهُۥ
وَ أَعْرَضَ عَنۢ بَعْضٍ ۖ فَلَمَّا نَبَّأَهَا بِهِۦ
قَالَتْ مَنْ أَنۢبَأَكَ هَٰذَا ۖ قَالَ نَبَّأَنِيَ
ٱلْعَلِيمُ ٱلْخَبِيرُ ﴿٣﴾ إِن تَتُوبَآ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ
فَقَدْ صَغَتْ قُلُوبُكُمَا ۖ وَ إِن تَظَٰهَرَا عَلَيْهِ
فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ مَوْلَىٰهُ وَ جِبْرِيلُ وَ صَٰلِحُ
ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۖ وَ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ
ظَهِيرٌ ﴿٤﴾ عَسَىٰ رَبُّهُۥٓ إِن طَلَّقَكُنَّ أَن
يُبْدِلَهُۥٓ أَزْوَٰجًا خَيْرًا مِّنكُنَّ مُسْلِمَٰتٍ
مُّؤْمِنَٰتٍ قَٰنِتَٰتٍ تَٰٓئِبَٰتٍ عَٰبِدَٰتٍ
سَٰٓئِحَٰتٍ ثَيِّبَٰتٍ وَ أَبْكَارًا ﴿٥﴾

The Prophet's family life is referred to in several verses in the Quran. There are common notions about the several wives that the Prophet had, but there are not many details about his family life, nor about the situation of the family in Arab society in general at that time. We expect the life of the Prophet to be the ideal model, but we often forget that Muhammad was sent to a society with different circumstances than ours, and thus the ideal model in his time is different from ours now. If Muhammad had been sent to respond only to our contemporary thinking after fourteen centuries of his message, and if

he had not coped with the circumstances of his own time and place, he would have failed to make his message rooted among his own people, and thus it would not have been possible to survive or to reach us. The Quran states: "*And never have We sent forth any conveyor of [God's] message otherwise than [with a message] in his own people's tongue, so that he might make [the truth] clear to them*" [14:4]. The "tongue" ought not be understood to merely mean the spoken language, but also the culture and social traditions which do not contradict the moral values for which the message calls.

If the conveyor of God's message ignores and even contradicts "all" his social circumstances in order to attain the model and ideal which may only be an abstract, or may materialize after centuries, he would not be able to communicate behaviorally and practically with his own people, and his message would not be accommodated and then extended through time and place. A conveyor of God's message has never to accept or to co-exist with evil, and he should always be morally ideal, but with regard to the various categories and levels of what may be relatively acceptable or bearable. However, he must be compatible with his own society, although he may also pave the way for continued social progress and provide the mechanism that can help to formulate the model and ideal in the continuously changing circumstances, according to the general values and principles and to the dynamics of change in God's message.

On these grounds, it is not inconceivable or confusing that Islam is a universal message presented through an Arab Conveyor and an Arabic Book, and that the medium for the earliest implementation of this message was the Arab society in the seventh century C.E. Arabia. In such a tribal society wives and children and marriage relations were the only means of social stability and power. The Catholic church, for example, has recently realized that it has to tolerate, at least temporarily, such a social fact in African tribal societies, if it wants people to listen to the more basic teachings of Christianity. Instead of rejecting polygamy in principle and losing the chance for any sympathy or understanding in tribal Arabia about the essence of the faith in the One God and the accountability of the human being, Islam and the Conveyor of its message chose to allow polygamy within certain conditions and restrictions, while it provides the general principles and dynamics which do not establish polygamy as a permanent model and ideal, but as a possibility in case of necessity, and develop gradually but continuously and consistently the one husband-one wife model as the ideal. It should be noted that it was a radical step forward at that time to move the social central institution in the Islamic life from the tribe to the family. The Quran deals with the family relations (e.g. marriage, divorce, parent-child relations, inheritance ... etc.), in considerable detail, while many of its verses and several traditions of the Prophet heavily condemn clanishness and the blind support of the tribe-fellows that was a basic tradition at the time.

The Prophet, being an Arab, lived in a polygamous tribal society. However, until he was fifty years old, and throughout most of his years of vigor, he lived with one wife, Khadija. After her death, he married several women, but the great majority of these were widows. Muhammad Husayn Haykal discussed the Prophet's wives and the circumstances of their marriages at considerable length in his book *The Life of Muhammad*: "Muhammad married Khadija [his first wife] when he was 23 years old, i.e. at the height

of his youth, the fullness of manhood and the apex of power and handsomeness. He remained true and loyal to Khadija for 28 years until he was over 50 years old. This was the case at a time when polygamy was normal among the Arabs. Moreover, since no male offspring of Khadija survived, Muhammad had all necessary justification to marry another woman... Throughout his married life with Khadija as well as during his celibate years, Muhammad was never known to be one susceptible to womanly attraction ... It is unnatural, therefore, now that Muhammad had passed the 50 year mark, for him to suffer such attraction ...

"When [Khadija] finally passed away, he married Sawdah daughter of Zam'ah, widow of Sakran ibn 'Amr ibn 'Abd Shams. No one described Sawdah as a beautiful woman, and no one has ever reported that she possessed any wealth or social position ... Rather, Sawdah was a wife of one of the early converts to Islam who migrated to Abyssinia ... Sawdah had embraced Islam with her husband and migrated with him. She suffered as he did and bore Makkan oppression as patiently as her husband did. If Muhammad married her thereafter [after her husband died as a martyr in the battle field] in order to provide for her and to raise her position to that of a "mother of the believers", he certainly did a most worthy and appreciable deed.

" 'A'ishah and Hafsah were daughters of his [close companions] Abu Bakr and 'Umar respectively. It was this relation of their fathers to Muhammad which caused the latter to cement his relationship with them ... That [also] is why he gave in marriage his daughters to 'Uthman and 'Ali. If it is true that Muhammad did in fact love 'A'ishah, it must have been a love which arose after marriage ...

"Another proof of this sense of social concern is the case of Muhammad's marriages to Zaynab daughter of Khuzaymah, and Umm Salama. The former was the wife of 'Ubaydah ibn al-Harith ibn al-Muttalib who fell at the battle of Badr. Surely, she was not beautiful, but she was so kind and gentle that she acquired the name of the "mother of the destitute." She was past her prime in age and lived only one or two years after her marriage to Muhammad. Besides Khadija, she was the only wife of the Prophet who died before him. As for Umm Salama, she was the daughter of Umayyah ibn al-Mughirah and the wife of Abu Salamah for whom she bore many children. Abu Salamah was wounded at Uhud ... [and died later as a result of the re-opening of his wound] ... Four months after his death, when the Prophet asked the hand of Umm Salamah, she apologized using the large number of her children and her old age as an excuse. The Prophet insisted until she accepted and he assumed the duty of caring for and bringing up her offspring. If Muhammad was indeed looking for beauty, there were many daughters of both Muhajirun [immigrants] and Ansar [supporters in Madina] far surpassing this woman in beauty, youth, position and wealth, [and] vitality, for him to choose from and to take in marriage. He did not have to choose those women who would bring to him large liabilities of mouths to feed and old people to take care of." Besides these social concerns mentioned, Haykal underlined Muhammad's longing for a male offspring, like any other Arab father of that time. [English translation by Isma 'il al- Faruqi, Indianapolis, Indiana 1976, pp. 289-292, underlines are author's own].

As for the Prophet's marriage to Zaynab the daughter of Jahsh to whom the above mentioned verse [33:37] refers, and whom the Prophet married after her divorce from his

adopted son Zayd (before adoption was forbidden by the Quran), Haykal said, "Zaynab was the daughter of Umaymah and granddaughter of Abd al-Muttalib [the grandfather of the Prophet, and so Zaynab was the daughter of the paternal aunt of the Prophet] ... The woman was brought up in the sight of Muhammad and under his care, and on this account he knew [her very] well before she ever married Zayd ..., and it was he who asked her hand for Zayd his adopted son ... [But] her brother Abdullah refused to let the Hashimi and Qurayshi noble girl and the first cousin of the Prophet become the wife of a slave whom Khadijah had bought and whom Muhammad had set free... But Muhammad sought to wipe out these racial and class distinctions ... Muhammad did not choose to force this noble principle upon a woman outside his own tribe and clan. Let it then be Zaynab ... And let Zayd, his own adopted son be the person to marry her ... [The insistence of the Prophet that the marriage should be accomplished] furnished the occasion for the revelation (of the verse 33:36, which precedes the verse referring to Zayd's case 33:37) that "*It is not for a believing man or a believing woman, whenever a matter is decided by God and the Conveyor of His message, to exercise choice in what they may do in this matter; and anyone who disobeys God and the Conveyor of His message, has indeed, wandered off into evident deviation*"] ... The Prophet helped Zayd furnish a dowry and the marriage took place. After the wedding, the husband found in his wife a woman very hard to manage and to live with. Her pride continued to know no bounds ... Zayd complained about her to the Prophet more than once and even consulted with him in the matter of divorcing her. All along, the Prophet would counsel him in these terms: 'Hold fast to your wife and face God.' Zayd's home life, however, did not improve ... and he divorced her. The All-wise legislation willed to undo the Arab practice of adopting children and passing onto them the adopter's genealogy and name ... with all the rights of the legitimate son including that of inheritance and the prohibition of marriage on grounds of consanguinity" [the verse 33:5, and declaring the wife's body as unlawful as the mother's is condemned in the Quranic verse 58:1-4, and the commentary in the section about "Marriage" in the "Family Laws", Chapter on "The Laws"]. Haykal explains that it is in this sense that the verse was revealed that : '*and never too has He made your adopted sons [truly] your sons; that is only what you, yourselves, are saying, the words of your own mouths*' [33:4].

" It follows from this that the adopter may mary the ex- wife of his adopted son and vice versa. But how was such provision to be implemented? Who, among the Arabs, could implement this legislation and thereby openly repudiate the ancient traditions? Even Muhammad himself, despite his tremendous will-power and profound understanding of the wisdom implicit in the divine command, found himself disinclined to implement this judgement by marrying Zaynab after Zayd [his previously adopted son] had divorced her..." Haykal explains that it was then that the following divine [guidance] was addressed to Muhammad, "*And you hide within yourself something that God was about to bring to light, fearing people, whereas it was God alone whom you should fear*" [33:37]. Then he continues, "The truth is, however, that Muhammad was the exemplar of obedience to God; his life was the implementation of that which he was entrusted to convey to mankind." Thus Muhammad married Zaynab so that he could give a good example of what God was seeking to establish: "*[But] then, when Zayd had come to the end of his relation with her, We gave her to you in marriage, so that no blame should attach to the*

believers for [marrying] the spouses of their adopted children when the latter have come to the end of their relation with them, and God's will was done" [ibid, pp. 295-297]. "In general, the provisions mentioned in the verses "had one purpose, namely the raising of the manumitted slave to the full status of freedom, and the reputation of all the rights of masters, protectors and adoptive parents in clear and unequivocal terms" [Haykal, 298].

The expression of the Quranic verse "We gave her to you in marriage, *zawwajnakah'a* has sometimes been understood to mean that the Prophet just carried out God's command to marry Zaynab, without any personal desire to do so, a viewpoint that may be unconsciously or intentionally contrary to that of those who said that Muhammad desired to marry her after her marriage to Zayd. I cannot see anything wrong in this even if Muhammad did have such a desire after Zayd's marriage to Zaynab had been broken and irreparable. Probably the Prophet thought of marrying Zaynab "in order to redeem what he considered to be his moral responsibility for her past unhappiness," as Muhammad Asad suggests [note 42 on the verse 33:37, "*The Message of the Quran*".]

As for the other wife of the Prophet, Juwayriyyah the daughter of al-Harith, Haykal in his same work underlined the circumstances of that marriage: "She was a noble woman [who became a captive of the Muslims in the battle of Banu al-Mustaliq], and her lot fell to a man of al-Ansar [the Supporters in Medina]. She sought to ransom herself, but her captor, knowing that she was the daughter of the leader of Banu al-Mustaliq, demanded a very high price ... Juwayriyyah sought the Prophet in the house of 'A'isha and, announcing her identity as the daughter of al-Harith ibn (son of) Abi Dirar, chief of Banu al-Mustaliq, she asked for the Prophet's assistance in ransoming herself from captivity. After listening to her story, the Prophet thought of a better fate for her. He suggested that he would ransom and marry her as well. Juwayriyyah accepted his proposal. When the news reached the people, everyone who held a captive of Banu al-Mustaliq granted that particular captive his or her freedom, [looking to them as becoming the in-laws of the Prophet]. A'ishah had said of her: 'I know of no woman who brought as much good to her people as Juwayriyyah'." Another report of the event mentioned that the Prophet married Juwayriyyah after she and her father embraced Islam [*ibid* pp. 333-334].

In similar circumstances and as a result of another victory in Khaybar, the Prophet married Safiyyah, the daughter of the Jewish leader Huyayy ibn Akhtab from Banu al-Nadir, and the wife of Kinnah ibn al-Rabi who was killed. Safiyyah became a captive, and the Prophet granted her her freedom and married her "to alleviate her tragedy and preserve her dignity ... Safiyyah remained loyal to Muhammad throughout his life" [*ibid* pp. 373-374].

Another wife, Umm Habibah Ramlah the daughter of Abu Sufyan, had been the wife of Abdullah ibn Jahsh. Together they had gone to Abyssinia as Muslim immigrants, but Abdullah was converted to Christianity and died there. Umm Habibah's perseverance and strong faith during her difficult circumstances in Abyssinia, and the loss of her husband who first became a Christian and later died, urged the Prophet to take care of her [ibid p. 377]. There was no means at the time for securing such care for women other than through marriage, especially with regard to the Prophet, who could not have a woman living permanently under his roof except on the basis of marriage. Besides, one may bear in mind that Umm Habibah's father Abu Sufyan was a prominent person in the Quraysh

leadership and was known for his hostility against the Prophet and the Muslims. The marriage of his daughter to the Prophet after the perseverance and firmness she had proved in Abyssinia, would either persuade him to rethink his stand, or make a case for Islam that would have its impact in many circles.

Maymunah was the aunt of Khalid ibn al-Walid, and the sister of the wife of al-'Abbas ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib, the uncle of the Prophet. She embraced Islam, and the Prophet married her. Such marriages extended the Prophet's relations with many prestigious clans which had not yet become Muslim, and probably were still among the enemies of Islam. The Prophet used that occasion which followed the treaty of al-Hudaybiyya, "the manifest victory" as it was described by the Quran, "to consolidate the mutual understanding between him and Quraysh ... He asked Suhayl ibn 'Amr - the delegate of Quraysh - that his marriage be performed in Makkah and invited Quraysh to attend the ceremony and the banquet. Muhammad, knowing the powerful reconciliatory effect [of this visit to the Ka'ba in the year that followed the treaty of al-Hudaybiyya according to its terms], sought to further this feeling by having them participate in a joyous occasion ... That was precisely what Suhayl feared [and he rejected an extension of the Prophet's stay in Mecca after the end of the visit and their due return of the Muslims to Madinah according to the terms of al-Hudaybiyya] ... Maymunah survived the Prophet by 50 years, and she asked to be buried at the site of her wedding outside Makkah." [*ibid.* pp. 384-385; see also Ibn al-Qayyim, *Zad al-Ma'ad* I:105-114, Beirut 1979].

It may be obvious then, from going through the cases of the Prophet's marriages one by one, that there were certain common underlying themes among them: he supported Muslim women who faced hard times and needed support, and he established relations with important clans who had previously been hostile to Islam, thus attempting to change their hostile stands by a legitimate approach in accordance with the social realities in the given circumstances, without contradicting the permanent values and principles of Islam, and with the purpose to strengthen the situation of the message of Islam in Arabia in that time. This should not be understood to mean that there was never any personal desire for these marriages on the side of the Prophet, or that he married women whom he disliked or about whom he did not care. Such an interpretation would be going to the other extreme, depriving the Prophet of his personal merits and rights as "a human being" who "received revelation" [18:110; 41:6], whereas in fact both sides of "humanity" and "prophethood" were balanced in his life, and they were interacting mutually in a sound and healthy way,. It has always been essential for Islam to stress that it is a divine message carried by the Prophet to the human beings to make their lives better in all their dimensions, and it is realistic in its idealism and application [e.g. 7:158; 10:57; 14:1; 30:30; 39:41].

Thus personal attraction did not seem to decide the Prophet's marriages in their given circumstances. The type of life which the Prophet lived, as the sources show, was not that of a person who was indulged in the pleasures of this worldly life or who enjoyed relations with women. The Prophet's life was very simple, modest and austere [Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqat*, Beirut, 1978, vol. 1, p.400-9, 464-8] and he seemed overwhelmed by the responsibilities of his message, staying with his companions and teaching them most of the

time, and moving from place to place to spread the message or defend it. He had to make it clear to his wives that unless they felt - at least to a certain extent - his spiritual and moral commitments, their marriage might not be tenable: "*O Prophet, say unto your wives, "If you desire [but] the life of this world and its charms, well, then, I shall provide for you and release you with kindliness. But if you desire God and the conveyor of His message and the last abode in the hereafter, then, surely, for the doers of good among you has God readied a mighty reward*'" [33:28-29]. To elaborate on this point, Muhammad Asad underlines the circumstances in which such "a warning" was given by God to the wives of the Prophet: "By the time the verse was revealed, the Muslims had conquered the rich agricultural region of Khaybar, and the community had grown more prosperous. But while life was becoming easier for most of its members, this ease was not reflected in the household of the Prophet who, as before, allowed himself and his family only the absolute minimum necessary for the most simple living. In view of the changed circumstances, it was no more than natural that his wives were longing for a share in the comparative luxuries which other Muslim women could now enjoy; but an acquiescence by Muhammad to their demand would have conflicted with the principle, observed by him throughout his life, that the standard of living of the conveyor of God's message and his family should not be higher than that of the poorest of the believers. [However,] when, immediately after the revelation [of these two verses], the Prophet recited them to his wives, all of them emphatically rejected all thought of separation and declared that they had chosen 'God and the Conveyor of His message and the good of the life to come' (reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim and others)." [notes 31 and 32 on the verses 33:28- 29, *The Message of the Quran*].

The Prophet's consideration of the realities of his Arab society during his life was always connected with an emphasis on the permanent values and principles that guide the development towards better social circumstances on the one side, with an introduction of certain restrictions for the transitional allowance of having many wives on the other. A maximum of four wives for one man was decided, and justice was essentially required in such cases [4:3]. Having more than one wife was allowed within the context of *"fearing injustice towards the orphans"* which refers to the excess of women over men after successive military confrontations for many years, and the presence of many orphans and their mothers without men who provide for their needs and care for them. As for the Prophet who had more than four wives, it would not have been suitable for his prophethood and leadership nor fair to his wives to divorce any of them, especially after they had unhesitantly chosen *"God and the Conveyor of His message and the good of the life to come."* Also, an addition of any more wives was forbidden in relation to the Prophet: "*No [other] woman shall henceforth be lawful to you, nor are you [allowed] to supplant [any of] them by other wives, even if their beauty may please you greatly - [none shall be lawful to you] beyond those whom your right hand has [already] come to possess. And God keeps watch over everything*" [33:52].

The Prophet's wives had to observe certain rules of etiquette in their behavior with others because of the prestigious position of prophethood and leadership of their husband

and their status as the "mothers of the believers". They had to observe modesty in their dress [33:59], refrain from flaunting their charms as was known in the time of pagan ignorance, abide quietly in their homes, avoid talking in an over-soft voice to others; "*God only wants to keep you safe from all that might be loathsome, O you members of the [Prophet's] household, and purify you to utmost purity. And bear in mind all that is recited in your homes of God's messages and wisdom...*" [33:33-34]. Inside the Prophet's home, the believers were told to enter only when they were permitted, and they were commanded not to prolong their visits until meal-times by indulging in unnecessary talk. When any of the Prophet's wives had to be contacted in her home for any reason, some separation needed to be observed between her and men [33:53], although these restrictions did not apply to men who were closely related to her [33:55].

Since these restrictions were because of special status, this distinction has been emphasized in the Quran: "*O wives of the Prophet! You are not like any of the [other] women*" [33:32]. Accordingly and because of "*all that is recited in your homes of God's message and wisdom*" [33:34], their reward in cases of doing good and their punishment in cases of wrongdoing would be the double of any other woman [33:30-31]. Further restrictions included that none of them could marry any man after the Prophet [33:52]. The Prophet, who repeatedly stressed that women should be treated fairly and kindly all his life including during his "Farewell Pilgrimage," truly "practiced what he preached" at home. It was reported that once the wife of 'Umar ibn al- Khattab argued with him: "How strange of you, O son of al-Khattab! You forbid me to have any different view from you, while your daughter [Hafsa the wife of the Prophet] argues with the Conveyor of God's message himself!" [reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, al-Tirmidhi and al-Nasa'i]. The Prophet used to help his wives with the house work until he heard the call for the prayers [Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, vol. I; p. 366, Beirut 1978].

But in spite of all the Prophet's fairness and kindness with his wives, differences and problems sometimes arose in his relation with them, as in any other family. The special occasion about which the verses 66:1-5 were revealed could not be definitely stated according to the available conflicting reports. Muhammad Asad points out that what can be understood from the Quranic verses themselves and the reliable traditions of the Prophet is that "at some time during the second half of the Medina period, the Prophet [denounced] an oath that for one month he would have no intercourse with any of his wives. Still, while the exact reason cannot be established with certainty, it is sufficiently clear from the ahadith [traditions] that this emotional, temporary renunciation of marital life was caused by display of mutual jealousy among some of the Prophet's wives. Some of the early commentators, however, connect the confidential information with the Prophet's veiled prediction that Abu Bakr and 'Umar ibn al-Khattab would succeed him as leaders of the Muslim community; the recipient of the information is said to have been Hafsah, the daughter of 'Umar and the one to whom she disclosed it was 'A'isha the daughter of Abu Bakr (Baghawi on the authority of Ibn 'Abbas and al-Kalbi; also al-Zamakhshari). If this is correct, it would explain why the Prophet 'made some of it known [to others] while he held back some of it.' [On one side] once his confidential prediction had been divulged, he saw no point in withholding it from the community. [On the other]

he alluded to it, nevertheless in deliberately vague terms - possibly in order not to give to the succession of Abu Bakr and Umar the appearance of an (apostolic sanction) but to leave it, rather, to a free decision of the community in pursuance of the Quranic principle (of Shura 42:38) [The Prophet's oath which was emotionally made could be broken and atoned for (the verse 2:224). The Prophet said: 'If anyone takes a solemn oath (that he would do or refrain from doing something), and thereupon realizes that something else would be more righteous, then let him [/her] do that which is more righteous, and let him [/her] break his [/her] oath and then atone for it' - reported by al-Bukhari and Muslims and others].

"In any case the purport of the above Quranic allusion to this incident is not simply biographical but is rather intended to bring out a moral lesson applicable to all human situations: namely, the inadmissibility of regarding as forbidden anything that God has made lawful, even if such an attitude happens to be motivated by the desire to please another person or persons. Apart from this, it serves to illustrate the fact - repeatedly stressed in the Quran - that the Prophet was but a human being, and therefore subject to human emotions and even liable to commit an occasional mistake (which in his case, however, was invariably pointed out and thus rectified through divine revelation)" [Muhammad Asad, *The Message of the Quran*, notes 1, 4, 7 on verses 66:1, 3, 4 and note 212 on verse 2:224, and see the verse 5:89].

As for the Quranic warning about divorcing the Prophet's wives and giving him instead wives who might be spiritually and morally superior, whether they were married before or not [66:5], Asad rightfully observed that the possibility described in the verse is very similar to the actual situation of the Prophet's wives who were mostly previously married and among whom the only one who had not been married before was 'A'isha. "This allusion," he writes, "together with the fact that the Prophet did not divorce any of his wives, as well as the purely hypothetical formulation of this passage shows that it is meant to be an indirect admonition to the Prophet's wives, who despite their occasional shortcomings - unavoidable in human beings - did possess the virtues referred to (in the verse 66:4). On a wider plane it seems to be an admonition to all believers, men and women alike ..." [note 10 on the verse 66:4, *The Message of the Quran*].

The Prophet's care and kindness to all his wives, and his keenness about justice and fairness towards all of them whatever his preferences might have been, was dominant until the last moments of his life. The Prophet's fatherhood, although not referred explicitly in the Quran, was presented clearly in his verbal and practical traditions. His love for his children and grandchildren was reflected in many of his words and deeds. His attitudes towards his daughter Fatima, his son Ibrahim who died as a child, and his grandchildren al-Hasan and al-Husayn were very impressive examples in this respect. He also maintained good relations in general with his extended family, with the exception of his uncle Abu Lahab who was hostile to him and who would follow him attacking him and discouraging people from accepting the message during the Prophet's efforts to spread Islam. Muhammad's clan of Bani Hashim, again with the exception of Abu Lahab, shared with him the strains of a blockade imposed as a hostile reaction against Muhammad and his message, by the enemies of his message, especially after the migration and settlement of

some Muslims in Abyssinia. For about two years or more, the clan forbade any purchase or sale or marriage to or from Banu Hashim [Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqat*, Beirut, 1978, vol. 1, pp. 208-210]. The closest uncles to the Prophet's heart were Hamza who was almost his age and who believed in his message in its sixth year, and Abu Talib, who continued to be supportive of the Prophet although he did not believe in the message - at least in a known unsecretive way - until his death in the tenth year of that message. The Prophet also showed his care and love to Halima, the woman who nursed him and thus became his milk-mother, and those who took care of him while he was an orphan child, and to their children who might sometimes have been his milk brothers or sisters [Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqat*, Beirut, 1978, vol. 1, pp. 108-15].

The Prophet's Character and Relations with the Believers

And it was by God's grace that you [O Prophet] did deal gently with your followers; and if you have been harsh and hard of heart, they would have indeed broken away from you. Pardon them, then, and pray that they be forgiven, and take counsel with them in matters [that need such counselling], and when you have decided upon what has to be done [as a result of the counselling], put your trust in God; surely, God loves those who put their trust in Him. [3:159]

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ
مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ لِنتَ لَهُمْ ۖ وَلَوْ كُنتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ
ٱلْقَلْبِ لَٱنفَضُّوا۟ مِنْ حَوْلِكَ ۖ فَٱعْفُ عَنْهُمْ
وَٱسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِى ٱلْأَمْرِ ۖ
فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ ﴿١٥٩﴾

And We have never sent a conveyor of [Our] message, but to be heeded by God's leave; if, when they wronged their own selves, they came to you and prayed for God's forgiveness, and the conveyor of [God's] message prayed for their forgiveness, they would assuredly find God an Acceptor of Repentance, Most Gracious. But nay, by your Lord, they do not [really] believe unless they make you [O Prophet] judge all that about which they may disagree among themselves, and then find in their own selves no uneasiness about your decision, but submit themselves utterly [to the commands of God and the conveyor of His message]. [4:64-65]

وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَا
مِن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَلَوْ
أَنَّهُمْ إِذ ظَّلَمُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ جَآءُوكَ
فَٱسْتَغْفَرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱسْتَغْفَرَ لَهُمُ ٱلرَّسُولُ
لَوَجَدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ تَوَّابًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿٦٤﴾ فَلَا
وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا
شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا۟ فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ
حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا۟ تَسْلِيمًا ﴿٦٥﴾

And do not argue on behalf of such as betray their own selves; surely God loves not one who betrays and is vicious. They try to hide themselves from the people while they would never hide themselves from God, since He is with them when they devise in the darkness of night what they say that He does not approve of; and God does encompass [with His knowledge] all that they do. [4:107-108]

وَ لَا تُجَٰدِلْ عَنِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَخْتَانُونَ
أَنفُسَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَن كَانَ
خَوَّانًا أَثِيمًا ﴿١٠٧﴾ يَسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ
ٱلنَّاسِ وَ لَا يَسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ وَ هُوَ
مَعَهُمْ إِذْ يُبَيِّتُونَ مَا لَا يَرْضَىٰ مِنَ ٱلْقَوْلِ ۚ
وَ كَانَ ٱللَّهُ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطًا ﴿١٠٨﴾

And but for God's favor upon you and His grace, some of those [who betray their own selves] would certainly have endeavored to lead you astray; yet [in fact] they will only lead their own selves astray; and to you they can do no harm in any way, as God has sent down to you the Book and wisdom and taught you the knowledge that you knew not [before]; and tremendous is the grace of God unto you. [4:113]

وَ لَوْلَا فَضْلُ
ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ وَ رَحْمَتُهُۥ لَهَمَّت طَّآئِفَةٌ
مِّنْهُمْ أَن يُضِلُّوكَ وَ مَا يُضِلُّونَ إِلَّآ
أَنفُسَهُمْ ۖ وَ مَا يَضُرُّونَكَ مِن شَىْءٍ ۚ
وَ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَ ٱلْحِكْمَةَ
وَ عَلَّمَكَ مَا لَمْ تَكُن تَعْلَمُ ۚ وَ كَانَ فَضْلُ ٱللَّهِ
عَلَيْكَ عَظِيمًا ﴿١١٣﴾

As for one who cuts himself[/herself] off from the Conveyor of God's message after guidance has become obvious to him/her, and follows a path other than that of the believers, We shall leave him[/her] to that which he himself[/she herself] has chosen, and shall cause him/her to endure Hell, and how evil a journey's end. [4:115]

وَ مَن يُشَاقِقِ
ٱلرَّسُولَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ ٱلْهُدَىٰ
وَ يَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ نُوَلِّهِۦ مَا
تَوَلَّىٰ وَ نُصْلِهِۦ جَهَنَّمَ ۖ وَ سَآءَتْ مَصِيرًا ﴿١١٥﴾

May God pardon you [O Prophet]! Why did you grant them permission [to stay] before it had become obvious to you who was truthful and [before] you came to know the liars? [9:43]

عَفَا ٱللَّهُ عَنكَ لِمَ أَذِنتَ
لَهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكَ ٱلَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا۟
وَ تَعْلَمَ ٱلْكَٰذِبِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾

And among them are some who find fault with you [O Prophet] concerning [the distribution of] the charity; if they are given a share they are well-pleased; but if they are given none then they become angry. And yet [it would be but for their own

وَ مِنْهُم
مَّن يَلْمِزُكَ فِى ٱلصَّدَقَٰتِ فَإِنْ أُعْطُوا۟
مِنْهَا رَضُوا۟ وَ إِن لَّمْ يُعْطَوْا۟ مِنْهَآ إِذَا هُمْ
يَسْخَطُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾ وَ لَوْ أَنَّهُمْ رَضُوا۟ مَآ

good] if they were to content themselves with what God and the Conveyor of His message have brought them, and said, "God is enough for us! God will bring us of His bounty and the Conveyor of His message; surely, unto God alone do we turn with hope." [9:58-59]

ءَاتَىٰهُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُۥ وَقَالُوا۟ حَسْبُنَا
ٱللَّهُ سَيُؤْتِينَا ٱللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ وَرَسُولُهُۥٓ
إِنَّآ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ رَٰغِبُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

And among them there are such that hurt the Prophet, saying, "He [merely] gives an ear [to whatever may be said]." Say, "[Yes], he gives an ear to what is good for you. He believes in God, and trusts the believers, and is [a manifestation of God's] grace towards those of you who have attained to faith. And for those who hurt the Conveyor of God's message, grievous suffering awaits." [9:61]

وَمِنْهُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ
ٱلنَّبِىَّ وَيَقُولُونَ هُوَ أُذُنٌ ۚ قُلْ أُذُنُ خَيْرٍ
لَّكُمْ يُؤْمِنُ بِٱللَّهِ وَيُؤْمِنُ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ
وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مِنكُمْ ۚ وَٱلَّذِينَ
يُؤْذُونَ رَسُولَ ٱللَّهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٦١﴾

Now there has come unto you a Conveyor of [God's] message from among yourselves; caring for you that you might not suffer, full of concern about you [your good], [and] full of compassion and mercy towards the believers. So if they turn their backs, say, "God is enough for me. There is no God but He. In Him have I put my trust; and He is the Lord of the mighty throne." [9:128-129]

لَقَدْ جَآءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ
أَنفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ
عَلَيْكُم بِٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٢٨﴾
فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا۟ فَقُلْ حَسْبِىَ ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا
هُوَ ۖ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ ۖ وَهُوَ
رَبُّ ٱلْعَرْشِ ٱلْعَظِيمِ ﴿١٢٩﴾

Endure, then, with patience, remembering that it is none but God who gives you the strength to endure, and do not feel saddened about them nor anguished for what they may plot. Surely, God is with those who are conscious of Him, and those who withal do the best [of different possible options]. [16:127-128]

وَٱصْبِرْ وَمَا
صَبْرُكَ إِلَّا بِٱللَّهِ ۚ وَلَا تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا
تَكُ فِى ضَيْقٍ مِّمَّا يَمْكُرُونَ ﴿١٢٧﴾ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ مَعَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوا۟
وَّٱلَّذِينَ هُم مُّحْسِنُونَ ﴿١٢٨﴾

But would you, perhaps, torment yourself with grief and sorrow over them if they believe not in His message? [18:6; see also 26:3]

فَلَعَلَّكَ بَٰخِعٌ نَّفْسَكَ عَلَىٰٓ
ءَاثَٰرِهِمْ إِن لَّمْ يُؤْمِنُوا۟ بِهَٰذَا ٱلْحَدِيثِ
أَسَفًا ﴿٦﴾

And patiently keep yourself by the side of those who appeal to their Lord morning and evening, seeking His countenance; and let not your eyes turn away from them, seeking the attraction of this world's life; nor obey any whose heart We have let in negligence of remembering Us, as such a person follows [only] his[/her] own whims and his[/her] behavior exceeds [all] bounds [of reason and moderation]. [18:28; see also 35:52]

وَ اصْبِرْ
نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُم بِالْغَدٰوةِ
وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ ۖ وَ لَا تَعْدُ
عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ الْحَيٰوةِ
الدُّنْيَا ۖ وَ لَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَن
ذِكْرِنَا وَ اتَّبَعَ هَوٰىهُ وَ كَانَ أَمْرُهُ فُرُطًا ﴿٢٨﴾

The only response of those who attained to faith, whenever they are called to God and the Conveyor of His message, that he might judge between them, can be no other than, "We have heard, and we obey" - it is such as these who will attain to success. [24:51]

إِنَّمَا كَانَ قَوْلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذَا
دُعُوٓا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَ رَسُولِهِۦ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ
أَن يَقُولُوا سَمِعْنَا وَ أَطَعْنَا ۚ وَ أُولَٰٓئِكَ
هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

The true believers are only they who have attained to faith in God and the Conveyor of His message, and who, whenever they are [engaged] with him [the Conveyor of God's message] upon a matter of common concern, they do not leave unless they have asked him for permission to do so; surely those who do ask you for such permission - it is they who [truly] believe in God and the Conveyor of His message. Hence, whereby they ask leave of you [to go] for some of their own affairs, then give you this leave to any one of them you may wish, and ask God to forgive them; surely God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious.
Do not regard bidding you [to do something] from the Conveyor of God's message, just as bidding one another among yourselves; God is indeed aware of those of you who try to slip away surreptitiously; then let those who go against His bidding beware that a [bitter] trial would befall them [in this world's life], or a grievous suffering would befall them [in the life to come]. [24:62-63]

إِنَّمَا
الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا بِاللَّهِ
وَرَسُولِهِۦ وَ إِذَا كَانُوا مَعَهُۥ عَلَىٰٓ أَمْرٍ
جَامِعٍ لَّمْ يَذْهَبُوا حَتَّىٰ يَسْتَـْٔذِنُوهُ ۚ إِنَّ
الَّذِينَ يَسْتَـْٔذِنُونَكَ أُولَٰٓئِكَ الَّذِينَ
يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَ رَسُولِهِۦ ۚ فَإِذَا
اسْتَـْٔذَنُوكَ لِبَعْضِ شَأْنِهِمْ فَأْذَن لِّمَن
شِئْتَ مِنْهُمْ وَ اسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمُ اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٦٢﴾ لَّا تَجْعَلُوا دُعَآءَ
الرَّسُولِ بَيْنَكُمْ كَدُعَآءِ بَعْضِكُم بَعْضًا ۚ قَدْ
يَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ يَتَسَلَّلُونَ مِنكُمْ لِوَاذًا ۚ
فَلْيَحْذَرِ الَّذِينَ يُخَالِفُونَ عَنْ أَمْرِهِۦٓ أَن
تُصِيبَهُمْ فِتْنَةٌ أَوْ يُصِيبَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٦٣﴾

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا
تَكُونُوا۟ كَٱلَّذِينَ ءَاذَوْا۟ مُوسَىٰ فَبَرَّأَهُ
ٱللَّهُ مِمَّا قَالُوا۟ ۚ وَكَانَ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ
وَجِيهًا ﴿٦٩﴾

O you who have attained to faith! Be not like those who hurt Musa (Moses), but God declared him quit of what they said against him, and he was of high honor in the sight of God. [33:69]

مُّحَمَّدٌ رَّسُولُ
ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَٱلَّذِينَ مَعَهُۥٓ أَشِدَّآءُ عَلَى
ٱلْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَآءُ بَيْنَهُمْ ۖ تَرَىٰهُمْ رُكَّعًا
سُجَّدًا يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ
وَرِضْوَٰنًا ۖ سِيمَاهُمْ فِى وُجُوهِهِم مِّنْ أَثَرِ
ٱلسُّجُودِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ مَثَلُهُمْ فِى ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ ۚ
وَمَثَلُهُمْ فِى ٱلْإِنجِيلِ كَزَرْعٍ أَخْرَجَ شَطْـَٔهُۥ
فَـَٔازَرَهُۥ فَٱسْتَغْلَظَ فَٱسْتَوَىٰ عَلَىٰ
سُوقِهِۦ يُعْجِبُ ٱلزُّرَّاعَ لِيَغِيظَ بِهِمُ
ٱلْكُفَّارَ ۗ وَعَدَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟
وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ مِنْهُم مَّغْفِرَةً
وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٢٩﴾

Muhammad is the Conveyor of God's message, and those who are with him are firm and unyielding towards all stubborn deniers of the truth, [yet] compassionate and merciful towards one another. You see them bow down and prostrate themselves [in prayer], seeking God's grace and [His] goodly acceptance. On their faces are their marks [of spiritual illumination], that are reflected by their prostration [before God and their spirituality]. This is their parable in the Torah, and their parable in the Gospel: [they are] like a plant which brings forth its shoot, and, then strengthens it, and it then grows out and [in the end] stands firm upon its own stem, in the way farmers admire. [Thus will God cause the believers to grow in strength], and [so] the stubborn deniers of the truth are exasperated by them [and the growth they have achieved]. God has promised those among them who attain to faith and do righteousness forgiveness, and a mighty reward [from Him]. [48:29]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تَرْفَعُوٓا۟ أَصْوَٰتَكُمْ فَوْقَ صَوْتِ
ٱلنَّبِىِّ وَلَا تَجْهَرُوا۟ لَهُۥ بِٱلْقَوْلِ كَجَهْرِ
بَعْضِكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ أَن تَحْبَطَ أَعْمَٰلُكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ
لَا تَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٢﴾ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَغُضُّونَ
أَصْوَٰتَهُمْ عِندَ رَسُولِ ٱللَّهِ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ
ٱلَّذِينَ ٱمْتَحَنَ ٱللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ ۚ لَهُم
مَّغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٣﴾ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ
يُنَادُونَكَ مِن وَرَآءِ ٱلْحُجُرَٰتِ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا

O you who have attained to faith! Do not raise your voices above the voice of the Prophet, nor speak loudly to him as you would speak loudly to one another, lest all your deeds should come to nothing while you may not be aware. They who lower their voices in the presence of the Conveyor of God's message, it is they whose hearts God has tested for [and have been proven to] consciousness of Him; [and] theirs shall be forgiveness and a reward supreme. Those who call unto you shouting from outside your private apartments - most of them do

not use their minds. And if only they had patience [to wait] until you came out to them [during the time in which you are used to going out], it would be for their own good; but God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious. [49:2-5]

يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٤﴾ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ صَبَرُوا حَتَّىٰ
تَخْرُجَ إِلَيْهِمْ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ ۚ وَاللَّهُ
غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٥﴾

And know that among you is the Conveyor of God's Message: were he to comply with your inclinations in many cases, you would certainly suffer; but God has endeared the faith to you, and has made it beautiful in your hearts, and He has made hateful to you all denial of the truth, and all inequity, and all rebelliousness [against what is good]; such indeed are those who follow the right course, a grace and favor from God, and God is All-knowing, Truly Wise. [49:7-8]

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ فِيكُمْ
رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ۚ لَوْ يُطِيعُكُمْ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِّنَ
الْأَمْرِ لَعَنِتُّمْ وَلَٰكِنَّ اللَّهَ حَبَّبَ إِلَيْكُمُ
الْإِيمَانَ وَزَيَّنَهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَكَرَّهَ
إِلَيْكُمُ الْكُفْرَ وَالْفُسُوقَ وَالْعِصْيَانَ ۚ
أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الرَّاشِدُونَ ﴿٧﴾ فَضْلًا مِّنَ
اللَّهِ وَنِعْمَةً ۚ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٨﴾

He frowned and turned away, that the blind man came to him. Yet how can you know [O Muhammad]; he might perhaps [be quite willing to] attain to purity or might remember and benefit from this remembrance. While the one who believes himself in no need [for any help or guidance], to him did you give your whole attention. And you are not accountable for his failure to attain to purity. But he who came unto you eagerly, and feeling awe [of God]; from him you look away. No indeed, this is a reminder. [80:1-11]

عَبَسَ وَتَوَلَّىٰ ﴿١﴾ أَن جَاءَهُ
الْأَعْمَىٰ ﴿٢﴾ وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ لَعَلَّهُ يَزَّكَّىٰ
﴿٣﴾ أَوْ يَذَّكَّرُ فَتَنفَعَهُ الذِّكْرَىٰ ﴿٤﴾ أَمَّا
مَنِ اسْتَغْنَىٰ ﴿٥﴾ فَأَنتَ لَهُ تَصَدَّىٰ
﴿٦﴾ وَمَا عَلَيْكَ أَلَّا يَزَّكَّىٰ ﴿٧﴾ وَأَمَّا مَن
جَاءَكَ يَسْعَىٰ ﴿٨﴾ وَهُوَ يَخْشَىٰ ﴿٩﴾
فَأَنتَ عَنْهُ تَلَهَّىٰ ﴿١٠﴾ كَلَّا إِنَّهَا تَذْكِرَةٌ ﴿١١﴾

You are not, by your Lord's grace, a mad man. And, surely, yours shall be a reward never failing; and you have indeed an outstanding character. [68:2-4]

مَا أَنتَ بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ بِمَجْنُونٍ ﴿٢﴾ وَإِنَّ لَكَ
لَأَجْرًا غَيْرَ مَمْنُونٍ ﴿٣﴾ وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ
خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٤﴾

Muhammad was not the father of any particular man, despite being like a father to his previously adopted son Zayd [3:40], yet he was the one who cared and was responsible for the whole community of believers, and his wives were "their mothers" [33:6]. Accordingly, there were mutual rights and obligations in the relationship between the

Prophet and the believers. The believers were taught to be heedful of the Prophet, and to deal with him with respect [e.g. 4:64-65, 115, 24:51; 49:2-5, 7-8], and the Prophet was always caring, kind and gracious towards the believers [e.g. 3:158; 9:43, 61, 128; 21:107; 49:7]. He was the Conveyor of God's message and the leader of the community, and in Medina he was the head of the earliest Islamic state.

Many Arabs - especially those who lived in the desert and were not acquainted with the urban life in cities like Mecca and Yathrib - were not used to the discipline or etiquette that might be required in such a situation, and they needed to come to their Prophet and leader and ask him about the religion or worldly matters. They also came to him when they wronged their own selves, repenting and asking him to pray to God for their forgiveness [4:64-65; 9:90-1, 117-8]. They needed to be accurate in giving him information, and they should never try to misguide him [4:107-108, 113, 49:6-8]. They were reminded in numerous verses that obeying the Prophet was connected with obeying God: *"Whoever obeys the Conveyor of the message he[/she] obeys God thereby"* [4:80], *"follow whatever the Conveyor of the Message gives you [thereof] and refrain from whatever he forbids you"* [59:7]. They were advised not to call on him in a loud voice from outside his home, while he might be resting, or to address him without the due reverence as they might do with one another, or to raise their voices annoyingly above his voice when they talked to him [24:63; 49:2-5]. If they were meeting with him to discuss a matter of common concern and any of them had to go, he had to ask his leave before leaving and could not just withdraw surreptitiously [24:62-63]. They could not enter his home without asking first for permission, and they should not stay for a long time waiting for the meal time or indulging in meaningless talk [33:53].

Islam requires the Muslims to be courteous and refined in their manners, especially with their Prophet and leader, and this developed in the Arab tribal society through God's message and the relations between the Prophet and the believers, and amongst the believers themselves. The Muslims have been strongly and repeatedly urged to follow the practical model of his behavior: *"Surely, in the Conveyor of God's message you have a good example for whoever looks forward [with hope and awe] to God and the Last Day, and remembers God frequently"* [33:21].

According to the Quran, the Conveyor of God's message might at times have been disturbed by the behavior of some of his supposed followers, that was not always out of ignorance or lack of courteousness. They might, for example, have presented false excuses in order to be exempted from the struggle's obligations [9:42-57]. They might have criticized him in distributing the gains of war or the purifying welfare dues (*zakat*) if they did not obtain what they desired from it [9:58]. They might have been jealous of those who were close to him and whom he trusted, and so they accused the Prophet of blindly following what they said to him without thinking [9:61].

Those who embraced Islam without genuine belief, simply to ride its wave of success in order to benefit themselves as much as possible, did not have the faith or the discipline required in the relationship between the Prophet and the believers. They used to

spread doubts, and rumors and denunciations and they would be pleased to undermine - morally at least - the Islamic leadership and the Muslim society from within. The followers of Muhammad were reminded not to act as the followers of Moses did when they hurt their prophet and gave offense to him, even though God defended him and let his innocence from whatever they alleged against him be known [33:69]. The existing Bible reads: "[And the Lord said,] 'My servant Moses ... who is faithful ... with him I speak ... wherefore then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?' And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them ..." [Numbers XII:6-9].

The Conveyor of God's message and the leader of the Muslim community and the Islamic state had to represent "God's mercy and grace" which is the essence and purpose of his message and mission [3:159; 21:10]. He always dealt gently and kindly with all people: be they genuine believers or hypocrites, friends or enemies. He was never harsh in his behavior, nor hard in his heart [3:159].

As a prophet and a leader, Muhammad was urged to tolerate and forgive others' shortcomings or even their hostile behavior if they were his enemies [e.g. 5:13; 7:99; 15:85; 43:89] but also to pray God for their forgiveness. He was told to take counsel with his Companions in matters of common concern, whatever the misconduct or the bad intentions of any of them might be, and as soon as a decision was reached according to this counselling, it had to be carried out thoroughly and without hesitation. He was urged to pray to God for the forgiveness of the wrongdoing of any of the believers [e.g. 4:64; 3:159]. He had to use all the human potentials with which God has graciously endowed people, while at the same time ultimately relying on Him alone in the end and putting his whole trust in Him, since He is the source of all power.

Despite all this responsibility, the Quran repeatedly stresses that Muhammad was a human being, and thus he might have the natural feelings and aspirations of one. He might have felt grieved and sorry for the failure of his people to believe, since he cared about them and about his success in his message [e.g. 18:6, also 26:3]. He might have looked for a moment on the powerful and wealthy people to believe in his message, so that many others who were influenced by them in that tribal society might follow them [18:28-9, also 6:35, 52; 80:1-11].

The Prophet was deeply grieved when his beloved wife and supporter Khadija died, and when his son Ibrahim passed away. He admitted his pain but he was always balanced and never lost self-control, as his own words impressively indicate: "The eyes shed tears, and the heart is heavy with grief, but we never say what may displease God." [a tradition reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Hanbal and Ibn Majah]. When it happened that a solar eclipse coincided with the death of his son Ibrahim and some people thought that nature might be sharing the Prophet's sorrow, he did not allow such a superstition to circulate, and quickly set the record straight: "The sun and the moon are two signs of God['s creation], and are never eclipsed for the death of anybody nor for the life of anybody" [a tradition reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, al-Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, and al-Darimi].

Anger might have afflicted the Prophet, as it does any other human being. He was deeply hurt when his wife betrayed his trust and revealed what he trusted her with to another of his wives [66:1-5] . On this occasion his anger and pain were reflected clearly on his face and his behavior, and so some thought that he had probably divorced his wives, for they did not know exactly who was involved in revealing the Prophet's private matter [66:2-5]. Anger was mixed with grief when his uncle and supporter Hamza was killed by the enemies in the battle of Uhud: "*And if you have to respond to an attack, let your response be only within the limits of the attack against you; but if you bear with patience, that is far better for those who bear with patience. Endure, then, with patience, remembering that it is none but God who gives you the strength to endure, and do not feel saddened about them nor anguished for what they may plot. Surely, God is with those who are conscious of Him, and those who withal do the best [of different possible options]*" [16:126-128]. One of the essential merits of a prophet in general and of Muhammad in his particular circumstances was patience, and thus it is stressed in the Quran in more than 80 places. The Prophet was urged to endure with goodly patience [70:5], and was reminded of the patience of the preceding conveyors of God's message "*endowed with steadfastness and firmness of heart*" [46:35]. God cares about the Prophet and guards him; He is All-sufficient for the Prophet whatever the challenges and hardship he was faced with might be: "*And so await with patience your Lord's judgement, and you are well under Our eyes...*" [52:48], "*So bear you with patience, as the [previous] conveyors of God's message endowed with steadfastness and firmness of heart did bear with patience*" [46:35].

Moreover, the Quran inspires the Prophet and the believers to be self-confident about the truth and about the positive potentials of the human being. "*It may be that God will bring about affection between you [O believers] and those whom you [now] hold as enemies: for God is All- powerful and God is All-forgiving, All-gracious. As for those [of the unbelievers] who do not fight against you because of [your] faith, nor drive you out of your homes, God does not forbid you to deal kindly and justly with them, for surely God loves those who act with justice*" [60:7-8]. It is for this trust in God, in His message and in the human positive potentials, that the Prophet, when he was asked to pray to God against his enemies so that he might destroy them, answered, "I have not been sent to denunciate anybody, I have been sent only as a mercy. Perhaps God may bring out from their offspring one who worships Him alone! O God, guide my people; they do not know" [reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim].

The Prophet's character has been condensed in these inspiring and significant Quranic words: "*Now there has come unto you a Conveyor of [God's] message from among yourselves; caring for you that you might not suffer, full of concern about you[your good], [and] full of compassion and mercy towards the believers*[9:128], "*Surely... you have indeed an outstanding character*" [68:4] . When the Prophet's wife 'A'isha was asked about the character of the Prophet, she just answered, "His character has simply been a representation of what the Quran is all about" [Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqat,* I:364, Beirut 1978].

SUBMISSION TO GOD IS THE MESSAGE OF ALL PROPHETS

بَلَىٰ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ
وَجْهَهُۥ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ فَلَهُۥٓ أَجْرُهُۥ
عِندَ رَبِّهِۦ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ
يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿١١٢﴾

Not precisely [is that which they are claiming] but rather, anyone who submits his [/her] face [and whole being] to God and is doing good, he [/she] shall have his [/her] reward with his [/her] Lord, and on such shall be no fear, neither shall they grieve. [2:112]

According to the Quran, Islam in its wider sense means simply submission of one's whole being to God's will and His guidance, and being always conscious of one's accountability before God in the life to come for all that one has done in this world. In this way, Islam is not limited to a certain denomination; all the conveyors of God's messages, of whom Muhammad is the last, called for such submission to God, and every human being can be among such submitters to God according to his/her intention and will, and considering his/her knowledge,abilities, circumstances etc. Submission to God and His law is manifested in the whole universe with all its living creatures [e.g. 3:83; 13:15; 17:44; 24:41]. The human being has been enabled to express his/her submission to God and His guidance voluntarily through his/her intellect and free will. He/she is accountable for using the powers given to him/her by God in this life and for his/her response to His messages accordingly. Any human being who acts positively in this way is expressing his/her submission to God, or Islam in its broad sense [e.g. 2:112, 208; 3:83; 4:125; 6:71; 16:81; 22:34; 31:22; 39:54; 72:14].

وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ ٱلْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ
ٱلْبَيْتِ وَإِسْمَٰعِيلُ رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّآ ۖ
إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿١٢٧﴾ رَبَّنَا
وَٱجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمَيْنِ لَكَ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِنَآ أُمَّةً
مُّسْلِمَةً لَّكَ وَأَرِنَا مَنَاسِكَنَا وَتُبْ
عَلَيْنَآ ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلتَّوَّابُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٢٨﴾

And when Ibrahim (Abraham), and Isma'il (Ishmael) with him, raised up the foundations of the House [of Worship, praying], "O our Lord! Accept this from us; You are All-hearing, All-knowing.
"O our Lord! Make us submissive to You, and make out of our offspring a people submissive to You, and show us Your ways of worship, and accept our repentance; surely, You alone are the Acceptor of Repentance, the Most Gracious." [2:127-128]

إِذْ قَالَ
لَهُۥ رَبُّهُۥٓ أَسْلِمْ ۖ قَالَ أَسْلَمْتُ لِرَبِّ

Behold, his Lord said to him, "Submit yourself to Me;" he said, "I have submitted myself to [You], the

Lord and Cherisher of the whole universe."
And Abraham charged his children with this, and [so did] Jacob: "O my children! God has chosen for you the [purest] faith, so die not save in submission to Him."
Were you witnesses when death approached Jacob, and when he said to his children, "Whom will you be worshipping after I am gone?" They said: "We will be worshipping your God, the God of your forefathers Abraham, Ishmael, and Isaac, the One God; and to Him do we submit ourselves." [2:131-133]

ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٣١﴾ وَوَصَّىٰ بِهَآ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ
بَنِيهِ وَيَعْقُوبُ ۖ يَٰبَنِىَّ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱصْطَفَىٰ
لَكُمُ ٱلدِّينَ فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُم
مُّسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٣٢﴾ أَمْ كُنتُمْ شُهَدَآءَ إِذْ حَضَرَ
يَعْقُوبَ ٱلْمَوْتُ إِذْ قَالَ لِبَنِيهِ مَا
تَعْبُدُونَ مِنۢ بَعْدِى قَالُوا۟ نَعْبُدُ إِلَٰهَكَ
وَإِلَٰهَ ءَابَآئِكَ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ وَإِسْمَٰعِيلَ
وَإِسْحَٰقَ إِلَٰهًا وَٰحِدًا وَنَحْنُ لَهُۥ
مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٣٣﴾

These verses emphasize the fact that "submission to God, Islam" was always the faith of the successive conveyors of God's messages, to which they invited their different peoples. It was not a new faith initiated by Muhammad, but had been the faith of the earlier prophets and conveyors of God's message, Abraham and his two sons, Ishmael and Isaac from whom the Arabs and the Israelites are respectively descended. The faith in the One God and the submission of one's whole self to Him and His guidance cannot be restricted to any tribe or ethnicity; He is the Lord of the whole universe whom all humanity should recognize and worship. In this respect, the Israelites and Arabs and all other peoples who are equally enjoying His gifts to the human race, have to submit their entire being to God and follow His guidance gratefully, and they will be accountable for their submission to Him in the eternal life to come. On the Day of Judgement, every individual will be judged and requited according to his/her own merits [19:95], not just by being a member of a certain group. This is the essence of the message of God, the Lord of the whole universe, to all humanity in different times and places.

Say: "We believe in God, and in that which has been sent down to us, and that which has been sent down to Ibrahim (Abraham) and Isma'il (Ishmael) and Is-haq (Isaac) and Ya'qub (Jacob) and their descendants (the tribes/ al-Asbat), and that which has been given to Musa (Moses) and 'Isa (Jesus) and that which has been given to all the prophets by their Lord; we make no differentiation between them [with regard to our belief in their prophethood], and it is unto Him that we submit ourselves." [2:136]

قُولُوٓا۟
ءَامَنَّا بِٱللَّهِ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَآ أُنزِلَ
إِلَىٰٓ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ وَإِسْمَٰعِيلَ وَإِسْحَٰقَ
وَيَعْقُوبَ وَٱلْأَسْبَاطِ وَمَآ أُوتِىَ مُوسَىٰ
وَعِيسَىٰ وَمَآ أُوتِىَ ٱلنَّبِيُّونَ مِن رَّبِّهِمْ
لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُۥ
مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٣٦﴾

Since the essence of God's message is one, addressed to the entire humanity through all the conveyors of God's messages, namely: submission to God and His guidance which is called in Arabic "Islam," the followers of Muhammad are merely maintaining the same faith and thus are required to believe equally in all the previous revelations of God and all the previous conveyors of His message, without differentiation between one and another in this belief. God is universal and the essence of His messages is one. Believing that one of these divine messages, is the only one, and looking to the rest as "others" with arrogance and hostility, betrays the essence of the oneness of God and the essence of His message, and the full submission due Him and His guidance.

The Conveyor of God's message, and the believers [in His message] believe in what has been sent down to him from his Lord; they all believe in God and His angels and His Books and the conveyors of His messages, not differentiating [in belief] between any of the conveyors, and they say: "We have heard, and we obey. Grant us Your forgiveness, O our Lord, and with You is all journeys' end." [2:285]

ءَامَنَ
ٱلرَّسُولُ بِمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِن رَّبِّهِۦ
وَٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۚ كُلٌّ ءَامَنَ بِٱللَّهِ وَمَلَٰٓئِكَتِهِۦ
وَكُتُبِهِۦ وَرُسُلِهِۦ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّن
رُّسُلِهِۦ ۚ وَقَالُوا۟ سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا ۖ
غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿٢٨٥﴾

This verse emphasizes the required belief in the one message of God through the successive conveyors of His message, a belief that is inseparable from the faith in God and His angels. The believers follow Prophet Muhammad in this belief, and they commit themselves to submitting their whole selves to God and following His guidance, and thus they can be described as Muslims, a word that gives this meaning of "submission" in Arabic.

And when Jesus felt their stubborn rejection of his message he said, "Who will be my supporters [in the cause of] God?" Said the white garbed-ones [or makers of white garments; the disciples of Jesus], "We are the supporters of God's cause; we believe in God and bear you witness that we have submitted ourselves to Him." [3:52]

فَلَمَّآ أَحَسَّ
عِيسَىٰ مِنْهُمُ ٱلْكُفْرَ قَالَ مَنْ أَنصَارِىٓ
إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۖ قَالَ ٱلْحَوَارِيُّونَ نَحْنُ
أَنصَارُ ٱللَّهِ ءَامَنَّا بِٱللَّهِ وَٱشْهَدْ بِأَنَّا
مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾

Just as Ibrahim (Abraham), Isma'il (Ishmael), Is-haq (Isaac), Ya'qub (Jacob), and his descendants (al-Asbat) all stressed their submission to the One God and His guidance, and can thus be called "muslims" according to the general meaning of the Arabic word, the Disciples of Jesus used the same word to identify themselves and their faith. Although some may use the word "Muslim"as a proper noun for the followers of God's message revealed to Muhammad, the term goes far beyond this, linguistically and conceptually, to embrace all those who submit their whole being voluntarily to God and His guidance.

Do they seek a faith other than that of God, while all that is in the heavens and on earth have, willingly or unwillingly, submitted themselves to Him, and to Him shall they all be brought back.
Say, "We believe in God, and in that which has been bestowed upon us and that which has been bestowed upon Ibrahim (Abraham), and Isma'il (Ishmael), and Is-haq (Isaac), and Ya'qub (Jacob), and his descendants (al-Asbat), and that which has been given to Musa (Moses), and 'Isa (Jesus) and all the [other] Prophets, from their Lord; we make no difference [in our belief] between one and another among them, and to God do we submit wholly ourselves.
And if one goes in search of a faith other than self-submission unto God, it shall never be accepted from him [/her], and in the life to come he [/she] shall be among the lost. [3:83-85]

أَفَغَيْرَ دِينِ ٱللَّهِ يَبْغُونَ
وَ لَهُۥٓ أَسْلَمَ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ
طَوْعًا وَ كَرْهًا وَ إِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٨٣﴾ قُلْ
ءَامَنَّا بِٱللَّهِ وَ مَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَيْنَا وَ مَآ
أُنزِلَ عَلَىٰٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَ إِسْمَٰعِيلَ
وَ إِسْحَٰقَ وَ يَعْقُوبَ وَ ٱلْأَسْبَاطِ وَ مَآ
أُوتِىَ مُوسَىٰ وَ عِيسَىٰ وَ ٱلنَّبِيُّونَ مِن
رَّبِّهِمْ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ وَ نَحْنُ لَهُۥ
مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾ وَ مَن يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ ٱلْإِسْلَٰمِ
دِينًا فَلَن يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَ هُوَ فِى ٱلْأَخِرَةِ مِنَ
ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾

The first of the above verses states the fact that submission to God, "Islam", is manifested by all His creation, whether involuntarily by following His natural laws and their own instinctive motives created by Him as do all creatures including the human being, or voluntarily as the human being in particular can do through his/her intellectual-spiritual merits. The human voluntary submission to God and His messages through His successive prophets, (islam in Arabic), is the faith which secures the human balance, stability, peace, happiness and success, physically and morally, in this life and in the eternal life to come. Contrary to this, ignoring or stubbornly rejecting this natural relation between the Creator and His human creatures leads to loss and disturbance - physically and psychologically, individually and socially - in this present life, and an even greater ruin in the future life.

And who could be of better faith than one who submits his [/her] whole self unto God, doing this sincerely and doing good, and follows the creed of Ibrahim (Abraham) who turned away from all that is false? And God exalted Ibrahim with His love. [4:125]

وَ مَنْ أَحْسَنُ دِينًا
مِّمَّنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُۥ لِلَّهِ وَ هُوَ مُحْسِنٌ
وَ ٱتَّبَعَ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ حَنِيفًا ۗ وَ ٱتَّخَذَ ٱللَّهُ
إِبْرَٰهِيمَ خَلِيلًا ﴿١٢٥﴾

The verse emphasizes that submission to God and following His guidance in one's behavior represent the faith and message of all the prophets since the earliest revelations. Abraham who was exalted with God's love [4:125], has been a leading model of the faith

in the One God that should be followed by all the believers in God's message through the successive prophets. It has been repeatedly stressed in the Quran that Muhammad is merely a follower of the creed of Abraham [e.g. 2:130, 135-6; 3:68, 84, 95-7; 4:125; 6:161; 16:120-3; 22:78; 33:7; 42:13; 60:4]. The followers of Muhammad mention Abraham in their prayers several times a day, praying to God to bestow His blessings on them.

And when I inspired the white garbed ones [or makers of white garments; disciples of Jesus]: "Believe in Me and in the Conveyor of My message' and they said, 'We believe and be our witness that we have submitted ourselves [to God alone]." [5:111]

وَ إِذْ
أَوْحَيْتُ إِلَى ٱلْحَوَارِيِّـۧنَ أَنْ ءَامِنُوا۟ بِى
وَ بِرَسُولِى قَالُوٓا۟ ءَامَنَّا وَ ٱشْهَدْ بِأَنَّنَا
مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١١١﴾

See the comment on the previously mentioned verse 3:52.

Say: "Am I to take to myself as patron other than God, the Originator of the heavens and the earth, He who gives nourishment but Himself needs none?" Say: "I am bidden to be foremost among those who submit themselves to God, and not to be among those who associate others with Him." [6:14]

قُلْ أَغَيْرَ ٱللَّهِ
أَتَّخِذُ وَلِيًّا فَاطِرِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ
وَ هُوَ يُطْعِمُ وَ لَا يُطْعَمُ ۗ قُلْ إِنِّىٓ أُمِرْتُ
أَنْ أَكُونَ أَوَّلَ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ ۖ وَ لَا تَكُونَنَّ
مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٤﴾

Submission to God is the natural and essential relation between the human being and his Creator, the Originator of the whole universe. He has created the human being with various abilities and potentials, and has provided him/her with the resources that fulfil the human needs in this world, and with the necessary intelligence to make use of these resources and fairly distribute their produce, and to develop the human and world's resources as guided by the divine messages. His sustenance and care call the human attention to know Him, and to realize the difference between Him who is in no need of any other, and all His creation including the human beings that rely on Him, on His laws of nature, and on His guidance to humanity. Submission to God alone secures and promotes the human intelligence as well as the individual and social morality.

Say: "Truly, my prayer and [all] my acts of worship and my living and my dying, are for God [alone], the Lord of All-being; no associate has He; for thus have I been bidden, and I shall [always] be foremost among those who submit themselves to Him." [6:162-163]

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِى
وَنُسُكِى وَ مَحْيَاىَ وَ مَمَاتِى لِلَّهِ رَبِّ
ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٦٢﴾ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُۥ ۖ وَ بِذَٰلِكَ
أُمِرْتُ وَ أَنَا۠ أَوَّلُ ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿١٦٣﴾

This is a verbal assertion of submission to God, which shows the practical submission to Him and His guidance in worship and in all the other various deeds throughout one's life, until the advent of death. Submission to God and His guidance should shield the believer against any temptation or threat from others that aims to turn him/her away from God's guidance as revealed through His messages and as reflected in the human perception of morality.

And *Moses said, "O my people! Having believed in God, you have to place your trust in Him, if you have really submitted your whole selves to Him."* [10:84]

وَ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ يَٰقَوْمِ
إِن كُنتُمْ ءَامَنتُم بِٱللَّهِ فَعَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلُوٓاْ إِن
كُنتُم مُّسْلِمِينَ ﴿٨٤﴾

It is natural and logical for the believer in God to rely on Him, and to follow His guidance in facing material and human challenges. His support in this life, and His reward in the eternal life to come ought to prevail over all pressures. Reliance on God and placing one's trust in Him are essential implications of the faith in Him, the Lord of the whole universe, the All-mighty and Most Powerful.

"O my Lord! You have given me to rule, and have imparted unto me some knowledge of what may happen and what the happenings may mean. O You, the Originator of the heavens and earth; You are the One who cares for me and supports me in this world and the life to come; let me die in true submission to You, and let me join the righteous." [12:101]

رَبِّ قَدْ ءَاتَيْتَنِى مِنَ ٱلْمُلْكِ وَ عَلَّمْتَنِى
مِن تَأْوِيلِ ٱلْأَحَادِيثِ ۚ فَاطِرَ
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ أَنتَ وَلِيِّۦ فِى
ٱلدُّنْيَا وَ ٱلْأَخِرَةِ ۖ تَوَفَّنِى مُسْلِمًا
وَ أَلْحِقْنِى بِٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿١٠١﴾

Here is another prophet - Joseph - who emphasized his submission to God and prayed to Him that He would enable him, through His guidance and support, to maintain his state of faith and behavior until the last moment of life, and thus he could join the righteous in eternity. The true believer has to place his/her trust in God, while he/she prays for His help and follows His guidance, and thus the faith has its implications and effects on the human morality and righteousness, as well as on self-confidence and steadfastness.

And strive in His cause as you ought to strive; it is He who has chosen you [to carry His message], and has laid no hardship on you in [matters of] religion, through which you follow the creed of your forefather Ibrahim (Abraham). It is He who has called you "those who have submitted themselves to God, Muslims," both before and

وَ جَٰهِدُواْ فِى ٱللَّهِ حَقَّ
جِهَادِهِۦ ۚ هُوَ ٱجْتَبَىٰكُمْ وَ مَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ
فِى ٱلدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ ۚ مِّلَّةَ أَبِيكُمْ
إِبْرَٰهِيمَ ۚ هُوَ سَمَّىٰكُمُ ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ مِن

in this [revelation] so that the Conveyor of God's message may bear witness [for the truth] about you, and that you may bear witness [for it] about the whole humanity! So keep up the prayer, and render the purifying welfare dues [zakat], and hold fast to God! He is your Lord Supreme, and how excellent is this Lord Supreme and excellent is this Giver of Support. [22:78]

قَبْلُ وَ فِي هَٰذَا لِيَكُونَ ٱلرَّسُولُ
شَهِيدًا عَلَيْكُمْ وَ تَكُونُوا شُهَدَآءَ عَلَى
ٱلنَّاسِ فَأَقِيمُوا ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَ ءَاتُوا
ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَ ٱعْتَصِمُوا بِٱللَّهِ هُوَ مَوْلَىٰكُمْ
فَنِعْمَ ٱلْمَوْلَىٰ وَ نِعْمَ ٱلنَّصِيرُ ﴿٧٨﴾

Once again, the Quran stresses that "those who have submitted themselves to God," or "muslims" do not represent a new faith or a new believing faction, but merely reflect what all successive conveyors of God's message call on their communities to be. Such a description of the believers in the One God has come through the successive messages of God, since Abraham, the early prophet who invited people to submit themselves to God alone, until Muhammad as the last Prophet and Conveyor of God's message.

CHAPTER FIVE

WORSHIP
" ' IBADAT"

INTRODUCTION:
THE CONCEPT OF WORSHIP IN THE QURAN

When one believes in the One God, and His Almightiness and Grace, His Omnipotence and Mercy, he/she feels the need and aspiration to communicate with Him, and pray for His guidance and help. According to the Quran, God is very close to the human being; He answers his/her prayers and rewards him/her for the faith in Him and for calling Him: *"And when my servants ask you about Me - behold, I am near; I respond to the call of one who calls, whenever he [/she] calls unto Me; let them, then, respond unto Me, and believe in Me, so that they might follow the right way"* [2:186].
"And your Lord says: 'Call unto Me, (and) I shall answer you ...' "[40:60].
"And thus does their Lord answer their prayer: "Never do I waste the work of any of you who works [in My way], be you male or female; you are related [and thus equal] to one another [and of the same entity] ..." [3:195].

Worship in Islam may encompass every deed of the human being practiced in accordance with God's guidance. However, worship ('ibada) may also have its particular and specific meaning as a means of communication with God. It aims to nurture and strengthen one's consciousness of God, and this communication with the Lord can be practiced in any time or form: *"Those who remember God when they stand, and when they sit, and when they lie down [to sleep], and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth; 'O our Lord, You have not created this without meaning or purpose or vanity. Glory be to You! Keep us safe, then, from suffering through fire'"* [3:191].

With the exception of pilgrimage to Mecca (hajj), Islam does not require withdrawal from daily life, since after spending a few moments in each of the five daily prayers one can resume work, and even after the weekly Friday congregation one can resume work, "*And when the [Friday] prayer is ended, dispense freely on earth and seek to obtain [something] of God's bounty; but remember God often, so that you would attain to success and happiness [in this life and in the one to come]*" [62:10].

Fasting in the month of Ramadan, which is limited to a bearable number of hours during a bearable number of days, also does not prevent a person from work. However, one feels that communication with God should have some special form, so that he/she may feel a difference in practicing it. Worship in Islam requires only possible -and even easy- steps: *"God does not desire to impose any hardship on you, but wants to make you pure, and to bestow upon you His blessings in full, so that you would be grateful"* [5:6] *"God wills that you shall have ease, and does not will you to suffer hardship"* [2:185].

The Islamic forms of worship vary from daily prayers which include movements like bowing and prostration, recitation from the Quran, praise of God and supplication for His guidance, and forgiveness and help, to yearly fasting and payment of social welfare dues (zakat), to the pilgrimage which must be performed once in a lifetime. If one is under some pressure that makes the worship very difficult - not necessarily impossible - a delay or another easier substitute is offered: "but if any of you is sick or on a journey [during Ramadan, then he [/she] shall fast later for the same number of other days" [2:185].

Forms of worship are meant not only for themselves, but for developing certain physical and moral virtues. For example, cleanliness of one's body, clothes, and place of prayer are prerequisites for any prayer throughout the day. Congregational prayers [on Fridays, the two feast days, for a deceased, for rain etc.] train the individual to keep order and assure his/her belongingness to the community. The most spiritual and moral achievement of all acts of worship is the development of God-consciousness which guards the believer against selfishness, arrogance, greed and any other immoral or unethical behavior: *"and, behold. prayer restrains [one] from loathsome deeds, and from all that runs counter to common sense and reason, and remembrance of God is indeed the greatest [good accomplished by prayer] and God knows all what you do"* [29:45], *"Fasting is ordained for you as it was ordained for those before you, so that you might remain conscious of God [and be trained on self-restraint]"* [2:183], *"And whoever undertakes the pilgrimage in its [appointed] time shall, while on pilgrimage, abstain from sexual contact, from wrongdoing, and from disputing; and whatever good you may do, God is aware of it. And make provision for yourselves, but - surely- the best of all provisions is God-consciousness; remain then conscious of Me, O you who have minds"* [2:197].

Worshipping God is really for one's own benefit, since God is in no need of this worship: *"surely, God Himself is the Provider of all sustenance, the One of all might, the Ever-invulnerable."* [51:58]; *"Surely, my Lord is All-sufficient, All-generous"* [27:40].

GENERAL TEACHINGS

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ
ٱعْبُدُوا۟ رَبَّكُمُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكُمْ وَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن
قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

O you people! Worship your Lord who has created you and those who lived before you so that you might remain conscious of Him. [2:21]

Worshipping God is an expression of one's belief in Him as the One God and Lord as well as of the submission of the human being to His will and guidance. In particular, it is a form of support for the human being against his/her limitations or arrogance in times of success and despair in cases of failure. The worshipper feels more self-confident and firm through contacting the All-mighty, by calling upon Him for guidance and help, and relying on His grace and support. It is a continuous contact with the All-mighty, the All-knowing, the All-reckoning. It maximizes human energy and productivity to the utmost of its potential, and secures balance and stability within the human self.

وَ إِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَـٰقَ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ لَا تَعْبُدُونَ
إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ وَ بِٱلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَ ذِى
ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ وَ ٱلْيَتَـٰمَىٰ وَ ٱلْمَسَـٰكِينِ
وَقُولُوا۟ لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا وَ أَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ
وَ ءَاتُوا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا
مِّنكُمْ وَ أَنتُم مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿٨٣﴾

And [remember] when We took this solemn pledge from the children of Israel: "Worship none but God, and be good to your parents and kin, and the orphans and the needy, and speak good to people, and keep up prayer, and render the purifying [welfare] dues (zakat); then did you turn away, save a few among you, swerving aside. [2:83]

The pledge of the Children of Israel to God and His promise to them if they fulfilled their pledge is related to the universal moral law. If a person breaks this law, he/she contradicts his/her submission to God and bears full responsibility for this breach, since God's justice cannot be biased with or against any person or group. Worshipping the One God should inspire and develop a morality which is reflected in the human behavior towards others. Speaking fairly and kindly to people is not restricted to outward courtesy to people; it must reach the depth of the human self and thus one's speaking should stress justice, benevolence, compassion and magnanimity in human relations.

بَلَىٰ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ
وَجْهَهُۥ لِلَّهِ وَ هُوَ مُحْسِنٌ فَلَهُۥٓ أَجْرُهُۥ
عِندَ رَبِّهِۦ وَ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَ لَا هُمْ
يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿١١٢﴾

Not precisely [is that which they are claiming] but rather, anyone who submits his [/her] face [and whole being] to God and is doing good, he [/she] shall have his [/her] reward with his [/her] Lord, and on such shall be no fear, neither shall they grieve. [2:112]

The word "Islam" in its wider sense means submission to God, and in this way anyone is a Muslim if he/she submits his/her whole self to God, believing in Him and in His judgement in the eternal life to come, and following His message and guidance in doing good to others. Throughout the Quran, faith, "*iman,*" is inseparable from good deeds. This submission to God in all human activities is the essence of worship, " '*ibada.*" It is a continuous direction and practice reflected in one's whole life, not just during limited performances at certain times or places. In classical Arabic "submitting one's face to God" denotes the submission of one's whole personality to Him, since the face of a person is the most expressive part of his/her body. This submission is the essence of "ibada" as well as of "Islam" in general. According to the Quran, God's acceptance and His eternal reward are offered to everyone who consciously submits his/herself to God and His guidance and laws that secure justice for all of humanity without bias, and thus lives righteously. There is no privileged "denomination" with regard to God's justice in this present life or in the eternal life to come.

Were you witnesses when death approached Jacob, and when he said to his children,"Whom will you be worshipping after I am gone?" They said: "We will be worshipping your God, the God of your forefathers Abraham, Ishmael, and Isaac, the One God; and to Him do we submit ourselves." [2:133]

أَمْ كُنتُمْ شُهَدَآءَ إِذْ حَضَرَ
يَعْقُوبَ ٱلْمَوْتُ إِذْ قَالَ لِبَنِيهِ مَا
تَعْبُدُونَ مِنۢ بَعْدِى قَالُوا۟ نَعْبُدُ إِلَٰهَكَ
وَإِلَٰهَ ءَابَآئِكَ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ وَإِسْمَٰعِيلَ
وَإِسْحَٰقَ إِلَٰهًا وَٰحِدًا وَنَحْنُ لَهُۥ
مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٣٣﴾

Although the Children of Israel were repeatedly assuring that they had always been worshipping the One God whom their forefathers had worshiped before them, their concept of God was confined in their minds to that of a God of a particular group of people. Here they are reminded that their forefathers had the pure concept of the submission of one's self to the One God of All-being until the last moment of life which is the meaning of the Arabic word "Islam" in its widest and most comprehensive sense.

O you who have attained to faith! Bow you down and prostrate yourselves, and worship your Lord [alone], and do good; so that you might attain to success and happiness. [22:77]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱرْكَعُوا۟ وَٱسْجُدُوا۟ وَٱعْبُدُوا۟
رَبَّكُمْ وَٱفْعَلُوا۟ ٱلْخَيْرَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾

Here also, true beliefs are inseparable from good deeds. Genuine worship of God should lead to righteous dealing with people. One cannot be fully conscious of God at a particular time or place or in dealing with particular people, while ignoring or contradicting His guidance and justice as revealed in His message in other circumstances. Worship aims to nurture God-consciousness so that this restrains the human being from all wrong and shameful deeds [see 29:45].

I have only created the invisible beings [jinn] and the human beings so that they may [know and] worship Me. No sustenance do I ever want from them, nor do I want them to feed Me. Surely, God is the Provider of all sustenance, the One with all might, the Ever-invulnerable. [51:56-58]

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ ٱلْجِنَّ وَٱلْإِنسَ إِلَّا
لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴿٥٦﴾ مَآ أُرِيدُ مِنْهُم مِّن رِّزْقٍ
وَمَآ أُرِيدُ أَن يُطْعِمُونِ ﴿٥٧﴾ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ
ٱلرَّزَّاقُ ذُو ٱلْقُوَّةِ ٱلْمَتِينُ ﴿٥٨﴾

God has His purpose and plan behind creation, which we may understand as giving all creatures the chance to fulfill their potentials through following the natural laws of the Creator. For human beings, this means following God's guidance and the human mind. Rational beings accept the existence of God by using their minds, and this is the intentional and voluntary statement made by the "homo sapiens" which represents the essence of worship, *ibada*: the acknowledgement of the true and absolute Divinity and Supreme "Lordship" of the One God, and the true and full "submission" of the human being. This realization and reckoning lead the human being to conform to God's message and plan for the fulfillment of all the human internal and external potential, while the All-mighty Lord Himself is in no need of being acknowledged or worshiped, since He is self-sufficient, infinite in His power and free of all needs. God is the source and center of all power and all goodness, and human progress depends upon our aligning ourselves with His will in all creation in this world's life and His guidance as represented in His messages. This is the meaning and purpose of worshipping Him. Any power which we seek must be from God, whose power is eternal, universal and beyond any bias. His care and grace are always sure, but they are applied together with His justice. His providence in this life reaches those who believe in Him and those who reject Him, the good-doers and the evil- doers: "*Of the bounties of your Lord We bestow freely on both these [who seek the good of the life to come while they drive out the good of this world's life] and those [who only seek the immediate pleasures of this world's life], and the bounties of your Lord are never confined [to one group]*" [17:20]. In the end, every human individual will be accountable for all that he/she has done with what God has granted him/her.

PRAYERS "SALAT"

Prayers and Faith

Those who believe in [the existence of] that which is beyond the reach of human sensory perception, keep up prayer, and spend [on those who are in need and on what the whole society needs] out of what We have provided for them as sustenance. [2:3]

ٱلَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ
بِٱلْغَيْبِ وَ يُقِيمُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَ مِمَّا
رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ﴿٣﴾

Yet, if they repent and take to prayer, and offer the purifying [welfare] dues (zakat), they become your brethren in faith, and clearly do We spell out these messages unto people of knowledge. [9:11]

فَإِن تَابُوا۟
وَ أَقَامُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَ ءَاتَوُا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ
فَإِخْوَٰنُكُمْ فِى ٱلدِّينِ ۗ وَ نُفَصِّلُ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ
لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١١﴾

Tell my servants who have attained to faith that they should keep up prayers, and spend [on whosoever is in need and on what the whole society needs] out of what We have provided for them as sustenance, secretly and openly, before the coming of a Day on which there is no place for bargaining, or intimate relationship. [14:31]

قُل لِّعِبَادِىَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ يُقِيمُوا۟
ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَ يُنفِقُوا۟ مِمَّا رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ سِرًّا
وَعَلَانِيَةً مِّن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِىَ يَوْمٌ لَّا بَيْعٌ فِيهِ
وَ لَا خِلَٰلٌ ﴿٣١﴾

Verily, I - alone - am God; there is no god but I; hence, worship Me alone, and be constant in prayer to keep alive your consciousness of Me. [20:14]

إِنَّنِىٓ أَنَا ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّآ أَنَا۠ فَٱعْبُدْنِى
وَ أَقِمِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ لِذِكْرِىٓ ﴿١٤﴾

The successful is one who attains to self-purity, and having his[/her] Lord's name alive in his[/her] mind, he[/she] prays [unto Him, to enjoy communicating with Him]. [87:14-15]

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن تَزَكَّىٰ ﴿١٤﴾
وَذَكَرَ ٱسْمَ رَبِّهِۦ فَصَلَّىٰ ﴿١٥﴾

Since religious faith is related to what is beyond the human sensory perception, acts of worship are required as concrete human practices to communicate with the Lord who

encompasses all that human vision may capture, while no human vision can encompass Him. The faith in the One God urges the believer to communicate with the Lord, bearing in mind His almightiness and His grace, and such a communication nurtures and strengthens the faith [20:14; 87:14-15]. The above verses clearly connect the prayer with the faith in the One God, as well as with all other elements in this faith. They also correlate offering the prayers with spending on those who are in need from that with which God has blessed the human being, whether physically, intellectually, morally, or materially. Keeping up daily prayers is considered a sign of true repentance to God [9:11], and it is - besides the paying of purifying welfare dues (zakat) - a pre-requisite to being truly a part of the Muslim community. Constant prayer to God and genuine worship of Him actualize the twofold sides of true faith as it comes in the Opening of the Book (*Fatiha-t al-Kitab*): worshipping Him alone, and turning to Him alone for help and support [1:5].

Prayers in all the Messages of God

They said, "O Shu'ayb, does your prayer [and relation to God] command you that we should give up what our forefathers were used to worship, or that we refrain from doing whatever we wish with our possessions? We hope you think with coolness and deliberation, and be right-minded?" [11:87]

قَالُوا۟ يَٰشُعَيْبُ
أَصَلَوٰتُكَ تَأْمُرُكَ أَن نَّتْرُكَ مَا يَعْبُدُ
ءَابَآؤُنَآ أَوْ أَن نَّفْعَلَ فِىٓ أَمْوَٰلِنَا مَا
نَشَٰٓؤُا۟ ۖ إِنَّكَ لَأَنتَ ٱلْحَلِيمُ ٱلرَّشِيدُ ﴿٨٧﴾

[Ibrahim/Abraham prayed] "O our Lord! I have settled some of my offspring in a valley where the land is not arable, close to Your Sanctified House [of worship], so that, O our Lord, they might keep up prayers; so cause people's hearts to yearn towards them, and grant them sustenance from land produce, so that they might feel grateful [for Your blessing]." [14:37]

رَبَّنَآ إِنِّىٓ
أَسْكَنتُ مِن ذُرِّيَّتِى بِوَادٍ غَيْرِ ذِى زَرْعٍ
عِندَ بَيْتِكَ ٱلْمُحَرَّمِ رَبَّنَا لِيُقِيمُوا۟
ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ فَٱجْعَلْ أَفْـِٔدَةً مِّنَ ٱلنَّاسِ تَهْوِىٓ
إِلَيْهِمْ وَٱرْزُقْهُم مِّنَ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

"O my Lord! Help me to keep up the prayer, and let there be among my offspring those who do [the same]; O our Lord, accept my prayer." [14:40]

رَبِّ ٱجْعَلْنِى مُقِيمَ
ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِى ۚ رَبَّنَا وَتَقَبَّلْ
دُعَآءِ ﴿٤٠﴾

And call to mind in this book Isma'il (Ishmael); he kept true to what he

وَٱذْكُرْ
فِى ٱلْكِتَٰبِ إِسْمَٰعِيلَ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ صَادِقَ

said and promised, a conveyor of [God's] message and a prophet. And he used to bid his family [and people] to pray and to give purifying dues (zakat), and found favor from his Lord. [19:54-55]

اَلْوَعْدِ وَ كَانَ رَسُولًا نَّبِيًّا ﴿٥٤﴾ وَ كَانَ
يَأْمُرُ أَهْلَهُۥ بِالصَّلَوٰةِ وَ الزَّكَوٰةِ وَ كَانَ
عِندَ رَبِّهِۦ مَرْضِيًّا ﴿٥٥﴾

And keep up [O children of Israel] the prayer, and give the purifying charity (zakat) [to those in need], and bow down in prayer with all who bow down. [2:43]

وَ أَقِيمُوا الصَّلَوٰةَ
وَ ءَاتُوا الزَّكَوٰةَ وَ ارْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّٰكِعِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾

And [remember] when We took this solemn pledge from the children of Israel: "Worship none but God, and be good to your parents and kin, and the orphans and the needy, and speak good to people, and keep up prayer, and render the purifying [welfare] dues (zakat); then did you turn away, save a few among you, swerving aside. [2:83]

وَ إِذْ
أَخَذْنَا مِيثَٰقَ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ لَا تَعْبُدُونَ
إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَ بِالْوَٰلِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَ ذِى
الْقُرْبَىٰ وَ الْيَتَٰمَىٰ وَ الْمَسَٰكِينِ
وَ قُولُوا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا وَ أَقِيمُوا الصَّلَوٰةَ
وَ ءَاتُوا الزَّكَوٰةَ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا
مِّنكُمْ وَ أَنتُم مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿٨٣﴾

And We made them [Ibrahim /Abraham, Is-haq/Isaac, Lut/Lot, and Ya'qub/Jacob] leaders who would guide [people] in accordance with Our command, and We inspired them to do good works, and keep up the prayer, and spend the purifying charity (zakat) [on those in need], and Us alone did they serve. [21:73]

وَ جَعَلْنَٰهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا
وَ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْهِمْ فِعْلَ الْخَيْرَٰتِ وَ إِقَامَ
الصَّلَوٰةِ وَ إِيتَآءَ الزَّكَوٰةِ ۖ وَ كَانُوا لَنَا
عَٰبِدِينَ ﴿٧٣﴾

Verily, I - alone - am God; there is no god but I; hence, worship Me alone, and be constant in prayer to keep alive your consciousness of Me. [20:14]

إِنَّنِىٓ أَنَا اللَّهُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّآ أَنَا۠ فَاعْبُدْنِى
وَ أَقِمِ الصَّلَوٰةَ لِذِكْرِىٓ ﴿١٤﴾

And We inspired Musa (Moses) and his brother; "Settle for your people in Egypt some houses, and let these [houses] be places of worship [for you], and keep up the prayer; and give you [O Moses] the good tidings [of God's support] to the believers." [10:87]

وَ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰ
مُوسَىٰ وَ أَخِيهِ أَن تَبَوَّءَا لِقَوْمِكُمَا
بِمِصْرَ بُيُوتًا وَ اجْعَلُوا بُيُوتَكُمْ قِبْلَةً
وَ أَقِيمُوا الصَّلَوٰةَ ۗ وَ بَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾

Thereupon, as he [Zakariyya/ Zachariah] stood praying in the sanctuary, the angels called out unto him: "God gives you good tidings of [the birth of] Yahya (John), who shall confirm the truth of a word of God, and shall be outstanding among people, and utterly chaste, and a prophet from among the righteous." [3:39]

فَنَادَتْهُ
ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَآئِمٌ يُصَلِّى فِى
ٱلْمِحْرَابِ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بِيَحْيَىٰ
مُصَدِّقًۢا بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَسَيِّدًا
وَحَصُورًا وَنَبِيًّا مِّنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾

[But] he [Jesus] said, "I am a worshipper of God; He has given me the Book and has made me a prophet. Blessed has He made me wherever I may be, and He has enjoined upon me the prayer and the purifying charity as long as I live." [19:30-31]

قَالَ إِنِّى عَبْدُ ٱللَّهِ
ءَاتَىٰنِىَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَجَعَلَنِى نَبِيًّا ﴿٣٠﴾
وَجَعَلَنِى مُبَارَكًا أَيْنَ مَا كُنتُ وَأَوْصَٰنِى
بِٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَٱلزَّكَوٰةِ مَا دُمْتُ حَيًّا ﴿٣١﴾

It is clear from the above verses that the prayer to the One God, to whom the person submits his/her whole self, was taught by the conveyors of God's message before Muhammad -according to the Quran. They might have differed in the form from one message to another, but the essence, which is an expression of submission of the whole to the One God and His guidance, has never changed. This essence also guards the believer against superiority complexes such as arrogance, selfishness and greed on the one side, and inferiority complexes such as hopelessness, submissiveness and passivity on the other. Clearly, it has its effect on individual morality, behavior, and social inter-relations. As early as the time of the Prophet Shu'ayb in Median, Northern Arabia, people felt that worshipping the One God has its effect on their socio-economic behavior, and that it sets limits to absolute individualism and materialism [11:87]. Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) established the ancient House of Worship in Mecca and settled some of his offspring there "*to keep up the prayers.*" According to some narratives in the history of Arabia on the eve of Islam and in the life of Muhammad before he received God's revelation, there were traces of Abrahamic monotheism and acts of worship among the Arabs in Mecca, in spite of the dominant idolatry and polytheism.

Houses of Worship

And when We made the House [of Worship] a destination to which people may turn repeatedly and a sanctuary: take, then, the place whereon Ibrahim (Abraham) once stood as your place of prayer. And thus did We commit Abraham and Isma'il (Ishmael): "Purify My House for those who

وَإِذْ جَعَلْنَا ٱلْبَيْتَ
مَثَابَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَأَمْنًا وَٱتَّخِذُوا۟ مِن
مَّقَامِ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ مُصَلًّى ۖ وَعَهِدْنَآ إِلَىٰٓ
إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ وَإِسْمَٰعِيلَ أَن طَهِّرَا بَيْتِىَ

will walk around it, and those who stay beside it for worship, and those who bow down and prostrate themselves in prayer. [2:125]

لِلطَّآئِفِينَ وَ ٱلْعَٰكِفِينَ وَ ٱلرُّكَّعِ ٱلسُّجُودِ ﴿١٢٥﴾

And when Abraham, and Ishmael with him, raised up the foundations of the House [of Worship, praying], "O our Lord! Accept this from us; You are All-hearing, All-knowing." [2:127]

وَ إِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ ٱلْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ ٱلْبَيْتِ وَ إِسْمَٰعِيلُ رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّآ ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿١٢٧﴾

The first House [of worship] established for the people was indeed the one at Bakka [Makka/Mecca], blessed and guiding to all people; therein are clear signs and messages from where Abraham once stood, and whoever enters it feels secure [and finds inner peace]. And pilgrimage unto the House is a duty of all people towards God, any who is able to make his [/her] way there. And as for those who stubbornly deny the truth, surely, God is All-sufficient and never needs any being. [3:96-97]

إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِى بِبَكَّةَ مُبَارَكًا وَ هُدًى لِّلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٩٦﴾ فِيهِ ءَايَٰتٌۢ بَيِّنَٰتٌ مَّقَامُ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ ۖ وَ مَن دَخَلَهُۥ كَانَ ءَامِنًا ۗ وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى ٱلنَّاسِ حِجُّ ٱلْبَيْتِ مَنِ ٱسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا ۚ وَ مَن كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَنِىٌّ عَنِ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٩٧﴾

And who does greater evil than one who bars God's places of worship [from being used in] invoking His name, and strives for their ruin? Such men should never enter them, save in fear [of God]; for them is disgrace in this world's life, and in the life to come a formidable suffering in store. [2:114]

وَ مَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّن مَّنَعَ مَسَٰجِدَ ٱللَّهِ أَن يُذْكَرَ فِيهَا ٱسْمُهُۥ وَ سَعَىٰ فِى خَرَابِهَا ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ مَا كَانَ لَهُمْ أَن يَدْخُلُوهَآ إِلَّا خَآئِفِينَ ۚ لَهُمْ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا خِزْىٌ وَ لَهُمْ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١١٤﴾

Say: "My Lord has commanded justice; and that you set your whole selves [to Him] at every act [and in every place] of worship, and to call upon Him, sincere in your faith in Him alone. As it was He who brought you into being in the first place, so also [to Him] you will return." [7:29]

قُلْ أَمَرَ رَبِّى بِٱلْقِسْطِ ۖ وَ أَقِيمُوا۟ وُجُوهَكُمْ عِندَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَ ٱدْعُوهُ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ ٱلدِّينَ ۚ كَمَا بَدَأَكُمْ تَعُودُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾

O Children of Adam! Take your adornment at every place of worship; and eat and drink, yet do not go

يَٰبَنِىٓ ءَادَمَ خُذُوا۟ زِينَتَكُمْ عِندَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَ كُلُوا۟ وَ ٱشْرَبُوا۟

beyond natural and reasonable limits, for God loves not those who go beyond moderation. [7:31]

وَلَا تُسْرِفُوٓا ۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُسْرِفِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

Only the one who should frequent God's houses of worship is he[/she] who believes in God and the Last Day and keeps up prayer and offers the purifying dues (zakat), and stands in awe of none but God, and [only such as] these may hope to be among the guided to what is right and righteous. [9:18]

إِنَّمَا يَعْمُرُ
مَسَٰجِدَ ٱللَّهِ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ
ٱلْءَاخِرِ وَأَقَامَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَى ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ
وَلَمْ يَخْشَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ ۖ فَعَسَىٰٓ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ
أَن يَكُونُوا۟ مِنَ ٱلْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿١٨﴾

And the [hypocrites] who have established a [separate] mosque in order to cause mischief and disbelief, and to develop a split among the believers, and to provide an outpost for all who have been fighting against God and the Conveyor of His message from the beginning; and they will certainly swear [to you], "We had but the best of intentions," while God attests that they are truly liars. Never stand there [in this mosque, for prayer]! Only a mosque established on [the foundation of] God-consciousness from the very first day is worthy for you to stand in; therein are men desirous of growing in purity, and God loves those who purify themselves. Which, then, is the better: one who has established his building on [the foundation of] God-consciousness and [has always been seeking] His goodly acceptance, or one who has established his building on the edge of a crumbling slope that will tumble with him into the fire of hell? And God does not grace with His guidance [such as deliberately choose to be] evildoing people. [9:107-109]

وَٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّخَذُوا۟ مَسْجِدًا ضِرَارًا وَكُفْرًا
وَتَفْرِيقًۢا بَيْنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَإِرْصَادًا لِّمَنْ
حَارَبَ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ مِن قَبْلُ ۚ
وَلَيَحْلِفُنَّ إِنْ أَرَدْنَآ إِلَّا ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ ۖ
وَٱللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّهُمْ لَكَٰذِبُونَ ﴿١٠٧﴾ لَا تَقُمْ
فِيهِ أَبَدًا ۚ لَّمَسْجِدٌ أُسِّسَ عَلَى ٱلتَّقْوَىٰ
مِنْ أَوَّلِ يَوْمٍ أَحَقُّ أَن تَقُومَ فِيهِ ۚ فِيهِ
رِجَالٌ يُحِبُّونَ أَن يَتَطَهَّرُوا۟ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ
يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُطَّهِّرِينَ ﴿١٠٨﴾ أَفَمَنْ أَسَّسَ
بُنْيَٰنَهُۥ عَلَىٰ تَقْوَىٰ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ وَرِضْوَٰنٍ
خَيْرٌ أَم مَّنْ أَسَّسَ بُنْيَٰنَهُۥ عَلَىٰ شَفَا
جُرُفٍ هَارٍ فَٱنْهَارَ بِهِۦ فِى نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ ۗ
وَٱللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٠٩﴾

Glory to Him, who moved His worshipper by night from the Inviolable House of Worship [in Mecca] to the Remote House of Worship [in Jerusalem], the environs of which We have blessed, so that We

سُبْحَٰنَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَسْرَىٰ بِعَبْدِهِۦ لَيْلًا مِّنَ
ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ إِلَى ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْأَقْصَا
ٱلَّذِى بَٰرَكْنَا حَوْلَهُۥ لِنُرِيَهُۥ مِنْ ءَايَٰتِنَآ ۚ

might show him some of Our signs; surely, He is the All-hearing, the All- seeing. [17:1]

إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْبَصِيرُ ﴿١﴾

"If you do good, it is but doing good to your own selves, and if you do evil, it is but done for your own selves" [,God said]. And when the second prediction came to pass, [We raised enemies against you, so that] these might disgrace you, and enter the House of Worship [Temple[as [the other enemies] had entered it once before, and utterly destroy that over which they prevailed. [17:7]

إِنْ أَحْسَنتُمْ أَحْسَنتُمْ لِأَنفُسِكُمْ ۖ
وَإِنْ أَسَأْتُمْ فَلَهَا ۚ فَإِذَا جَآءَ وَعْدُ
ٱلْآخِرَةِ لِيَسُۥٓـُٔوا۟ وُجُوهَكُمْ وَلِيَدْخُلُوا۟
ٱلْمَسْجِدَ كَمَا دَخَلُوهُ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ
وَلِيُتَبِّرُوا۟ مَا عَلَوْا۟ تَتْبِيرًا ﴿٧﴾

And in that way, We let people come upon them, so that they might know that God's promise [of resurrection] is true, and that there is no doubt about [the coming of] the Last Hour, when they argued among themselves about the matter of those men of the Cave]. Some said, "Erect a building over them; their Lord knows best about them." Those whose opinion prevailed in the end said, "Let us erect a house of worship so that they might always be remembered." [18:21]

وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَعْثَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ
لِيَعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَأَنَّ
ٱلسَّاعَةَ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهَآ إِذْ يَتَنَٰزَعُونَ بَيْنَهُمْ
أَمْرَهُمْ ۖ فَقَالُوا۟ ٱبْنُوا۟ عَلَيْهِم بُنْيَٰنًا ۖ
رَّبُّهُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِهِمْ ۚ قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ غَلَبُوا۟ عَلَىٰٓ
أَمْرِهِمْ لَنَتَّخِذَنَّ عَلَيْهِم مَّسْجِدًا ﴿٢١﴾

Thereupon he[Zakariyya/Zachariah] came out of the sanctuary unto his people and signaled to them [by gestures]: "Extol His glory at dawn and in the evening." [19:11]

فَخَرَجَ عَلَىٰ قَوْمِهِۦ مِنَ ٱلْمِحْرَابِ
فَأَوْحَىٰٓ إِلَيْهِمْ أَن سَبِّحُوا۟ بُكْرَةً
وَعَشِيًّا ﴿١١﴾

And her Lord accepted her [Maryam /Mary] with gracious favor, and caused her to grow up in goodly growth, and placed her in the care of Zakariyya (Zachariah). Whenever Zachariah went in to her in the sanctuary, he found her provided with [God's] sustenance. "Mary," he said, "how did this come to you?" She said, "It is from God; truly God grants sustenance unto whomsoever He wills, beyond all reckoning." [3:37]

فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ
حَسَنٍ وَأَنۢبَتَهَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا وَكَفَّلَهَا
زَكَرِيَّا ۖ كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا
ٱلْمِحْرَابَ وَجَدَ عِندَهَا رِزْقًا ۖ قَالَ
يَٰمَرْيَمُ أَنَّىٰ لَكِ هَٰذَا ۖ قَالَتْ هُوَ مِنْ عِندِ
ٱللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَن يَشَآءُ بِغَيْرِ
حِسَابٍ ﴿٣٧﴾

Thereupon, as he [Zakariyya/ Zachariah] stood praying in the sanctuary, the angels called out unto him: "God gives you good tidings of [the birth of] Yahya (John), who shall confirm the truth of a word of God, and shall be outstanding among people, and utterly chaste, and a prophet from among the righteous." [3:39]

فَنَادَتْهُ
ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَآئِمٌ يُصَلِّى فِى
ٱلْمِحْرَابِ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بِيَحْيَىٰ
مُصَدِّقًۢا بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَسَيِّدًا
وَحَصُورًا وَنَبِيًّا مِّنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾

And has the story of the [two] litigants come to you, when they surmounted the walls of the sanctuary [in which Dawud/David prayed], and he moved back as he was frightened of them. They said, "Fear not..." [38:21-22]

وَهَلْ أَتَىٰكَ نَبَؤُا۟ ٱلْخَصْمِ إِذْ تَسَوَّرُوا۟
ٱلْمِحْرَابَ ﴿٢١﴾ إِذْ دَخَلُوا۟ عَلَىٰ دَاوُۥدَ
فَفَزِعَ مِنْهُمْ ۖ قَالُوا۟ لَا تَخَفْ ۖ خَصْمَانِ
بَغَىٰ بَعْضُنَا عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ ۖ فَٱحْكُم بَيْنَنَا
بِٱلْحَقِّ وَلَا تُشْطِطْ وَٱهْدِنَآ إِلَىٰ سَوَآءِ
ٱلصِّرَٰطِ ﴿٢٢﴾

And [know] that all places of worship belong to God alone; hence, call not, along with God, upon anyone. [72:18]

وَأَنَّ ٱلْمَسَٰجِدَ لِلَّهِ فَلَا تَدْعُوا۟ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ
أَحَدًا ﴿١٨﴾

Those who have been driven from their homes in defiance of all right, for no other reason than saying, "Our Lord is God". And had not God enabled people to defend themselves against one another, there would have been destroyed monasteries and churches and synagogues, and mosques, wherein God's name is abundantly extolled. Assuredly, God will support one who supports His [cause]; for verily, God is the Most Powerful, the All-mighty. [22:40]

ٱلَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا۟ مِن دِيَٰرِهِم
بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ إِلَّآ أَن يَقُولُوا۟ رَبُّنَا ٱللَّهُ ۗ
وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ ٱللَّهِ ٱلنَّاسَ بَعْضَهُم بِبَعْضٍ
لَّهُدِّمَتْ صَوَٰمِعُ وَبِيَعٌ وَصَلَوَٰتٌ وَمَسَٰجِدُ
يُذْكَرُ فِيهَا ٱسْمُ ٱللَّهِ كَثِيرًا ۗ وَلَيَنصُرَنَّ
ٱللَّهُ مَن يَنصُرُهُۥٓ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَقَوِىٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٤٠﴾

In houses [of worship] which God has allowed to be raised up, and His name to be remembered and devoutly pronounced therein, there [are such that] extol His glory in the mornings and evening, people whom neither [worldly] trade nor any profitable business would divert from remembering God and praising Him, and from keeping up the prayer and offering the purifying

فِى بُيُوتٍ أَذِنَ ٱللَّهُ أَن تُرْفَعَ
وَيُذْكَرَ فِيهَا ٱسْمُهُۥ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُۥ فِيهَا بِٱلْغُدُوِّ
وَٱلْءَاصَالِ ﴿٣٦﴾ رِجَالٌ لَّا تُلْهِيهِمْ
تِجَٰرَةٌ وَلَا بَيْعٌ عَن ذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ وَإِقَامِ
ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَإِيتَآءِ ٱلزَّكَوٰةِ ۙ يَخَافُونَ

[welfare] dues, fearing a Day on which all hearts and eyes shall be turned about. [24:36-37]

يَوْمًا تَتَقَلَّبُ فِيهِ ٱلْقُلُوبُ وَ ٱلْأَبْصَٰرُ ﴿٣٧﴾

Congregational worship with its required cleanliness: physical and behavioral, seems to have existed since Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) who, with his son Isma'il, established the ancient Sanctified House of Worship in Mecca [e.g. 2:125, 127; 3:96-97]. The Arabic word "*masjid,*" usually translated as "mosque" and meant to refer to the house of worship in Islam, means in its linguistic origin any place assigned for worshipping God and prostration - *sujud* in Arabic - before Him, to express submission to His glory and gratitude to His grace. The word "*masjid*" is sometimes used in the Quran in its general meaning and wider sense [e.g. 7:29, 31; 17:1, 7; 18:21]. Even the house of worship which was established by the hypocrites in Medina to cause disunity and disbelief, was also, in the Quran, called "*masjid*" in the general sense of the word, even though the word in this particular instance was qualified by the description "*masjid* of mischief."

The Quran also mentions the word "*mihrab*" as a place assigned for worship with regard to Dawud (David), Zakariyya (Zachariah), and Maryam (Mary) [38:21-22; 3:37-39; 19:11], a word which was later used to mean "the direction of prayer" or "niche" in an Islamic mosque. However, the Arabic word in its linguistic origin, as dictionaries show, may mean the front and leading part in a place or a room, as was known in Yemen. The Quran also uses "*bayt Allah*"/ "the house of God" [e.g. 24:36-38]. This was the name given to the house established by Abraham and Ishmael in Mecca, which was described in Arabic as *haram,* meaning sanctified, sacred, and/or inviolable.

Since the houses of worship have been called "*buyut Allah*" [*buyut* is the plural of *bayt*], they have been legally considered a common property as soon as they are constructed and opened for prayers, even if the land and construction expenses are initially offered by private sources. "The rights of Allah" are meant, in Islamic jurisprudence, to point to the collective rights of society at large, as opposed to "the rights of persons or individuals." Furthermore, the houses of God cannot be used for any purpose that contradicts its goal and character [72:18], such as personal glorification or propagation of ideas that contradict the faith. Finally, it is significant that the above verse 22:40 combines together houses of worship related to different faiths (monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques) with regard to religious sanctity and the legitimate defense of this sanctity.

Prayers and Endurance

And seek help in steadfast patience and prayer, and this indeed is hard for all but the humble [to God], who reckon that they shall meet their Lord and that unto Him they will return. [2:45-46]

وَ ٱسْتَعِينُوا۟ بِٱلصَّبْرِ
وَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ ۚ وَ إِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى
ٱلْخَٰشِعِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُم
مُّلَٰقُوا۟ رَبِّهِمْ وَ أَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ رَٰجِعُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾

O you who have attained to faith! Seek help in patient perseverance and prayer; surely God is with those who patiently persevere. And say not of those who are killed in God's cause, "They are dead;" nay, they are alive but you perceive it not. And surely We will try you with something of fear and hunger, and loss of worldly goods, and of lives and of yield, but give good tidings unto the patient, who, when they are visited by an affliction, say, "Surely we belong to God, and to Him we return." It is those upon whom blessings and grace from their Lord are bestowed, and it is they who are truly guided [on the right path]. [2:153-157]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱسْتَعِينُواْ
بِٱلصَّبْرِ وَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَعَ
ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ ﴿١٥٣﴾ وَ لَا تَقُولُواْ لِمَن يُقْتَلُ
فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ أَمْوَٰتٌ ۚ بَلْ أَحْيَآءٌ
وَلَٰكِن لَّا تَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١٥٤﴾ وَ لَنَبْلُوَنَّكُم
بِشَىْءٍ مِّنَ ٱلْخَوْفِ وَ ٱلْجُوعِ وَ نَقْصٍ مِّنَ
ٱلْأَمْوَٰلِ وَ ٱلْأَنفُسِ وَ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ ۗ
وَبَشِّرِ ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ ﴿١٥٥﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ إِذَآ
أَصَٰبَتْهُم مُّصِيبَةٌ قَالُوٓاْ إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَ إِنَّآ
إِلَيْهِ رَٰجِعُونَ ﴿١٥٦﴾ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ
صَلَوَٰتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَ رَحْمَةٌ ۖ وَ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ
هُمُ ٱلْمُهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾

The hypocrites seek to deceive God, while it is He who causes them to be deceived [by their own selves]. And when they rise to pray, they rise reluctantly and show off to people, but seldom do they remember God [sincerely]. [4:142]

إِنَّ
ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ يُخَٰدِعُونَ ٱللَّهَ وَ هُوَ خَٰدِعُهُمْ
وَ إِذَا قَامُوٓاْ إِلَى ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ قَامُواْ
كُسَالَىٰ يُرَآءُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ وَ لَا يَذْكُرُونَ
ٱللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿١٤٢﴾

And nothing prevented that their spending [claimed to be in the cause of God] from being accepted except that they stubbornly reject God and the Conveyor of His message and that they never come to prayer without reluctance and that they never spend [for the cause of God] without resentment. [9:54]

وَ مَا مَنَعَهُمْ أَن تُقْبَلَ مِنْهُمْ
نَفَقَٰتُهُمْ إِلَّآ أَنَّهُمْ كَفَرُواْ بِٱللَّهِ
وَبِرَسُولِهِۦ وَ لَا يَأْتُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ إِلَّا وَ هُمْ
كُسَالَىٰ وَ لَا يُنفِقُونَ إِلَّا وَ هُمْ كَٰرِهُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾

And keep up the prayers at both ends of the day and during the early watches of the night; surely, good deeds drive away evil deeds; this is a reminder to all the mindful [of God].

And patiently persevere, for verily God does not waste that for which the

وَأَقِمِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ طَرَفَىِ ٱلنَّهَارِ وَ زُلَفًا مِّنَ
ٱلَّيْلِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلْحَسَنَٰتِ يُذْهِبْنَ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ ۚ
ذَٰلِكَ ذِكْرَىٰ لِلذَّٰكِرِينَ ﴿١١٤﴾ وَ ٱصْبِرْ فَإِنَّ

good-doers should be rewarded. [11:114-115]

ٱللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١١٥﴾

And to those who patiently persevere, longing for their Lord's countenance and keep up the prayers, and spend [on who are in need] secretly and openly out of what We provide for them as sustenance, and ward off evil with good; it is they that shall have the ultimate fulfilling abode. [13:22]

وَٱلَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا۟ ٱبْتِغَآءَ وَجْهِ رَبِّهِمْ
وَأَقَامُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَ أَنفَقُوا۟ مِمَّا رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ
سِرًّا وَ عَلَانِيَةً وَ يَدْرَءُونَ بِٱلْحَسَنَةِ
ٱلسَّيِّئَةَ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ عُقْبَى ٱلدَّارِ ﴿٢٢﴾

The Lord of the heavens and the earth and all that is between them. Worship, then, Him alone, and remain steadfast in His worship. Do you know any that can be named with His name [and/or can be equal to Him]? [19:65]

رَّبُّ
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ وَ مَا بَيْنَهُمَا
فَٱعْبُدْهُ وَ ٱصْطَبِرْ لِعِبَٰدَتِهِۦ ۚ هَلْ تَعْلَمُ
لَهُۥ سَمِيًّا ﴿٦٥﴾

And bid your family [and people] to pray, and be yourself persevering therein. We ask you not to provide sustenance [for Us]; it is We who provide sustenance for you. And the ultimate outcome in the end is for God-consciousness and righteousness. [20:132]

وَ أْمُرْ أَهْلَكَ بِٱلصَّلَوٰةِ
وَٱصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا ۖ لَا نَسْـَٔلُكَ رِزْقًا ۖ نَّحْنُ
نَرْزُقُكَ ۗ وَ ٱلْعَٰقِبَةُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ ﴿١٣٢﴾

All those whose hearts tremble with awe whenever God is mentioned, and who endure patiently whatever befalls them, and who keep up the prayer, and spend [on those who are in need] out of what We provide for them as sustenance. [22:35]

ٱلَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ
ٱللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَ ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ عَلَىٰ
مَآ أَصَابَهُمْ وَ ٱلْمُقِيمِى ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَ مِمَّا
رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

Prayers are connected with patience, endurance, and perseverance in the above verses. They naturally support one another and interact with one another. Patience radiates stability, and thus it provides a suitable situation for communicating with God and making this communication fruitful. Furthermore, the communication itself nurtures patience through the peace that it develops in the depth of the human self. Patience precedes prayers four times in the above verses, while it follows prayers three times, and both are essential in facing the ups and downs in this life. Through patience and prayers one can maintain stability and balance in times of success and power, and can hold one steadfastly to endurance and perseverance in times of failure and weakness. In this way communicating

with God enables the human being to maintain self-control and see the ups and downs of life in perspective, enabling him/her to face the changing circumstances sensibly and in a balanced way, and restrain him/her from the hasty reactions of anger, arrogance or depression. Such persons are following the right way in their lives, and enjoy self-confidence and the support of God.

Prayers inspire patience due to their requirements for time, cleanliness, discipline and organized acts. But what is beyond any physical merit in prayers is the feeling of the finite human being, with all his/her limitations in knowledge and power, communicating with the Infinite, All-knowing, All-mighty. Prayers are distributed all over the day, with weekly and annual obligatory congregations, and a universal pilgrimage once during one's lifetime, and thus they have their continuos effect and inspiration radiated through the human self throughout one's whole life. If the essence of prayers is observed, the psychological, moral and behavioral results would be achieved, and these can never be reached by those who perform prayers mechanically or to show off, "*those who rise to prayer reluctantly, and only showing off to people, while they in fact seldom remember God*" [4:142], those who "*pray but their hearts and minds from [the essence of] their prayers are remote; those who [want but] to show off whereas they refuse to help others [who need help]*" [107:4-7].

Prayers and Good Works

And We made them [Ibrahim/Abraham, Is-haq/Isaac, Lut/Lot, and Ya'qub/Jacob] leaders who would guide [people] in accordance with Our command, and We inspired them to do good works, and keep up the prayer, and spend the purifying charity (zakat) [on those in need], and Us alone did they serve. [21:73]

وَجَعَلْنَٰهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا
وَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْهِمْ فِعْلَ ٱلْخَيْرَٰتِ وَإِقَامَ
ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَإِيتَآءَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةِ ۖ وَكَانُوا۟ لَنَا
عَٰبِدِينَ ﴿٧٣﴾

O you who have attained to faith! Bow you down and prostrate yourselves, and worship your Lord [alone], and do good; so that you might attain to success and happiness. [22:77]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱرْكَعُوا۟ وَٱسْجُدُوا۟ وَٱعْبُدُوا۟
رَبَّكُمْ وَٱفْعَلُوا۟ ٱلْخَيْرَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ
﴿٧٧﴾

Convey [unto others] what has been revealed to you of this divine writ, and keep up the prayer; prayer restrains [the human being] from loathsome behavior and from that which runs counter to reason [and common sense]; and the remembrance of God is indeed far greater [in its

ٱتْلُ مَآ أُوحِىَ إِلَيْكَ
مِنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَأَقِمِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ ۖ إِنَّ
ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ ٱلْفَحْشَآءِ
وَٱلْمُنكَرِ ۗ وَلَذِكْرُ ٱللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ

value and reward in this world life and in the life to come]. And God knows all that you do. [29:45]

يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

[And set up you face steadfastly towards the faith]...Turning unto Him [alone], and remain conscious of Him, and keep up the prayers, and be not among those who associate others with Him, [and/or] who have broken the unity of their faith and have become [several] sects; each party rejoicing in what they themselves hold [as beliefs]. [30:31-32]

مُنِيبِينَ إِلَيْهِ وَ اتَّقُوهُ
وَ أَقِيمُوا الصَّلَوٰةَ وَ لَا تَكُونُوا مِنَ
الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٣١﴾ مِنَ الَّذِينَ فَرَّقُوا دِينَهُمْ
وَ كَانُوا شِيَعًا ۖ كُلُّ حِزْبٍ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ
فَرِحُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

Truly the human being is born restless ever discontented; whenever evil touches him [/her], he [/she] is startled and panicked, and whenever good touches him [/her], he[/she] selfishly withholds it [from others]; save those who [sincerely] practice their prayer, and who constantly keep on their prayer. [70:19-23]

إِنَّ الْإِنسَٰنَ خُلِقَ هَلُوعًا ۙ
﴿١٩﴾ إِذَا مَسَّهُ الشَّرُّ جَزُوعًا ۙ ﴿٢٠﴾
وَ إِذَا مَسَّهُ الْخَيْرُ مَنُوعًا ۙ ﴿٢١﴾ إِلَّا
الْمُصَلِّينَ ﴿٢٢﴾ الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَىٰ صَلَاتِهِمْ
دَآئِمُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

Woe, then, unto those who pray, but their hearts and minds from [the essence and message of] their prayers are remote, those who [want but] to be seen and praised, whereas they refuse to help others [who need help]. [107:4-7]

فَوَيْلٌ لِّلْمُصَلِّينَ ۙ
﴿٤﴾ الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَن صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ ﴿٥﴾
الَّذِينَ هُمْ يُرَآءُونَ ﴿٦﴾
وَيَمْنَعُونَ الْمَاعُونَ ﴿٧﴾

Prayers, if offered properly, nurture God-consciousness, and inspire those who pray to be good, say good, and do good in their interaction with all people. Prayers are distributed throughout the day so that one who offers them is always mindful that he/she is emerging from a communication with God, and that he/she is about to enter a new one. No long amount of time passes between prayers that would allow one who observes prayer to forget his/her consciousness of God. The weekly and annual obligations of congregational prayers amplify the spirituality and motivates the good-doing, and restrains the wrongdoing [e.g. 29:45; 70:19-23]. The above verses underline how prayers and good deeds are connected. Prayers that do not inspire doing good, and do not restrain from wrong-doing have been mechanically performed [e.g. 30:31-32; 70:19-23; 107:4-7]. The Prophet warned that it might happen that a person who prays at night may gain nothing but lack of sleep, and that a person who fasts may gain nothing but hunger and thirst [reported by Ibn Hanbal, al-Hakim in *Mustadrak*, al-Bayhaqi in *Sunan,* and al-Tabarani].

Thus true prayers should teach one who keeps them up and properly offers them to

be stable, balanced, patient, and a good-doer, since he/she is in communication with God several times daily. Good deeds may comprise an enormous variety, including words and actions. A welcoming or supporting smile, sincere advice, physical help or material aid - all these represent good deeds that may differ according to the abilities of one who may offer and the needs of one who may receive. The Prophet's traditions tell us that smiling at another or others, guiding one who has lost his/her way, advising one who needs advice, and helping a person in obtaining water, all represent considerable charity for one who may offer any of them [reported by al-Bukhari in *Adab*, al-Tirmidhi, and Ibn Hibban]. Spending on the needs of one's own self and one's family are weighty good deeds and even charity from one who cannot afford more [reported by al-Hakim]. Even a bite that a husband puts in his wife's mouth is regarded in the same light [reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, and al-Tirmidhi]. Faith has so many branches and channels, as the Prophet's tradition indicates, starting from bearing witness that there is no god but the One God, to removing anything harmful out of the way [reported by Muslim, Abu Dawud, al-Nasa'i, and Ibn Majah]. Good deeds mentioned in the Quran are connected with faith, as well as with the acts of worship [e.g. 2:177, 277; 4:114; 11:84-88; 24:55].

Prayers And Books Of Divine Guidance

And those who hold fast to the Book, and keep up prayer; surely We do not waste the reward of those who endeavor to set the matters aright. [7:170]

وَٱلَّذِينَ يُمَسِّكُونَ
بِٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَأَقَامُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ إِنَّا لَا نُضِيعُ
أَجْرَ ٱلْمُصْلِحِينَ ﴿١٧٠﴾

Convey [unto others] what has been revealed to you of this divine writ, and keep up the prayer; prayer restrains [the human being] from loathsome behavior and from that which runs counter to reason [and common sense]; and the remembrance of God is indeed far greater [in its value and reward in this world's life and in the life to come]. And God knows all that you do. [29:45]

ٱتْلُ مَآ أُوحِىَ إِلَيْكَ
مِنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَأَقِمِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ ۖ إِنَّ
ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ ٱلْفَحْشَآءِ
وَٱلْمُنكَرِ ۗ وَلَذِكْرُ ٱللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ
يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

Surely those who recite the Book of God and keep up the prayer and spend [on others who are in need] secretly and openly, out of what We provide for them as sustenance are driving at a deal that never comes to loss. [35:29]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَتْلُونَ كِتَٰبَ ٱللَّهِ وَأَقَامُوا۟
ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَأَنفَقُوا۟ مِمَّا رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ سِرًّا
وَعَلَانِيَةً يَرْجُونَ تِجَٰرَةً لَّن تَبُورَ ﴿٢٩﴾

While prayer is the spiritual channel between the human being and his/her Lord and Creator, God's revelation, preserved in the divine writs or "*books,*" is the conceptual and behavioral light sent down by God to guide the believers to the right path and good-doing, and warns them against deviation and wrong-doing [e.g. 2:38; 16:89; 20:123-127]. The Quran is recited during prayer, but it also should be read separately at other times, so that chances for more access to its guidance may be there with full concentration. Of course, the reading of God's guidance should be followed by its observance, and the verse 7:70 clearly refers to holding to the Book's guidance as connected with offering prayer, and not merely its reading or recitation. The verse 35:29 mentions, in addition to reciting the book and offering the prayer, spending on all who may be in need from what God has granted the human being of His bounty. Considering that spending in its general meaning is not limited to material expenditure, but comprises all that God has provided for the human being such as knowledge, time, energy, and even moral support, one may realize how wide and varied good deeds can be.

Prayers And The Purifying Welfare Dues (Zakat)

This is the Book wherein is no doubt, [meant to be] a guidance for all the God-conscious, who believe in [the existence of] that which is beyond the reach of human sensory perception, keep up prayer, and spend [on those who are in need and on what the whole society needs] out of what We have provided for them as sustenance. [2:2-3]

ذَٰلِكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبُ لَا رَيْبَ ۛ فِيهِ ۛ
هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٢﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ
بِٱلْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَمِمَّا
رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ﴿٣﴾

And [remember] when We took this solemn pledge from the Children of Israel: "Worship none but God alone, and be good to your parents and kin, and the orphans and the needy, and speak good to people and keep up prayer, and render the purifying [welfare] dues (zakat);" then did you turn away, save a few among you, swerving aside. [2:83]

وَإِذْ
أَخَذْنَا مِيثَٰقَ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ لَا تَعْبُدُونَ
إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ وَبِٱلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَذِى
ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ وَٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰ وَٱلْمَسَٰكِينِ
وَقُولُوا۟ لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا وَأَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ
وَءَاتُوا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا
مِّنكُمْ وَأَنتُم مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿٨٣﴾

And keep up the prayer and give purifying [welfare] dues; and whatever good you forward for your own selves, you shall find it with God; assuredly God sees well all that you do. [2:110]

وَأَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتُوا۟
ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ ۚ وَمَا تُقَدِّمُوا۟ لِأَنفُسِكُم مِّنْ
خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِمَا
تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿١١٠﴾

True piety and virtuousness is not in [merely] turning your faces towards the east or the west, but true piety and virtuousness is [represented] in one who believes in God and the Last Day, and the angels, and the [divine] writ[s], and the prophets, and spends of his [/her] possessions - however cherished they may be - upon the near of kin, and the orphans, and the needy, and the wayfarer, and those who ask [for help], and for the freeing of human beings from bondage, and keeps up prayer, and renders the purifying [welfare] dues (zakat); and [truly pious and virtuous are] those who keep their word whenever they promise, and are patient [and persevere] in adversity and hardship and peril. It is they who have proved themselves true, and it is they who are conscious of God. [2:177]

لَّيْسَ ٱلْبِرَّ أَن تُوَلُّوا۟ وُجُوهَكُمْ
قِبَلَ ٱلْمَشْرِقِ وَ ٱلْمَغْرِبِ وَ لَٰكِنَّ ٱلْبِرَّ
مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِٱللَّهِ وَ ٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْأٓخِرِ
وَ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ وَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَ ٱلنَّبِيِّۦنَ وَ ءَاتَى
ٱلْمَالَ عَلَىٰ حُبِّهِۦ ذَوِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ
وَ ٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰ وَ ٱلْمَسَٰكِينَ وَ ٱبْنَ ٱلسَّبِيلِ
وَ ٱلسَّآئِلِينَ وَ فِى ٱلرِّقَابِ وَ أَقَامَ
ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَ ءَاتَى ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَ ٱلْمُوفُونَ
بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَٰهَدُوا۟ ۖ وَ ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ فِى
ٱلْبَأْسَآءِ وَ ٱلضَّرَّآءِ وَ حِينَ ٱلْبَأْسِ
أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا۟ ۖ وَ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ
ٱلْمُتَّقُونَ ﴿١٧٧﴾

Surely, those who have attained to faith and do good works, and keep up prayer and offer the purifying [welfare] dues (zakat) will have their reward with their Lord; no fear shall be on them, and neither shall they grieve. [2:277]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَ عَمِلُوا۟
ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ وَ أَقَامُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَ ءَاتَوُا۟
ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ وَ لَا خَوْفٌ
عَلَيْهِمْ وَ لَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٢٧٧﴾

And strive in His cause as you ought to strive; it is He who has chosen you [to carry His message], and has laid no hardship on you in [matters of] religion, through which you follow the creed of your forefather Ibrahim (Abraham). It is He who has called you "those who have submitted themselves to God, Muslims," both before and in this [revelation] so that the Conveyor of God's message may bear witness [for the truth] about you, and that you may bear witness [for it] about the whole humanity! So keep up the prayer, and render the purifying welfare dues [zakat], and hold fast to God! He is your Lord Supreme, and how excellent is this Lord Supreme and excellent is this Giver of Support. [22:78]

وَ جَٰهِدُوا۟ فِى ٱللَّهِ حَقَّ
جِهَادِهِۦ ۚ هُوَ ٱجْتَبَىٰكُمْ وَ مَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ
فِى ٱلدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ ۚ مِّلَّةَ أَبِيكُمْ
إِبْرَٰهِيمَ ۚ هُوَ سَمَّىٰكُمُ ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ مِن
قَبْلُ وَ فِى هَٰذَا ۖ لِيَكُونَ ٱلرَّسُولُ
شَهِيدًا عَلَيْكُمْ وَ تَكُونُوا۟ شُهَدَآءَ عَلَى
ٱلنَّاسِ ۚ فَأَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَ ءَاتُوا۟
ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَ ٱعْتَصِمُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ هُوَ مَوْلَىٰكُمْ ۖ
فَنِعْمَ ٱلْمَوْلَىٰ وَ نِعْمَ ٱلنَّصِيرُ ﴿٧٨﴾

And keep up prayer and offer the purifying dues, and obey the Conveyor of God's message so that you might be blessed by God's grace. [24:56]

وَ أَقِيمُواْ
ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَ ءَاتُواْ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَ أَطِيعُواْ
ٱلرَّسُولَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

Successful indeed are the believers; those who humble themselves in their prayers, and who turn away from idle talk, and who determinedly give the purifying [welfare] dues (zakat). [23:1-4]

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ
فِى صَلَاتِهِمْ خَٰشِعُونَ ﴿٢﴾ وَ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ
عَنِ ٱللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ ﴿٣﴾ وَ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ
لِلزَّكَوٰةِ فَٰعِلُونَ ﴿٤﴾

Keeping up prayers is connected with paying the purifying welfare dues (zakat) tens of times in the Quran. Worshipping God alone should be reflected in helping any who may be in need. The Arabic word "*zakat*" points out the purifying effect of helping the needy, spiritually and materially, since it purifies the human self from greed and selfishness, as well as purifying the earned income from any unfairness that might blemish the earning [9:103], and it pays back the society as a whole, represented in its needy members, for what it has contributed in its individual earning. Because of this strong connection between prayer and zakat, the first Caliph Abu Bakr decided to fight against those who refrained from paying the due rights of the poor and needy, even if they continued to pronounce that there is no god but the One God and that Muhammad is the Conveyor of God's message, and even offered their prayers. Reportedly the Caliph said, "Surely I shall fight any who split zakat from prayer." The connection between zakat and prayer was prominent in the works of jurists, who dealt with zakat right after salat, and before dealing with fasting.

Defending Freedom Of Faith And Worship

And fight in the way of God against those who have [initially] waged war against you, but do not commit aggression; surely, God loves not aggressors. And fight them wherever you may come upon them, and drive them away from wherever they drove you away, for [the] oppression [that they heavily initiated] is even worse than killing. But fight not against them near the Inviolable House of Worship unless they fight against you there first; but if they [initiated the] fight against you, [it becomes inevitable that you fight against them and do not be reluctant to] kill them, such is the requital for

وَ قَٰتِلُواْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّذِينَ
يُقَٰتِلُونَكُمْ وَ لَا تَعْتَدُوٓاْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا
يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿١٩٠﴾ وَ ٱقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ
ثَقِفْتُمُوهُمْ وَ أَخْرِجُوهُم مِّنْ حَيْثُ
أَخْرَجُوكُمْ ۚ وَ ٱلْفِتْنَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنَ ٱلْقَتْلِ ۚ
وَ لَا تُقَٰتِلُوهُمْ عِندَ ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ
حَتَّىٰ يُقَٰتِلُوكُمْ فِيهِ ۖ فَإِن قَٰتَلُوكُمْ
فَٱقْتُلُوهُمْ ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ جَزَآءُ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿١٩١﴾

those who have initially profaned the sanctity [of the Inviolable House]. But if they desist, God is All-forgiving, Most-Gracious. And fight against them until there is no more oppression and the matter of faith is [left free from any human interference and pertains] to God alone, and if they desist, then all hostility shall cease, save against those who have been [willfully and initially] evil transgressors. Fight during a sacred month if you are attacked, for sanctity should be guarded by involved parties. If then anyone commits aggression against you, fight against the aggressor just as he [/she] has fought against you; but remain conscious of God, and know that God is with those who are conscious of Him. [2:190-194]

فَإِنِ ٱنتَهَوْا۟ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ
رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٩٢﴾ وَقَٰتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّىٰ لَا تَكُونَ
فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ ٱلدِّينُ لِلَّهِ ۖ فَإِنِ ٱنتَهَوْا۟
فَلَا عُدْوَٰنَ إِلَّا عَلَى ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٩٣﴾
ٱلشَّهْرُ ٱلْحَرَامُ بِٱلشَّهْرِ ٱلْحَرَامِ
وَٱلْحُرُمَٰتُ قِصَاصٌ ۚ فَمَنِ ٱعْتَدَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ
فَٱعْتَدُوا۟ عَلَيْهِ بِمِثْلِ مَا ٱعْتَدَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ ۚ
وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَعَ
ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٩٤﴾

Permission [to fight back] is given to those who have been wronged and are suffering [the woes of] injustice; surely, God in His exalted power is quite able to support them. Those who have been driven from their homes in defiance of all right, for no other reason than saying, "Our Lord is God". And had not God enabled people to defend themselves against one another, there would have been destroyed monasteries and churches and synagogues, and mosques, wherein God's name is abundantly extolled. Assuredly, God will support one who supports His [cause]; for verily, God is the Most Powerful, the All-mighty.
Those who if We firmly establish them [and enable them to seize power] in the land, keep up prayer and render purifying welfare dues (zakat), and enjoin the doing of what is right and forbid the doing of what is wrong; with God rests the final outcome of all events. [22:39-41]

أُذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقَٰتَلُونَ
بِأَنَّهُمْ ظُلِمُوا۟ ۚ وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ نَصْرِهِمْ
لَقَدِيرٌ ﴿٣٩﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا۟ مِن دِيَٰرِهِم
بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ إِلَّآ أَن يَقُولُوا۟ رَبُّنَا ٱللَّهُ ۗ
وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ ٱللَّهِ ٱلنَّاسَ بَعْضَهُم بِبَعْضٍ
لَّهُدِّمَتْ صَوَٰمِعُ وَبِيَعٌ وَصَلَوَٰتٌ وَمَسَٰجِدُ
يُذْكَرُ فِيهَا ٱسْمُ ٱللَّهِ كَثِيرًا ۗ وَلَيَنصُرَنَّ
ٱللَّهُ مَن يَنصُرُهُۥٓ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَقَوِىٌّ عَزِيزٌ
﴿٤٠﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ إِن مَّكَّنَّٰهُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ
أَقَامُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَوُا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ
وَأَمَرُوا۟ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَوْا۟ عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ ۗ
وَلِلَّهِ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلْأُمُورِ ﴿٤١﴾

Freedom of faith and worship is essential in Islam, and thus defending it is a human right and obligation if it is suppressed. Muslims are ordered to fight only those who have initiated war against their lives and their faith [2:190; 22:39]. They have to observe the sanctity of the Inviolable House of Worship which has been secured since it was established

by Ibrahim and Isma'il (Abraham and Ishmael), and observe the sanctity of the sacred months in which the pilgrimage or visit to this House occur. However, if the Muslims are attacked in the Inviolable House of Worship, or during the sacred months, they have the legitimate right to fight back in self-defence [2:191, 194]. Significantly, the verse 2:191 points out that oppression is more severe than killing, since it represents a continuous pressure on the human being and violation of his/her indispensable human rights. Equally significant, the verse 2:194 states that fighting in such a case is only legitimized to stop oppression and keep the religious faith between the human being and God free from any human obstruction [2:193], and as soon as the aggressors stop their aggression and secure freedom of faith, God's grace can reach any true repenter.

As has been repeatedly pointed out before, the verse 22:39 deals with the houses of worship of different faiths in an equal manner, and legitimizes defending monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques in the same way. The Islamic law and state protect freedom of faith and worship, as well as the sanctity of the houses of worship, religious institutions, and the sanction of any violation in this respect, whether it is committed by Muslims or others.

Practice Of Prayers

وَ أَقِيمُواْ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَ ءَاتُواْ
ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ ۚ وَ مَا تُقَدِّمُواْ لِأَنفُسِكُم مِّنْ
خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِمَا
تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿١١٠﴾

And keep up the prayer and give purifying [welfare] dues; and whatever good you forward for your own selves, you shall find it with God; assuredly God sees well all that you do. [2:110]

قَدْ نَرَىٰ تَقَلُّبَ وَجْهِكَ فِي ٱلسَّمَآءِ ۖ
فَلَنُوَلِّيَنَّكَ قِبْلَةً تَرْضَىٰهَا ۚ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ
شَطْرَ ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ ۚ وَ حَيْثُ مَا كُنتُمْ
فَوَلُّواْ وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُۥ ۗ وَ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ
أُوتُواْ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ لَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ ٱلْحَقُّ مِن
رَّبِّهِمْ ۗ وَ مَا ٱللَّهُ بِغَٰفِلٍ عَمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٤٤﴾

We have seen the turning of your face about in the heaven, now We will surely direct you to a direction [for prayer, a "qibla"] that shall satisfy you. Turn your face, then, towards the Inviolable House of worship, and wherever you are, turn you faces towards it [in prayer]. And those who have been given the Book know well that it is the truth from their Lord, and God is not unaware of what they do. [2:144]

For some time in Makka (Mecca), and for a short time after being settled in Madina (Medina), Prophet Muhammad made Jerusalem the direction for prayers, since facing the Inviolable House of Worship (al-Masjid al-Haram) in Mecca might have been interpreted as an acceptance of the idols which were set around it. However, the Inviolable House of Worship had been initially established by the Prophets Ibrahim (Abraham) and Isma'il (Ishmael) for worshipping the One God, and was called by the Arabs "Ka'ba" referring to its cubic shape. The people of the Book could therefore recognize the authenticity of the

divine revelation to Muhammad and the essential message of Islam as a whole, including the matter of qibla, if they think seriously and sincerely without bias. Later, in Madinah (Medina), restoration of monotheistic worship in the Inviolable House that had been established by Abraham and Ishmael about 25 centuries previously reflected the hope for generally restoring the worship of the One God among the people of Mecca that would influence all Arabia — a hope that Prophet Muhammad strived all his life to fulfill. About six months after the Prophet's migration to Medina, Hijra, God responded to the Prophet's wish and directed him to make the Ka'ba the direction for the prayers of Muslims wherever they may be.

The House of Worship established by Ibrahim and Isma'il also became the universal gathering place every year for another worship, the pilgrimage (hajj).

Be ever mindful of prayers, and of the middle prayer, and stand before God in devotion and humility. And if you are in fear [of an enemy], pray then on foot, or mounted [as may be more suitable under the given circumstances], but when you are secure, bear God in mind, as He has taught you what you knew not. [2:238-239]

حَٰفِظُواْ عَلَى ٱلصَّلَوَٰتِ وَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ
ٱلْوُسْطَىٰ وَ قُومُواْ لِلَّهِ قَٰنِتِينَ ﴿٢٣٨﴾
فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ فَرِجَالًا أَوْ رُكْبَانًا ۖ فَإِذَآ
أَمِنتُمْ فَٱذْكُرُواْ ٱللَّهَ كَمَا عَلَّمَكُم مَّا لَمْ
تَكُونُواْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٣٩﴾

Commentators differ about the exact meaning of "the middle prayer," as well as to whether the command to be "ever mindful of it" refers to the time of the prayer, i.e. the afternoon, which comes at a time when one is absorbed in worldly affairs, or to the way of performing the prayer. The word may also be translated to mean "the best or most excellent prayer," which thus should not be practiced too quickly or too slowly, nor in too loud or too soft a voice [e.g. 17:110].

However, God's mercy would not require a person who is facing danger as in the case of war to do what he/she is used to doing in a regular prayer (i.e. standing, bowing, and prostrating oneself), since such a person would inevitably lose concentration both in the prayer and in the dangerous surroundings, and would thus be an easy target to attack. The prayers can, therefore, be delayed if the circumstances make their performance impossible. Nevertheless, maintaining communication with God in a feasible way is helpful if it is possible. This can be done through certain points of flexibility allowed by God's grace such as shortening the prayers, not necessarily facing the direction of Mecca, the qibla, and keeping a group always on alert to watch out and protect those who pray, and then alternating the position of the two groups so that the group that was on guard can pray [4:101-103].

O you who have attained to faith! Do not try to pray while you are drunken, [but wait] until you know what you are saying, nor while you are in a

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا
ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا تَقْرَبُواْ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَ أَنتُمْ
سُكَٰرَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَعْلَمُواْ مَا تَقُولُونَ وَ لَا

state requiring total wash of the body until you have washed yourselves, except if you are travelling [and you are unable to do so]; but if you are sick or on a journey, or if any of you comes from the restroom or has sexual contact with a woman [intercourse], and you can find no water, then turn to wholesome dust, passing [therewith] lightly over your face and your hands; God is All-pardoning, All-forgiving. [4:43]

جُنُبًا إِلَّا عَابِرِي سَبِيلٍ حَتَّىٰ
تَغْتَسِلُوا ۚ وَإِن كُنتُم مَّرْضَىٰ أَوْ عَلَىٰ
سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِّنكُم مِّنَ الْغَائِطِ
أَوْ لَامَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً
فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوا
بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُوًّا
غَفُورًا ﴿٤٣﴾

By means of liquor and gambling Satan seeks only to bring about enmity and hatred among you, and to bar you from the remembrance of God and from prayer. Will you not, then, desist? [5:91]

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَن يُوقِعَ
بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ فِي الْخَمْرِ
وَالْمَيْسِرِ وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَن ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَعَنِ
الصَّلَاةِ ۖ فَهَلْ أَنتُم مُّنتَهُونَ ﴿٩١﴾

Prayer means communication with God, and this requires a full intellectual and spiritual consciousness of what one is doing and saying, in addition to what one is seeing and hearing in case of a congregation, *jama'a*. Since drinking, as well as gambling, were deeply-rooted in pre-Islamic Arabia, the prohibition of liquor significantly presented the gradual course of Islamic legislation in reaching its objectives. In the beginning, the Quran only indicated that drinking and gambling may have advantages, but their disadvantages and vices exceed the advantages and benefits [2:219]. A further step was taken after some time by forbidding people from approaching prayer in a state of drunkenness [the above verse 4:43], until they know what they are doing and saying during the prayer. The Quran condemns those who pray with their bodies while their minds are absent or occupied in something other than the prayer and communication with God [e.g. 107:4-7; also 9:54]. A mere physical performance of the prayer would not bring out the intellectual and behavioral fruits of the prayer [29:45].

Indulging in drinking and gambling would prevent the person from serious and deep thinking, and block him/her from bearing God in mind and answering His call for prayer. Exposing the mind to the effects of intoxication, and the human self to the greed and tension of gaining money without work but through gambling, would provoke hostilities and splits among people. At a final stage, drinking and gambling were absolutely prohibited for the believers at all times [5:90].

And when you go travelling out in the world, no blame is on you in shortening the prayer, if you have reason to feel that those who stubbornly deny the truth may fall upon you; those who stubbornly deny

وَإِذَا ضَرَبْتُمْ فِي
الْأَرْضِ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَن تَقْصُرُوا
مِنَ الصَّلَاةِ إِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَن يَفْتِنَكُمُ الَّذِينَ

the truth are surely your open foes. And when you [O Muhammad] are among them [believers] and you announce to them the coming of the prayer, let [only] a part of them stand up [for prayer] with you, and let them take their weapons, and let the others provide a cover for you while you are in prayer. Then let a group which has not yet prayed come and pray with you [covered by those who have just prayed], taking all precautions and their arms; those who have stubbornly rejected the truth would love if you were negligent of your arms and your equipment so that they might fall upon you all at once. But if you are troubled by rain or if you are sick, there is no blame on you to lay down your arms [while you pray]but [always] be on alert [since it is all the time expected in the battle field] danger. Surely, for those who stubbornly rejected the truth, God has readied a humiliating suffering. And when you have finished the prayer, remember God, when you stand, and when you sit, and when you lie down on your sides. Then as soon as you are secure, keep up your prayer [fully in the regular way]; surely, the prayers are ordained on the believers at appointed times. [4:101-103]

كَفَرُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ كَانُوا۟ لَكُمْ عَدُوًّا
مُّبِينًا ﴿١٠١﴾ وَإِذَا كُنتَ فِيهِمْ فَأَقَمْتَ لَهُمُ
ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ فَلْتَقُمْ طَآئِفَةٌ مِّنْهُم مَّعَكَ
وَلْيَأْخُذُوٓا۟ أَسْلِحَتَهُمْ ۖ فَإِذَا سَجَدُوا۟
فَلْيَكُونُوا۟ مِن وَرَآئِكُمْ وَلْتَأْتِ طَآئِفَةٌ
أُخْرَىٰ لَمْ يُصَلُّوا۟ فَلْيُصَلُّوا۟ مَعَكَ
وَلْيَأْخُذُوا۟ حِذْرَهُمْ وَأَسْلِحَتَهُمْ ۗ وَدَّ
ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لَوْ تَغْفُلُونَ عَنْ أَسْلِحَتِكُمْ
وَأَمْتِعَتِكُمْ فَيَمِيلُونَ عَلَيْكُم مَّيْلَةً وَٰحِدَةً ۚ
وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِن كَانَ بِكُمْ أَذًى مِّن
مَّطَرٍ أَوْ كُنتُم مَّرْضَىٰٓ أَن تَضَعُوٓا۟
أَسْلِحَتَكُمْ ۖ وَخُذُوا۟ حِذْرَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
أَعَدَّ لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُّهِينًا ﴿١٠٢﴾ فَإِذَا
قَضَيْتُمُ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ فَٱذْكُرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ قِيَٰمًا
وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِكُمْ ۚ فَإِذَا ٱطْمَأْنَنتُمْ
فَأَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ كَانَتْ
عَلَى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَٰبًا مَّوْقُوتًا ﴿١٠٣﴾

This verse shows how Muslims are trained to plan and organize themselves to face different circumstances, even in their prayers. It also points out that Islamic obligations -even prayers - are not meant to be burdensome, and that they vary with the changing circumstances. The congregational prayer (*jama'a*) when performed while the Muslims are facing an enemy in the battle-field, is organized in a way that maintains the obligation of prayer and fulfills the spiritual need of feeling closeness to God and appealing for His succor on one side, while providing the necessary precautions for protecting those who are praying from any sudden attack on the other side. One party prays carrying its weapons, while the other is on full alert watching the enemy and covering those who are praying, then the roles are reversed between the two groups. Armor and arms need not be carried by those who pray under the pressure of rain, illness or fatigue.

The prayer if it is normally four "raka'as," i.e. the midday, afternoon, and evening prayers, is reduced to two, and mid- day and afternoon prayers as well as the dusk and evening prayers can be performed together at the same time. This shortening of prayer was also extended through a Prophet's tradition to the case of travel in general in secure circumstances [see al-Bukhari, Muslim, Malik, Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi,

al-Nasa'i, and Ibn Majah]. Details are given according to oral and practical traditions of the Prophet (Sunna) and the books of jurisprudence.

The hypocrites seek to deceive God, while it is He who causes them to be deceived [by their own selves]. And when they rise to pray, they rise reluctantly and show off to people, but seldom do they remember God [sincerely]. [4:142]

إِنَّ
ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ يُخَٰدِعُونَ ٱللَّهَ وَهُوَ خَٰدِعُهُمْ
وَإِذَا قَامُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ قَامُوا۟
كُسَالَىٰ يُرَآءُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ
ٱللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿١٤٢﴾

Keeping up the prayers and performing them properly and earnestly represent a sign of genuine faith and keenness to communicate with God and to express one's submission and gratitude to Him. Therefore, a hypocrite does not penetrate to such depths of prayers, as such a person concentrates on selfish and short-sighted worldly interests. It is enough for such a person to be seen amongst those who pray, and thus he/she always feels reluctant to rise to pray, since the inner conviction or commitment is missing. Early revelation in Mecca warned the people against being remote from what prayers are meant for, and wanting only to be seen praying and being praised for this [107:4-7].

O You who have attained to faith! When you rise to pray, wash your faces and your hands [and arms] up to the elbows, and lightly wipe your heads [with water], and [wash] your feet up to the ankles. And after a complete sexual act, wash your whole body. But if you are sick, or on a journey, or if one of you comes out of the restroom, or if you have been in contact with women, and you find no water, then resort to wholesome soil and rub therewith lightly your faces and hands. God does not want to place you in a difficulty, but wants to make you pure, and to complete His blessings upon you, so that you all may be grateful. And always remember God's blessings upon you, and the solemn pledge by which He binds you towards Himself, as you said, "We have heard and we obey;" and remain conscious of God; surely God knows well what is in the depth of your hearts. [5:6- 7]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟
إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ فَٱغْسِلُوا۟
وُجُوهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى ٱلْمَرَافِقِ
وَٱمْسَحُوا۟ بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى
ٱلْكَعْبَيْنِ ۚ وَإِن كُنتُمْ جُنُبًا فَٱطَّهَّرُوا۟ ۚ
وَإِن كُنتُم مَّرْضَىٰٓ أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ أَوْ
جَآءَ أَحَدٌ مِّنكُم مِّنَ ٱلْغَآئِطِ أَوْ لَٰمَسْتُمُ
ٱلنِّسَآءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا۟ مَآءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا۟ صَعِيدًا
طَيِّبًا فَٱمْسَحُوا۟ بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُم
مِّنْهُ ۚ مَا يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُم مِّنْ
حَرَجٍ وَلَٰكِن يُرِيدُ لِيُطَهِّرَكُمْ وَلِيُتِمَّ
نِعْمَتَهُۥ عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٦﴾
وَٱذْكُرُوا۟ نِعْمَةَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَمِيثَٰقَهُ ٱلَّذِى
وَاثَقَكُم بِهِۦٓ إِذْ قُلْتُمْ سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا ۖ
وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمٌۢ بِذَاتِ
ٱلصُّدُورِ ﴿٧﴾

These verses describe the basic preparations for prayers, both the partial washing of certain parts of the body, *wudu'* in Arabic, and total washing of the whole body, *ghusl* in Arabic. Striking with the hands a wholesome and dry part of the earth [i.e. dust, sand, rock etc.] when water is not available and passing the hands over the face and over one another can be a symbolic substitute for the ablutional requirements for prayers. What is most important in this respect is the general principle of the message and law of Islam: God does not want to create difficulties for you in observing His guidance, and whenever one finds obligation beyond one's ability, one is allowed to only do what he/she is able to do, since "*God does not burden any human being with more than one is well able to bear*" [2:286].

The human being must fulfill his/her commitment to God's message as he/she believes in it. Such a solemn pledge should be observed whenever possible by obeying all God's guidance including cleanliness of the body, clothes, place, food, drink, etc. Physical cleanliness would help to develop the cleanliness of mind and heart, so that total cleanliness would be a sign of the believer, who has to spread this sense of physical, spiritual-psychological and intellectual cleanliness wherever he/she goes and throughout all human relations.

Say, "Truly, my prayer and [all] my acts of worship and my living and my dying, are for God [alone], the Lord of All-being; no associate has He; for thus have I been bidden, and I shall [always] be foremost among those who submit themselves to Him." [6:162-163]

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي
وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ
الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٦٢﴾ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ ۖ وَبِذَٰلِكَ
أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿١٦٣﴾

Worship in its wider sense is not limited to any particular act, time or place. It encompasses all that one does during one's whole life, which all should be conducted according to God's guidance. The real meaning of "Islam" is submission to God in thinking, planning and acting, since God does not observe us only in times and places of worship or hold us accountable only for these limited practices; nor did He send His messages just to guide us during such few moments. This wider concept of worship, ibada, is what is also meant in the verse 51:56, which preceded in the "General Teachings."

The hypocrites seek to deceive God, while it is He who causes them to be deceived [by their own selves]. And when they rise to pray, they rise reluctantly and show off to people, but seldom do they remember God [sincerely]. [4:142]

إِنَّ
الْمُنَافِقِينَ يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَهُوَ خَادِعُهُمْ
وَإِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا
كُسَالَىٰ يُرَاءُونَ النَّاسَ وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ
اللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿١٤٢﴾

And nothing prevented that their spending [claimed to be in the cause of God] being accepted from them except that they stubbornly reject God and the Conveyor of His message and that they never come to prayer without reluctance and that they never spend [for the cause of God] without resentment. [9:54]

وَمَا مَنَعَهُمْ أَن تُقْبَلَ مِنْهُمْ
نَفَقَاتُهُمْ إِلَّآ أَنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ
وَبِرَسُولِهِۦ وَلَا يَأْتُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ إِلَّا وَهُمْ
كُسَالَىٰ وَلَا يُنفِقُونَ إِلَّا وَهُمْ كَٰرِهُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾

God judges a person according to his/her intention, not according to superficial physical acts which may be practiced for outward conformity and not inner conviction. Unless worship is practiced with full consciousness and devotion, it cannot change the depth of the human being, direct his/her thinking, judging, planning and acts to righteousness or restrain him/her from all that is loathsome, unreasonable and unfair [29:45].

And keep up the prayers at both ends of the day and during the early watches of the night; surely, good deeds drive away evil deeds; this is a reminder to all the mindful [of God]. And patiently persevere, for verily God does not waste that for which the good-doers should be rewarded. [11:114-115]

وَأَقِمِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ طَرَفَىِ ٱلنَّهَارِ وَزُلَفًا مِّنَ
ٱلَّيْلِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلْحَسَنَٰتِ يُذْهِبْنَ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ ۚ
ذَٰلِكَ ذِكْرَىٰ لِلذَّٰكِرِينَ ﴿١١٤﴾ وَٱصْبِرْ فَإِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١١٥﴾

Keep up prayers from when the sun passes its zenith till the coming darkness of the night, and [be ever mindful of] the recital of the Quran at dawn, for its' recital at dawn is witnessed. And as for the night, keep vigil for a part of it praying, as your voluntary additional [worship]; for it may well be that your Lord raise you to a laudable situation. And say; "O my Lord! Lead me in [whatever I may do] with a truthful and sincere ingoing, and lead me out [of whatever I may do] with a truthful and sincere outgoing; and grant me from You supporting power." [17:78-80]

أَقِمِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ
لِدُلُوكِ ٱلشَّمْسِ إِلَىٰ غَسَقِ ٱلَّيْلِ
وَقُرْءَانَ ٱلْفَجْرِ ۖ إِنَّ قُرْءَانَ ٱلْفَجْرِ كَانَ
مَشْهُودًا ﴿٧٨﴾ وَمِنَ ٱلَّيْلِ فَتَهَجَّدْ بِهِۦ
نَافِلَةً لَّكَ عَسَىٰٓ أَن يَبْعَثَكَ رَبُّكَ مَقَامًا
مَّحْمُودًا ﴿٧٩﴾ وَقُل رَّبِّ أَدْخِلْنِى
مُدْخَلَ صِدْقٍ وَأَخْرِجْنِى مُخْرَجَ صِدْقٍ
وَٱجْعَل لِّى مِن لَّدُنكَ سُلْطَٰنًا نَّصِيرًا ﴿٨٠﴾

The command for the five daily prayers may be understood from the first verse. It refers in its forepart to the four prayers which are distributed from the time when the sun passes its zenith to the darkness of the night; it then adds the early morning prayer, part of which includes reciting the Quran. The early morning prayer may have been separately mentioned because of the quietness and peacefulness of the time in which it is performed,

since such an atmosphere has its special spiritual influences. Voluntary prayers may be added in the late night by any person in accordance to his/her ability, despite the fact that the Prophet, because of his special mission and place from God, practiced them constantly. In the last verse, the believer prays to God to lead him rightfully in any action, whether during this world's life or out of it, and so out of the whole life in the end. In this whole journey one desperately needs the support and the guidance of the Lord, the All-mighty, the All-knowing, the All-wise.

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ تَقُومُ
أَدْنَىٰ مِن ثُلُثَيِ ٱلَّيْلِ وَ نِصْفَهُۥ وَ ثُلُثَهُۥ
وَطَآئِفَةٌ مِّنَ ٱلَّذِينَ مَعَكَ ۚ وَ ٱللَّهُ يُقَدِّرُ
ٱلَّيْلَ وَ ٱلنَّهَارَ ۚ عَلِمَ أَن لَّن تُحْصُوهُ
فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ ۖ فَٱقْرَءُوا۟ مَا تَيَسَّرَ مِنَ
ٱلْقُرْءَانِ ۚ عَلِمَ أَن سَيَكُونُ مِنكُم
مَّرْضَىٰ ۙ وَءَاخَرُونَ يَضْرِبُونَ فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ يَبْتَغُونَ مِن فَضْلِ ٱللَّهِ
وَءَاخَرُونَ يُقَٰتِلُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ
فَٱقْرَءُوا۟ مَا تَيَسَّرَ مِنْهُ ۚ وَ أَقِيمُوا۟
ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتُوا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَ أَقْرِضُوا۟
ٱللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا ۚ وَ مَا تُقَدِّمُوا۟
لِأَنفُسِكُم مِّنْ خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ هُوَ
خَيْرًا وَ أَعْظَمَ أَجْرًا ۚ وَ ٱسْتَغْفِرُوا۟
ٱللَّهَ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٢٠﴾

Behold [O Prophet], your Lord knows that you stay in prayer nearly two thirds of the night, or a half of it, or a third of it, together with some of those who follow you. And God determines [the length of] night and day, and knows that you cannot entirely pass over it [in prayer], and so He has turned to you in His grace. Recite, then, as much of the Quran as you can with ease. He knows that there will be among you sick people, and others who will go about the land to earn of God's bounty, and others who will fight in God's cause. Recite, then, [only] as much of it as you can with ease, and keep up the prayer, and spend [on others in need] the purifying dues (zakat), and lend unto God a goodly loan; and whatever good you may offer for your own-self, you shall truly find it, with God better and mightier in reward. And [always] seek God's forgiveness; God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious. [73:20]

Additional and voluntary prayers, *nafl*, performed late at night after the last obligatory prayer in the evening, *'isha*, and before the early morning prayer the next day, *al-qiyam*, is recommended. Islam requires as obligations what an average person can carry out, while it persuades those who are able to do more to vie, race, and compete in doing good deeds [e.g. 3:133; 56:7-14; 57:21; 83:26]. Those who are unable to fulfill the obligations are required to do only what is within the limits of their ability without becoming overburdened by serious pressures. Thus a certain easier way to fulfill the obligation that would substitute for the original requirement may be specified, or the person may be totally exempt from the obligation in cases of complete disability [e.g. 2:173, 233, 286; 5:3, 6; 6:119, 149, 152; 7:42; 22:78; 16:115; 23:62; 24:61; 48:17].

The above verse indicates that it is by no means recommended that a person be engaged all night in such voluntary prayer, because maintaining physical abilities, having the energy for work, and earning one's living are among the goals of Shari'a. One may pray

and recite the Quran at night according to what he/she is able to do without hurting his/her body, or causing any serious imbalances in his/her life. Among the Prophet's tradition is that he himself, who received God's revelation, used to both pray and sleep during the night, and fast and break the fast, and eat, and marry; "this is my way, and whoever is unwilling to follow my Sunna is not my follower" [reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Hanbal, and Abu Dawud]. Voluntary night prayers are left to the individual according to what he/she may be able to do. However, the Prophet offered these prayers in the mosque for some nights during Ramadan, and was followed by some, but he did not continue to pray them regularly, so that they may not become or be understood as an obligation. Later, Caliph Umar organized the night prayers during Ramadan in the mosque led by one imam.

Moreover, the Prophet stayed in worship, abiding in the mosque the last ten days and nights of Ramadan, and such a stay or abidance, *i'tikaf*, can happen at any time according to the worshiper's desire or vow to do it. One can eat and sleep in the mosque during *i'tikaf*, but without causing any dirtiness or disarray, and without disturbing the prayers. He/she may see any of his/her family or others briefly for urgent needs, but without close sexual contact which is absolutely forbidden during *i'tikaf* [2:187].

Say, "Call upon God, or call upon the All-merciful, by whatever name you call upon Him, [He is always the One], and hence be sure that His are the most beautiful names [and attributes of perfection]. And be not loud in your prayer, nor say it in too low a voice, but seek a way in between. [17:110]

قُلِ ٱدْعُواْ ٱللَّهَ أَوِ ٱدْعُواْ
ٱلرَّحْمَٰنَ ۖ أَيًّا مَّا تَدْعُواْ فَلَهُ
ٱلْأَسْمَآءُ ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ ۚ وَلَا تَجْهَرْ بِصَلَاتِكَ
وَلَا تُخَافِتْ بِهَا وَٱبْتَغِ بَيْنَ ذَٰلِكَ سَبِيلًا
﴿١١٠﴾

The "All-merciful" is one of the attributes of God. His grace and mercy reach all His creation, including the human beings whatever their faith or deeds may be: "*of the bounties of your Lord We bestow freely on both these [who seek the good of for the life to come while they drive at the good of this world's life] and those [who seek the immediate pleasures of this world life] and the bounties of your Lord are never confined [to one group]*" [17:20]. Thus God can be called upon, either by His simple name "God" which includes all attributes, or by any particular name which explains any angle of His relation to His creation. These Beautiful Names or attributes of God are many. One of the Prophet's tradition mentions 99 names or attributes of God [reported by al-Tirmidhi, Ibn Hibban, al-Hakim in *al-Mustadrak*, and al-Bayhaqi in *Shu'ab al-Iman*.

The above verse also indicates the way in which the Muslim should speak during the prayer. Exaggerated loudness or softness of voice should both be avoided. Loudness, especially when the prayer is at home, may not not be agreeable for others who may be there and are not praying for health considerations, work obligations, care for small children or sick people, while a very low voice in practicing the prayers may not be heard by others who may be following the prayers, and it may not ensure activity and mindfulness if a person is praying alone. However, the Sunna of the prophet indicates that the recitation of the Quran in certain prayers or parts of prayers have to be relatively loud, others

should be inaudible, while glorifying, praising or thanking God during prayers can be done at an average or moderate level.

"O our Lord! Make us submissive to You, and make out of our offspring a people submissive to You, and show us Your ways of worship, and accept our repentance; surely, You alone are the Acceptor of Repentance, the Most Gracious." [2:128]

رَبَّنَا
وَٱجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمَيْنِ لَكَ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِنَآ أُمَّةً
مُّسْلِمَةً لَّكَ وَأَرِنَا مَنَاسِكَنَا وَتُبْ
عَلَيْنَآ ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلتَّوَّابُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٢٨﴾

"O our Lord! I have settled some of my offspring in a valley where the land is not arable, close to Your Sanctified House [of worship], so that, O our Lord, they might keep up prayers; so cause people's hearts to yearn towards them, and grant them sustenance from land produce, so that they might feel grateful [for Your blessing]." [14:37]

رَبَّنَآ إِنِّىٓ
أَسْكَنتُ مِن ذُرِّيَّتِى بِوَادٍ غَيْرِ ذِى زَرْعٍ
عِندَ بَيْتِكَ ٱلْمُحَرَّمِ رَبَّنَا لِيُقِيمُوا۟
ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ فَٱجْعَلْ أَفْـِٔدَةً مِّنَ ٱلنَّاسِ تَهْوِىٓ
إِلَيْهِمْ وَٱرْزُقْهُم مِّنَ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

"O our Lord! Help me to keep up the prayer, and let be among my offspring those who do [the same]; O our Lord, accept my prayer." [14:40]

رَبِّ ٱجْعَلْنِى مُقِيمَ
ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِى ۚ رَبَّنَا وَتَقَبَّلْ
دُعَآءِ ﴿٤٠﴾

And call to mind in this book Isma'il (Ishmael); he kept true to what he said and promised, a conveyor of [God's] message and a prophet. And he used to bid his family [and people] to pray and to give purifying dues (zakat), and found favor from his Lord. [19:54-55]

وَٱذْكُرْ
فِى ٱلْكِتَٰبِ إِسْمَٰعِيلَ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ صَادِقَ
ٱلْوَعْدِ وَكَانَ رَسُولًا نَّبِيًّا ﴿٥٤﴾ وَكَانَ
يَأْمُرُ أَهْلَهُۥ بِٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَٱلزَّكَوٰةِ وَكَانَ
عِندَ رَبِّهِۦ مَرْضِيًّا ﴿٥٥﴾

And We inspired Moses and his brother; "Settle for your people in Egypt some houses, and let these [houses] be places of worship [for you], and keep up the prayer; and give you [O Moses] the good tidings [of God's support] to the believers." [10:87]

وَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰ
مُوسَىٰ وَأَخِيهِ أَن تَبَوَّءَا لِقَوْمِكُمَا
بِمِصْرَ بُيُوتًا وَٱجْعَلُوا۟ بُيُوتَكُمْ قِبْلَةً
وَأَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾

One has to call and persuade the members of the nuclear family, i.e. the spouse and the children, to the acts of worship, starting with what is obligatory, so as to let them benefit from the spiritual, conceptual, and behavioral virtues of worship. Regularly communicating with God nurtures the faith and morality [29:45], and acts of worship teach and adapt the worshipper to healthy individual and social manners. The prayers required in Islam teach those who offer them equality, cleanliness, togetherness, discipline, correcting wrongs, self-restraint, universality etc. It is naturally expected that the conveyors of God's messages advise and persuade the persons closest to them to experience these virtues of prayer and to benefit from them, as the above verses reveal, and they pray to God to let their families and offspring follow them in worshipping Him alone and observing His guidance.

Additionally, they looked to instill some roots of their message in the hearts and minds, and to secure its continuation at least in the closest persons to them. They tried to let them hold onto, not only the abstract faith in the One God, but also to the concrete acts of worship with all their spiritual and behavioral benefits [see also 2:132-3]. Moreover, Prophets Musa (Moses) and Harun (Aaron) went a step further by urging their followers to turn their own homes into places of worship[10:87], as they were living under oppression with no free expression of faith - other than the officially accepted one - was allowed. Fathers always offer their children the best of their experiences, in order to benefit from them and avoid wrong behavior as much as possible, and the faith in the One God and worshipping Him alone is the highest of all experience, especially for the conveyors of God's messages.

Therefore, bear with patience with whatever they [who stubbornly reject the truth] may say, and extol the limitless glory of your Lord, and praise Him [as an act of worship], before the rising of the sun, and before its setting, and extol His glory, too, for some of the night and of the day, so that you might attain self-satisfaction. And never turn your eyes towards whatever We have allowed some of the others to enjoy during the[ir] most pleasing time in this world's life, so that they might be tested through it; for the sustenance which your Lord provides [for you] is better and more enduring.

And bid your family [and people] to pray, and be yourself persevering therein. We ask you not to provide sustenance [for us]; it is We who provide sustenance for you. And the ultimate outcome in the end is for God-consciousness and righteousness. [20:130-132]

فَٱصۡبِرۡ عَلَىٰ مَا
يَقُولُونَ وَسَبِّحۡ بِحَمۡدِ رَبِّكَ قَبۡلَ طُلُوعِ
ٱلشَّمۡسِ وَقَبۡلَ غُرُوبِهَا ۖ وَمِنۡ ءَانَآيِٕ
ٱلَّيۡلِ فَسَبِّحۡ وَأَطۡرَافَ ٱلنَّهَارِ لَعَلَّكَ
تَرۡضَىٰ ﴿١٣٠﴾ وَلَا تَمُدَّنَّ عَيۡنَيۡكَ إِلَىٰ مَا
مَتَّعۡنَا بِهِۦٓ أَزۡوَٰجٗا مِّنۡهُمۡ زَهۡرَةَ ٱلۡحَيَوٰةِ
ٱلدُّنۡيَا لِنَفۡتِنَهُمۡ فِيهِۚ وَرِزۡقُ رَبِّكَ خَيۡرٞ
وَأَبۡقَىٰ ﴿١٣١﴾ وَأۡمُرۡ أَهۡلَكَ بِٱلصَّلَوٰةِ
وَٱصۡطَبِرۡ عَلَيۡهَاۖ لَا نَسۡـَٔلُكَ رِزۡقٗاۖ نَّحۡنُ
نَرۡزُقُكَۗ وَٱلۡعَٰقِبَةُ لِلتَّقۡوَىٰ ﴿١٣٢﴾

People who are committed to faith and moral values have to bear with what is against their faith and values around them. That does not mean that they should not struggle against evil, for such a struggle is essentially required in Islam. What should be avoided is impatience that might lead to estranging reactions or uncalculated confrontation. The believers must remember God and praise His limitless glory from time to time during the day and night so that they may attain self-satisfaction and peace of mind, and this would nurture and strengthen their endurance and perseverance. They have to pray for God's help and support, which would enable them to struggle against evil, and gain the reward in this life through their self-satisfaction and through realizing their goals when this becomes possible. In any case their greatest reward is guaranteed with God in the life to come. This can be done through the five mandatory prayers which are distributed throughout the hours of the day and night. To feel closer to God and to acquire more spiritual power for patience and perseverance one can practice additional praying according to what is recommended or allowed by the Prophet. While Islam sets a standard of requirements for the average, it urges the believers to vie, race and compete with one another in doing the good which is beyond the required standard [e.g. 3:133; 35:32; 56:7-14; 57:21; 83:26]. Prayer requires patience and persistence in order to be practiced constantly and properly, and thus prayer inspires endurance and steadfastness, as well as being supported and maintained by these values. Urging one's family and the people around one to pray would add to individual spiritual power, and would benefit the group that prays with the blessings of togetherness and solidarity.

A life of a sensible and sensitive human being has to go through a harmonious communication with God, and thus one gains self-control against the arrogance of success or the hopelessness and depression of failure. The pleasures of this world life are attractive, but all material short-range pleasures can never be compared with one's self-satisfaction and self-assuredness when one goes beyond selfishness and short-sightedness, nor can they ever be compared with the reward of the eternal life to come. Therefore, the immediate material and psychological pleasures of this worldly life may be given to both good and evil people according to their efforts and as a test and trial, and in any case such pleasures soon come to an end, while the self-satisfaction in addition to the possible prevalence of the message in this present life, and God's reward in the eternal life to come are the true gain for those who can use their minds and choose the long-term happiness.

Those, who, if We firmly establish them [and enable them to seize power] in the land, keep up prayer and render purifying welfare dues (zakat), and enjoin the doing of what is right and forbid the doing of what is wrong; with God rests the final outcome of all events. [22:41]

ٱلَّذِينَ إِن مَّكَّنَّٰهُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ
أَقَامُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَوُا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ
وَأَمَرُوا۟ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَوْا۟ عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ ۗ
وَلِلَّهِ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلْأُمُورِ ﴿٤١﴾

It is the responsibility of the rulers, as they become entrusted with authority in the land by the people [4:59], to secure the worship of God in its general and particular sense,

and through their choice, so as to reach the goals and virtues of God-consciousness, righteousness and morality and to secure the human rights and dignity [17:70] in the depth of the human self and among the people in their inter-relations.

Successful indeed are the believers; those who humble themselves in their prayers. [23:1-2]

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ
فِى صَلَاتِهِمْ خَٰشِعُونَ ﴿٢﴾

Those who pray humbly and devoutly reach the essence of prayer and achieve its aims. Prayer is a chance for self-correction and realization of one's own worth and powers as one stands in the presence of God. Those who pray devoutly, thus emphasizing their need for God's guidance and help to follow the right path, learn certain virtues from their prayers such as cleanliness, punctuality, togetherness, order and discipline, advice for any wrong, God consciousness, and avoidance of loathsome deeds, as well as what is unreasonable or unfair, etc. Moreover, they will achieve the success that is greater in the eternal life to come.

And those who observe [the proper performance and the meaning of] their prayers. [23:9, also 70:34]

وَٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَىٰ صَلَوَٰتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ
﴿٩﴾

Besides observing humbleness and earnestness in the prayer, the believer is required to guard the merit of his/her prayer in its form (i.e. time, sayings, actions etc.) and essence. Keeping up the prayers as they are required to be performed is essential to the human spiritual well-being and development, as it brings the person closer to God, and brings the virtues of prayers to all the aspects of human life: physical, psychological and spiritual, individual and social.

Convey [unto others] what has been revealed to you of this divine writ, and keep up the prayer; prayer restrains [the human being] from loathsome behavior and from that which runs counter to reason [and common sense]; and the remembrance of God is indeed far greater [in its value and reward in this world life and in the life to come]. And God knows all that you do. [29:45]

ٱتْلُ مَآ أُوحِىَ إِلَيْكَ
مِنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَأَقِمِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ ۖ إِنَّ
ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ ٱلْفَحْشَآءِ
وَٱلْمُنكَرِ ۗ وَلَذِكْرُ ٱللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ
يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

Reciting or reading the Quran implies thinking about the meaning of what is recited or read, so as to conduct our life according to its guidance with all its dimensions: physical, intellectual, and spiritual-psychological-moral, so that the prayers fulfill their goal. Prayer urges us to avoid any thinking or behavior that may cause us shame before God or

among people whether we initiate, accept or participate in it. It nurtures our innate life as we realize the presence of God, and that brings to mind angles of vision and aspects of comprehension that may otherwise have been absent before, and its inspiration is felt in our whole life. Prayer thus fills the human mind and heart with God consciousness, and so becomes an unmatched means of individual and social reform.

يَٰبُنَيَّ
أَقِمِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَ أۡمُرۡ بِٱلۡمَعۡرُوفِ وَ ٱنۡهَ
عَنِ ٱلۡمُنكَرِ وَ ٱصۡبِرۡ عَلَىٰ مَآ أَصَابَكَۖ
إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ مِنۡ عَزۡمِ ٱلۡأُمُورِ ﴿١٧﴾

[Luqman the sage said] "O my dear son! Keep up the prayer, and enjoin the doing of what is right and forbid the doing of what is wrong, and bear patiently whatever may befall you; this is a matter of determination and [proves a] strong will." [31:17]

Raising children is not limited to providing for their physical needs; one should develop the morality and spirituality of the child, so that his/her growth becomes balanced and comprehensive. Keeping up prayers should not be a passive or mechanical habit, but it should develop the positive virtues. Therefore, prayer, if practiced properly, should lead to and inspire a positive stand towards morality, represented in enjoining the doing of what is right and forbidding the doing of what is wrong. Communicating with God regularly would help the communicator to bear the desirable consequences of being socially positive and fulfilling his/her responsibility toward society, and this perseverance and steadfastness in conducting individual and social matters would secure success and development for both in all areas of this world's life, and through successive generations, and what is with God in the end is the best and most lasting.

إِنَّ ٱلۡإِنسَٰنَ خُلِقَ هَلُوعًا
﴿١٩﴾ إِذَا مَسَّهُ ٱلشَّرُّ جَزُوعًا
﴿٢٠﴾ وَإِذَا مَسَّهُ ٱلۡخَيۡرُ مَنُوعًا
﴿٢١﴾ إِلَّا
ٱلۡمُصَلِّينَ ﴿٢٢﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمۡ عَلَىٰ صَلَاتِهِمۡ
دَآئِمُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ وَ ٱلَّذِينَ فِيٓ أَمۡوَٰلِهِمۡ حَقّٞ
مَّعۡلُومٞ ﴿٢٤﴾ لِّلسَّآئِلِ وَ ٱلۡمَحۡرُومِ
﴿٢٥﴾

Truly the human being is born restless ever discontented; whenever evil touches him [/her], he [/she] is startled and panicked, and whenever good touches him [/her], he [/she] selfishly withholds it [from others]; save those who [regularly and sincerely] pray, those who are constant in their prayers, and those in whose possessions there is an acknowledged due share for any who asks for help or is deprived from the needs of life. [70:19-25]

The misuse of the human intellect and the free-will, through human limitations such as egotism and shortsightedness, makes the human being unstable and fretful when faced with an enormous success or failure. He/she is never content or balanced, but is swinging always between arrogance and arbitrariness in cases of success and hopelessness and helplessness in cases of failure. Those who keep up prayers and practice them devoutly, however, learn to develop self restraint against depression and submission in their weakness, or

haughtiness and unrestrictedness when they have power. Prayers should fill the mind and heart with God-consciousness, and should not be merely formal rituals. Prayer means a complete submission of one's whole being to God, and to His will and His guidance, and such a submission secures the individual with social balance through the ups and downs of this world's life.

One of the achievements of prayers is to acknowledge one's relation to the social and human wholeness, and accordingly to assign from one's possession a due share for the needy whether they are pressured to ask for help or they manage to hide their need so as to preserve their dignity. In many places throughout the Quran, keeping up prayers is connected with paying the purifying welfare dues (zakat) to those who are in need. Significantly, the above verses state an acknowledged, recognized and appointed right of the needy over a portion of the possessions of those who have more than their needs [70:24-25]; thus the latter are not giving them this portion as a mere favor or out of generosity. Socio-economic justice is embedded in the teachings of Islam in all its areas, be they related to faith, worship, moral values, or law [see the section on "Socio-Economic Justice" in the Chapter on "Laws"].

Naturally, the needs of those who ask for help should be duly investigated, so as to put the offered help in its suitable place and make the needy able to rely on themselves in earning their living as much as possible. Education and work should be provided for the needy to secure permanent resources for their living so that they do not always depend on temporary charity. Such welfare dues are just to complement the Islamic principles which guide and control the earning and the spending of money, and to support those who may be disabled and cannot work.

Have you ever seen a human being who contradicts the [essence of] faith [in God and His Judgement]? Then such is the one who thrusts the orphan away, and feels no urge to feed the needy.

Woe, then, unto those who pray, but their hearts and minds from [the essence and message of] their prayers are remote, those who [want but] to be seen and praised, whereas they refuse to help others [who need help]. [107:1-7]

أَرَءَيْتَ ٱلَّذِى يُكَذِّبُ بِٱلدِّينِ ﴿١﴾ فَذَٰلِكَ
ٱلَّذِى يَدُعُّ ٱلْيَتِيمَ ﴿٢﴾ وَلَا يَحُضُّ عَلَىٰ
طَعَامِ ٱلْمِسْكِينِ ﴿٣﴾ فَوَيْلٌ لِّلْمُصَلِّينَ
﴿٤﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ عَن صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ ﴿٥﴾
ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ يُرَآءُونَ ﴿٦﴾
وَيَمْنَعُونَ ٱلْمَاعُونَ ﴿٧﴾

True worship does not consist of the mere physical performance of rituals, without the involvement of the heart and mind to feel the presence of God, and to understand and carry out His guidance. If this is not reflected by care and compassion for those who are in need, then the physical performance is surely empty and thus fruitless. Such a hard-hearted and ego-centered person may go beyond miserliness and selfishness, to hurting and thrusting a powerless orphan away and dissuading others from offering any help to those who are in need. In such cases of insensitive passivity or positive evil-doing, how can a prayer from such a person be judged except as a means of showing off! Those kinds of

people are condemned twice: once for their hypocrisy and the other for their being selfish, miserly, and merciless.

O you who have attained to faith! When the prayer is called for on the Day of Congregation (Jum'a, Friday) hasten to the remembrance of God, and leave all selling [and buying] business; this is for your own good, did you but know. And when the prayer is ended, disperse freely on earth and seek the bounty of God, and often keep up the remembrance of God, so as you may attain to success.
[Yet] if they come across a commercial dealing or a passing delight, they scatter off to it and they leave you standing [alone]. Say: "What is with God is far better than all passing delight and commercial dealing, and God is the best of providers." [62:9-11]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِذَا
نُودِىَ لِلصَّلَوٰةِ مِن يَوْمِ ٱلْجُمُعَةِ فَٱسْعَوْاْ
إِلَىٰ ذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ وَذَرُواْ ٱلْبَيْعَ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ
خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٩﴾ فَإِذَا
قُضِيَتِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةُ فَٱنتَشِرُواْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ
وَٱبْتَغُواْ مِن فَضْلِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱذْكُرُواْ ٱللَّهَ
كَثِيرًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠﴾ وَإِذَا رَأَوْاْ
تِجَٰرَةً أَوْ لَهْوًا ٱنفَضُّوٓاْ إِلَيْهَا وَتَرَكُوكَ
قَآئِمًا ۚ قُلْ مَا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ خَيْرٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهْوِ
وَمِنَ ٱلتِّجَٰرَةِ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ
خَيْرُ ٱلرَّٰزِقِينَ ﴿١١﴾

Islam urged the Muslims to attend the regular daily prayers in congregation (*jama'a*) as much as possible, and required them to offer the noon prayer every Friday in jama'a in the mosque. The above verses strike a noticeable balance between the spiritual and material needs of the individual and society. As soon as the believer hears the call for the congregational Friday noon prayer, he/she must leave any engagement in worldly affairs and answer the call to prayer, and as soon as the prayer is ended the believers have to disperse on earth earning their living and seeking God's bounty. The believer must seek the good of the life to come through his/her work in this world without forgetting the rightful human share and obligation in this life [28:77], and his/her prayer to God to always grant him/her good in this life and in the life to come [2:201].

A larger congregational prayer is held in the morning of each of the two yearly feasts - the one after the fasting month of Ramadan (the ninth month of the Arab lunar calendar), and the other after the main acts of pilgrimage during Dhu-l-Hijja (the twelfth and last month of the Arab lunar calendar). Other congregational prayers are not obligatory, such as those during Ramadan that occur after the last prayer of the day, *qiyam*, the prayer for rain during times of drought, and the prayer when a solar or lunar eclipse occurs. Individual prayers to ask for God's help in bringing about a wish or making a choice between two or more options, can be practiced. Islam opens the way between the human being, as an individual and as a member of the community, and his/her Lord, since such constant regular - and irregular - communications deepen one's faith and strengthen morale in dealing with the ups and downs of this world's life.

THE PURIFYING WELFARE DUES "ZAKAT"

Those who believe in that which is beyond the reach of human perception, and keep up prayers, and give out of what We provide for them. [2:3]

ٱلَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ
بِٱلْغَيْبِ وَ يُقِيمُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَ مِمَّا
رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ﴿٣﴾

It is basic to the Quranic teachings to develop the habit of "giving" in its widest sense that encompasses all that the human being can give from his/her energy, time, knowledge, skill, influence, compassion and so on. Giving is connected with keeping up prayers, and both come, in importance, just next to the faith in God and the life to come and all that is beyond the reach of human perception, since both reflect this faith in the human behavior and make it present in concrete actions.

And [remember] when We took this solemn pledge from the children of Israel: "Worship none but God, and you be good to your parents and kin, and the orphans and the needy, and speak good to people, and keep up prayer, and render the purifying [welfare] dues (zakat);" then did you turn away, save a few among you, swerving aside. [2:83]

وَ إِذْ
أَخَذْنَا مِيثَٰقَ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ لَا تَعْبُدُونَ
إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ وَ بِٱلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَ ذِى
ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ وَ ٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰ وَ ٱلْمَسَٰكِينِ
وَقُولُوا۟ لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا وَ أَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ
وَ ءَاتُوا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا
مِّنكُمْ وَ أَنتُم مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿٨٣﴾

Giving the purifying welfare dues, which is the meaning of the Arabic word "zakat", has been a religious obligation connected with the upkeep of prayers in God's message throughout all its stages, and this two-fold obligation has been repeated about thirty times throughout the Quran. The verse also stresses the relation between zakat, and the faith in God and the support and heeding of the conveyors of His message and the belief in the life to come and its unmatchable rewards. In the Quran giving to those in need may be described as "*lending unto God a goodly loan*" [73:20]. The Quran also emphasizes that "*whatever good you shall forward to your own selves, you shall find it with God as better and mightier a reward*" [73:20, and see also 2:110].

In the above verse, specifically giving zakat is connected with keeping up prayers, and both follow worshipping God alone and being good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans and the needy, and speaking good to people. The last commandment cannot be limited to the

way of speaking or the chosen words, but it encompasses spreading and supporting the good and just. The above verse indicates that these moral values were the essence of the message of God to the children of Israel and the heart of their pledge to observe God's commandments, just as it has been the essence of God's messages revealed to all prophets.

You will never attain to true piety and benevolence unless you spend [on others] of that which you yourselves love and value, and whatever you spend, God has full knowledge thereof. [3:92]

لَن
تَنَالُوا۟ ٱلْبِرَّ حَتَّىٰ تُنفِقُوا۟ مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ ۚ
وَمَا تُنفِقُوا۟ مِن شَىْءٍ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِهِۦ عَلِيمٌ
﴿٩٢﴾

The proof of a genuine spirit of benevolence and altruism is giving away something that one personally values and cherishes. Giving is not limited to money; the basic virtue here is to give from anything that you love, whether it is much or little. A little gift from one with limited resources can be more valuable than a big gift much from one with huge resources. One can give from one's energy, time, knowledge, skill and moral support, as well as giving material aid, and giving up one's own position or life for a noble cause is naturally the highest form. Whatever the value of what is given may be, the essential requirement is to develop the habit of giving from what one values, and to resist selfishness and nurture altruism.

You are the best people that has ever been brought forth for [the good of] humanity: you enjoin the doing of what is [known by common sense and sound minds to be] right and forbid the doing of what is [known by common sense and sound minds to be] wrong, and believe in God. Had the people of the Book attained to [such a] faith, it would have been for their own good; among them are some who have faith, but most of them are iniquitous. [3:110]

كُنتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ
أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ
وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ ۗ
وَلَوْ ءَامَنَ أَهْلُ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُم ۚ
مِّنْهُمُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ ٱلْفَٰسِقُونَ
﴿١١٠﴾

The believer is not only required to do good, but to spread and support it in all society, and to resist the evil and confront it in his/her own self as well as in society. This encompasses giving zakat and spending from whatever one may possess; physically, materially, intellectually or morally. In the verse 107:3, the true believer is required to "urge," motivate and mobilize others to give to the needy.

And it is He who has brought into being gardens, trellised and untrellised, and palm trees, and plantation with produce of all kinds, and olives and

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنشَأَ جَنَّٰتٍ مَّعْرُوشَٰتٍ وَغَيْرَ
مَعْرُوشَٰتٍ وَٱلنَّخْلَ وَٱلزَّرْعَ مُخْتَلِفًا

pomegranates, each seems like each, yet each is different [in itself from the other]; eat of their fruits when they fructify and render the due thereof [unto the poor] on the day of its harvest. But do not waste [God's bounties]; surely, He loves not the wasteful. [6:141]

أَكُلُهُۥ وَ ٱلزَّيْتُونَ وَ ٱلرُّمَّانَ مُتَشَٰبِهًا
وَغَيْرَ مُتَشَٰبِهٍ ۚ كُلُوا۟ مِن ثَمَرِهِۦٓ إِذَآ أَثْمَرَ
وَءَاتُوا۟ حَقَّهُۥ يَوْمَ حَصَادِهِۦ ۖ وَ لَا
تُسْرِفُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُسْرِفِينَ ﴿١٤١﴾

And those in whose possessions there is a due share, determined and recognized and acknowledged [by them], for one who asks [for help] and one who is deprived [of the needs of life]. [70:24-25, see also 51:19]

وَ ٱلَّذِينَ فِىٓ أَمْوَٰلِهِمْ حَقٌّ مَّعْلُومٌ ﴿٢٤﴾
لِّلسَّآئِلِ وَ ٱلْمَحْرُومِ ﴿٢٥﴾

This verse which speaks about paying the acknowledged and recognized "dues" to the needy is a Meccan verse that came before the revelation of the mandatory laws of zakat in Medina. Earlier Meccan verses speak about "a due rightful share in one's possessions for one who asks for help and one who is deprived [from the needs of life]" [51:19, 70:24-25]. In general, numerous Quranic verses in the Meccan period urge helping the poor and the needy and condemn selfishness, greed. and the accumulation of wealth [e.g. 68:12-14, 17-33; 69:28; 73:11; 74:11-15; 76:8-9; 89:17-20; 90:11-18; 92:5-11; 93:6-11; 96:6-8; 100:6-8; 102:1-2; 104:1-4; 107:1-7]. It is significant in the message of Islam to see such an early indication that "giving" is a "due" and that there is a recognized "due share" in everyone's possessions for those who ask for help or are deprived of the needs of life.

The charity offerings "sadaqat" are really meant only for the poor and the needy, and those who are in charge thereof, and those whose hearts have to be won over, and for the freeing of human beings from bondage or relieving the over-burdened with debt and [for] that which can serve the cause of God, and [for] the wayfarer: [this is] an ordinance from God, and God is All- knowing, All-wise. [9:60]

إِنَّمَا
ٱلصَّدَقَٰتُ لِلْفُقَرَآءِ وَ ٱلْمَسَٰكِينِ
وَٱلْعَٰمِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَ ٱلْمُؤَلَّفَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَ فِى
ٱلرِّقَابِ وَ ٱلْغَٰرِمِينَ وَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ
وَٱبْنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ ۖ فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَ ٱللَّهُ
عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٦٠﴾

This is a verse revealed in Medina to indicate those who have the right to receive zakat or other charity offerings such as the voluntary ones, *sadaqat*, or the offerings meant to make up for doing some wrong-doing such as breaking an oath or an ordained fasting without a valid excuse, *kuffurat*. Different views were expressed by the commentators and the jurists to differentiate between "the poor" (*al-fuqara`*) and "the needy" (*al-masakin*) mentioned at the beginning of the list of the eligible recipients of zakat in the above verse. There may be a difference in the degree of need between the two, or it may be in the quality of need. A poor person, *faqir*, may be one who is able to work but cannot find work,

while the needy one, *miskin*, may be one who is disabled physically or mentally and cannot work in any way.

The mention of the wayfarer as one eligible for zakat is significant since Islam calls for a universal humanity and urges a person to move from his/her area to another in order to earn a living or avoid oppression [e.g. 4:97-101; 59:8; 73:20]; this category may also include those who seek political asylum. Caring for those who are overburdened with debts is also significant, since zakat in this way is not restricted to consumption needs, but can also provide economic assistance to those who are able to work but cannot find work, and to those who are overburdened with debts. Using the public revenues of zakat to free a slave from bondage sent an early signal that Islam and the Islamic state are against slavery in principle.

The necessary managerial expenses for zakat funds may be covered by these means. However, such expenses should be proportionally reasonable, since most of the funds should be allocated for the main goal of social assistance. In the historical circumstances of early Islam in Arabia, it was necessary to secure a respectable administration for the emerging centralized state. This may be why some of the zakat revenues were allocated for reconciling people, such as the leading persons on the enemy's side, and those who might be severely hurt by the Muslim military operations.

Of their wealth take [O Prophet] an offering [due to social welfare], so that you cleanse them thereby [in their possessions as well as their morality] and cause them to grow in purity, and pray for them, as - behold - your prayers are a comfort for them; and God is All-hearing, All-knowing. [9:103]

خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَٰلِهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ
وَتُزَكِّيهِم بِهَا وَصَلِّ عَلَيْهِمْ ۖ إِنَّ صَلَوٰتَكَ
سَكَنٌ لَّهُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٠٣﴾

Here, the Prophet in Medina, as the head of the earliest Islamic state, was ordered to be in charge of taking the zakat and distributing it. The verse significantly combines the Prophet's spiritual particulars, such as his prayers for the believers which represent a source of comfort for them, with his worldly responsibilities as the head of the earliest Islamic state. Moreover, it points out that social security and welfare represent a top priority of the responsibilities of the Islamic state since its earliest existence. It has been described as a means of "purification" and "growth" which may have both spiritual and material significance.

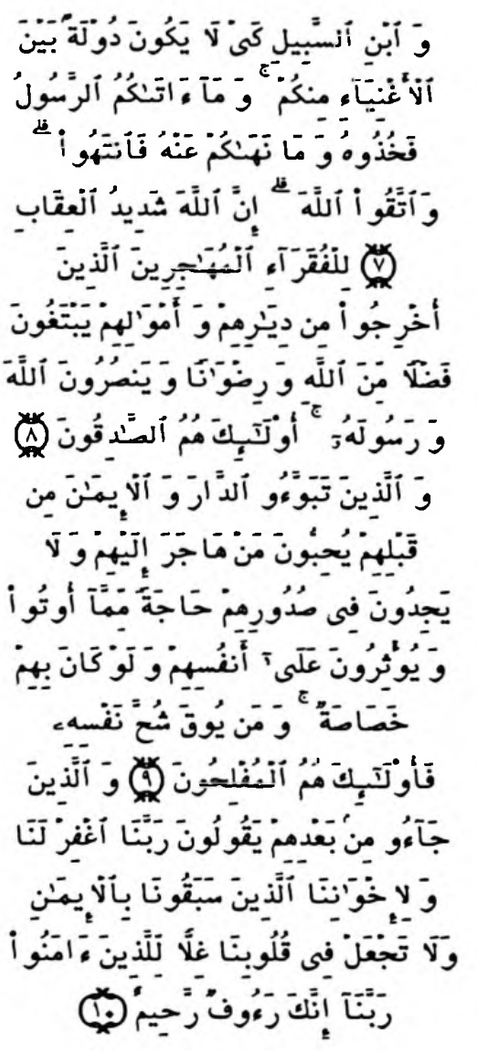
What God has turned over to the Conveyor of His Message from the people of the cities, belongs to God and the Conveyor of His Message, and the near of kin [of the deceased fighters] and the orphans, and the needy and the wayfarer; in order that it may not be [merely a

مَّآ أَفَآءَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ
رَسُولِهِۦ مِنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْقُرَىٰ فَلِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ
وَلِذِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ وَٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰ وَٱلْمَسَٰكِينِ

benefit limited to a particular group] going round and round among only those of you who [may fight and] thus would become wealthy. Hence, follow whatever the Conveyor of the Message gives you [thereof] and refrain from whatever he forbids you, and be conscious of God; surely, God is strict in retribution.

Such [war-gains] are due to the poor among those who were driven from their homes and their possessions seeking God's bounty and [His] goodly acceptance, and supporting the cause of God and the Conveyor of His Message: it is they who have proved to be true [to their commitment]. And [this is also due] to those who before them had homes [in the place to which the former migrated] and embraced the faith, and who show their affection to all that migrated to them [in search of refuge], and have no ill feeling about whatever the others may have been given, but they rather give them preference over themselves, even though they feel a private need, and those who are saved from the covetousness of their own selves, it is they who attain to success.

And those who come later after them pray, "O our Lord! Forgive us, and our brethren who preceded us in faith, and let not our hearts have any hard feelings against those who have attained to faith. O our Lord! Verily, You are All-compassionate, Most Gracious." [59:7-10]


وَ ٱبْنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ كَىْ لَا يَكُونَ دُولَةًۢ بَيْنَ
ٱلْأَغْنِيَآءِ مِنكُمْ ۚ وَ مَآ ءَاتَىٰكُمُ ٱلرَّسُولُ
فَخُذُوهُ وَ مَا نَهَىٰكُمْ عَنْهُ فَٱنتَهُوا۟ ۖ
وَ ٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ شَدِيدُ ٱلْعِقَابِ
﴿٧﴾ لِلْفُقَرَآءِ ٱلْمُهَٰجِرِينَ ٱلَّذِينَ
أُخْرِجُوا۟ مِن دِيَٰرِهِمْ وَ أَمْوَٰلِهِمْ يَبْتَغُونَ
فَضْلًا مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَ رِضْوَٰنًا وَ يَنصُرُونَ ٱللَّهَ
وَ رَسُولَهُۥٓ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلصَّٰدِقُونَ ﴿٨﴾
وَ ٱلَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُو ٱلدَّارَ وَ ٱلْإِيمَٰنَ مِن
قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَ لَا
يَجِدُونَ فِى صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِّمَّآ أُوتُوا۟
وَ يُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَ لَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ
خَصَاصَةٌ ۚ وَ مَن يُوقَ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِۦ
فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٩﴾ وَ ٱلَّذِينَ
جَآءُو مِنۢ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا ٱغْفِرْ لَنَا
وَ لِإِخْوَٰنِنَا ٱلَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِٱلْإِيمَٰنِ
وَ لَا تَجْعَلْ فِى قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِّلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟
رَبَّنَآ إِنَّكَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٠﴾

These verses specifically refer to the historical case of the emigrants from Mecca to Medina, *al-muhajirun*, who had left behind their homes and property. They were offered all the moral and material support available by their brothers in faith in Medina and thus the latter group were rightfully called *al-ansar*, the supporters. However, the verses also have their permanent significance to any Islamic society and state in any time or place. First, social solidarity and cooperation in times of hardship require certain arrangements so that these hardships and pressures can be faced through individual and social efforts. The verses also imply that the offerings of the haves to the have-nots may exceed the limits of the due zakat as long as the former can afford what they offer, and the latter are in pressing need, and the two parties do not have hard feelings. Everyone should be considerate and caring about the other, and altruism should overwhelmingly prevail over egoism. An essential and outstanding socio- economic goal of the Islamic society is condensed in

these few words: "*so that it may not be merely [a gain] going round and round among the wealthy of you.*" Moreover, the interests of the entire society in its successive generations ought to be observed, and the existing resources should not be exhausted for the benefit of the present generation at the expense of "*those who would come after them,*" and thus would have hard feelings towards their predecessors. The verses guide the socio-economic planning to guard the solidarity and integration of the society in its wholeness and continuation, in the present and the future.

Have you ever seen a human being who contradicts the [essence of] faith [in God and His Judgement]? Then such is the one who thrusts the orphan away, and feels no urge to feed the needy.

Woe, then, unto those who pray, but their hearts and minds from [the essence and message of] their prayers are remote, those who [want but] to be seen and praised, whereas they refuse to help others [who need help]. [107:1-7]

أَرَءَيْتَ ٱلَّذِى يُكَذِّبُ بِٱلدِّينِ ﴿١﴾ فَذَٰلِكَ
ٱلَّذِى يَدُعُّ ٱلْيَتِيمَ ﴿٢﴾ وَلَا يَحُضُّ عَلَىٰ
طَعَامِ ٱلْمِسْكِينِ ﴿٣﴾ فَوَيْلٌ لِّلْمُصَلِّينَ
﴿٤﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ عَن صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ ﴿٥﴾
ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ يُرَآءُونَ ﴿٦﴾
وَيَمْنَعُونَ ٱلْمَاعُونَ ﴿٧﴾

Significantly, this whole sura which consists of the above verses has been called in Arabic "the assistance" "al-Ma'un". It was revealed in the early years of the Mecca period, probably after the sura that condemns the obsession of possessing more and more [sura 102, "al- Takathur".] Its verses condemn thrusting the orphan away, being non- motivated, or even refraining from motivating others to help the needy, all actions that are considered to be denouncements of the faith as a lie, since such behavior and practice are contradicting the principles of faith. The verses warn those who pray but deny all assistance to their fellows, and whose prayers are thus considered to be merely a way of showing off. Since its earliest days, the Quranic message has repeatedly stressed that social-economic balance and integration is fundamental in establishing the Islamic society. Some time after the revelation of the earliest five verses of the Quran, the following verses in the sura were revealed and they read: "*Nay, verily, the human being tends to arbitrariness whenever he [/she] believes himself [/herself] to be self-sufficient. Surely, unto your Lord all must return*" [96:6-8].

FASTING "SIYAM"

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ كُتِبَ عَلَيۡكُمُ ٱلصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبۡلِكُمۡ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٨٣﴾ أَيَّامٗا مَّعۡدُودَٰتٖۚ فَمَن كَانَ مِنكُم مَّرِيضًا أَوۡ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٖ فَعِدَّةٞ مِّنۡ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَۚ وَعَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُۥ فِدۡيَةٞ طَعَامُ مِسۡكِينٖۖ فَمَن تَطَوَّعَ خَيۡرٗا فَهُوَ خَيۡرٞ لَّهُۥۚ وَأَن تَصُومُواْ خَيۡرٞ لَّكُمۡۖ إِن كُنتُمۡ تَعۡلَمُونَ ﴿١٨٤﴾ شَهۡرُ رَمَضَانَ ٱلَّذِيٓ أُنزِلَ فِيهِ ٱلۡقُرۡءَانُ هُدٗى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَٰتٖ مِّنَ ٱلۡهُدَىٰ وَٱلۡفُرۡقَانِۚ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنكُمُ ٱلشَّهۡرَ فَلۡيَصُمۡهُۖ وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوۡ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٖ فَعِدَّةٞ مِّنۡ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَۗ يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ بِكُمُ ٱلۡيُسۡرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ ٱلۡعُسۡرَ وَلِتُكۡمِلُواْ ٱلۡعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُواْ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَىٰكُمۡ وَلَعَلَّكُمۡ تَشۡكُرُونَ ﴿١٨٥﴾ وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌۖ أُجِيبُ دَعۡوَةَ ٱلدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِۖ فَلۡيَسۡتَجِيبُواْ لِي وَلۡيُؤۡمِنُواْ بِي لَعَلَّهُمۡ يَرۡشُدُونَ ﴿١٨٦﴾ أُحِلَّ لَكُمۡ لَيۡلَةَ ٱلصِّيَامِ ٱلرَّفَثُ إِلَىٰ نِسَآئِكُمۡۚ هُنَّ لِبَاسٞ لَّكُمۡ وَأَنتُمۡ لِبَاسٞ لَّهُنَّۗ عَلِمَ ٱللَّهُ أَنَّكُمۡ كُنتُمۡ

O you who have attained to faith! Fasting is ordained for you as it was ordained for those before you, so that you might remain conscious of Him [and be trained on self- restraint; fasting is] for a certain number of days; but whoever of you is sick, or on a journey, [shall fast instead for] a number of other days later [equal to the number during which he/she was unable to fast in Ramadan]; and as for those who are able, they have to make a redemption by feeding a poor person, since whoever voluntarily does good, it is good for his[/her] own self. And that you should fast is better for you, if you but know.

It was the month of Ramadan when the Quran was [first] sent down, to be a guidance to the people, and well-spelled out indications of that guidance, and [to be] the standard by which to discern the right from the wrong. Hence, whoever of you is around at that month should fast throughout it. But one that is sick, or on a journey, [shall fast instead for] a number of other days later [equal to the number of Ramadan days during which he/she was unable to fast]. God wills that you have ease; and does not will you to suffer hardship. So complete the number of [days required in the way indicated for either case] and extol Him for having guided you aright and that you may be grateful [to Him].

And if My servants ask you about Me, I am indeed close [to them]; I respond to the prayer of one who calls on Me whenever he[/she] calls; let them, then, respond to Me, and believe in Me, so that they might follow the right way. It is lawful for you to have sexual unions with your wives the night preceding the [day's] fasting; they are as a garment for you and you are as a garment for them. God knows that you have been acting differently from

what you think ought to be done in this respect, and so He has turned unto you in His grace and removed this hardship from you. So now, you may lie with them, and seek what God has ordained for you, and eat and drink until you can discern the white [streak of dawn] from the black [end of night], and then resume fasting until [the end of the day and the beginning of] nightfall, but do not lie with them while you are abiding in worship in the mosques. These are the bounds set by God, so keep well within [what is allowed and never approach what is forbidden by] them. Thus God makes His message clear to people, so that they might always be conscious of Him. And devour not one another's possessions wrongfully, nor offer them to those who rule, so as to wrongfully and knowingly devour what is owned by others. [2:183-188]

تَخْتَانُونَ أَنفُسَكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَ عَفَا
عَنكُمْ ۖ فَالْـَٰٔنَ بَـٰشِرُوهُنَّ وَ ٱبْتَغُوا۟ مَا
كَتَبَ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ ۚ وَ كُلُوا۟ وَ ٱشْرَبُوا۟ حَتَّىٰ
يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ ٱلْخَيْطُ ٱلْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ ٱلْخَيْطِ
ٱلْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ ٱلْفَجْرِ ۖ ثُمَّ أَتِمُّوا۟ ٱلصِّيَامَ
إِلَى ٱلَّيْلِ ۚ وَ لَا تُبَـٰشِرُوهُنَّ وَ أَنتُمْ
عَـٰكِفُونَ فِى ٱلْمَسَـٰجِدِ ۗ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ
ٱللَّهِ فَلَا تَقْرَبُوهَا ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ
ءَايَـٰتِهِۦ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٨٧﴾ وَ لَا
تَأْكُلُوٓا۟ أَمْوَٰلَكُم بَيْنَكُم بِٱلْبَـٰطِلِ وَ تُدْلُوا۟
بِهَآ إِلَى ٱلْحُكَّامِ لِتَأْكُلُوا۟ فَرِيقًا مِّنْ
أَمْوَٰلِ ٱلنَّاسِ بِٱلْإِثْمِ وَ أَنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ
﴿١٨٨﴾

In general, fasting was ordained in general in previous divine messages, although probably in different forms. Fasting in Islam, in its particular rules, may not be like the other fasts previously observed. However, the Quran, clearly stresses that fasting is not meant for self-torture, since "*God wills that you have ease, and does not will you to suffer hardship.*" It is merely a temporary abstention from food, drink, and sexual relations during a number of hours during the day, for one month of the year.

The instincts for eating, drinking, and having sex are naturally pressing for every human being at the biological level, and a temporary calculated restraint from them maintains self-control on the one side, and the direction of human attention to such human dimensions as the intellectual and the spiritual-moral on the other. These dimensions are developed for a whole month through self-restraint and the offering of assistance - material, intellectual or moral - to those who are really in need. Certain requirements for such development are the basics that ought to be fulfilled by all believers, but higher standards are recommended to be attained through the spiritual-moral and intellectual faculties by those who are able to reach them and vie with one another in doing what is good [3:133; 57:21; 83:26].

To make fasting within the ability of most persons, people are allowed to not observe fasting when they are sick or traveling, since both cases imply that a person is not in his/her normal state of life, and fasting may be over-burdening for him/her in such circumstances. Also, women with their periods, or those who are pregnant, in the post-delivery period, or who are nursing their babies have the same permission. However, all these must make up the same number of days during which they did not fast when these circumstances have ended.

Besides the abstention from food and drink while one is fasting, husbands and

wives, the only group for whom sex is allowed, must abstain from sex. The human sex instinct has to be controlled just like the human instinct of eating and drinking, although all are normal and one ought not to be ashamed of them.

These three instinctive demands have to be avoided only by day; they are allowed as soon as the fast is broken from dusk until the dawn of the next day. Besides this, a retreat to the mosque during the last ten days of Ramadan, is recommended according to the Prophet's practice (Sunna). During this retreat, husbands and wives who may be abiding in the mosque, following this Sunna, cannot have sex even at night as long as they are in the mosque, but when they return home from the mosque they may behave as all fasting spouses may behave during the night.

Two relevant points are raised in the verses of fasting. The first is how close God is to the human being, and this point is closely related to the spiritual atmosphere of fasting and self-restraint. God is telling the worshipper that He is close to him/her and responds to whoever calls unto Him. It is logical that a human being who wants God to respond to His prayers, should himself/herself respond to God's message and guidance, which ensures sensibility, foresightedness and insight.

The other point is related to another human greed beside the greed for food, drink and sex with which the training for fasting deals, and that is the greed for wealth and possession. Fasting would be fruitless if it did not result in controlling this greed, which can be manifested in ways other than the open practices of theft, robbery, and fraud. The Quran warns against the wrongful devouring of others' rights, especially through those who are in authority, whom one may bribe to get what legally belongs to others, while he/she knows the truth. These wrongful devourers of others' rights and properties, in this way commit two-fold offenses: one is by their devouring of what belongs to others and the second is by spreading corruption among those who are in authority. Both should receive the message of self-control from fasting and resist the temptation of illegitimate accumulation of wealth.

He [Zakariyya/Zachariah] said, "My Lord! Appoint for me a sign." Said [the angels], "Your sign shall be that for three days you shall not speak to people other than by gestures. And keep remembering and invoking your Lord unceasingly, and extol His limitless glory by night and by day." [3:41]

قَالَ رَبِّ
ٱجْعَل لِّيٓ ءَايَةً ۖ قَالَ ءَايَتُكَ أَلَّا تُكَلِّمَ
ٱلنَّاسَ ثَلَٰثَةَ أَيَّامٍ إِلَّا رَمْزًا ۗ وَٱذْكُر رَّبَّكَ
كَثِيرًا وَسَبِّحْ بِٱلْعَشِيِّ وَٱلْإِبْكَٰرِ ﴿٤١﴾

He [Zakareyya/Zachariah] said, "My Lord! Appoint for me a sign." He said, "Your sign is that for three full nights [and days] you will not speak to people." Thereupon he came out of the sanctuary unto his people and signaled to them [by gestures]: "Extol His glory at dawn and in the evening." [19:10-11]

قَالَ رَبِّ
ٱجْعَل لِّيٓ ءَايَةً ۚ قَالَ ءَايَتُكَ أَلَّا تُكَلِّمَ
ٱلنَّاسَ ثَلَٰثَ لَيَالٍ سَوِيًّا ﴿١٠﴾ فَخَرَجَ
عَلَىٰ قَوْمِهِۦ مِنَ ٱلْمِحْرَابِ فَأَوْحَىٰٓ
إِلَيْهِمْ أَن سَبِّحُوا۟ بُكْرَةً وَعَشِيًّا ﴿١١﴾

And shake the trunk of the palm-trees towards you, it will drop fresh ripe dates upon you. Eat, then, and drink, and let your eye be unworried and at ease. And if you should see any human being, say, "I have vowed to the All-merciful an absence from speech (a fast); hence, I will not speak today to any human being." [19:26]

فَكُلِى وَ ٱشْرَبِى
وَ قَرِّى عَيْنًا ۖ فَإِمَّا تَرَيِنَّ مِنَ ٱلْبَشَرِ
أَحَدًا فَقُولِىٓ إِنِّى نَذَرْتُ لِلرَّحْمَٰنِ
صَوْمًا فَلَنْ أُكَلِّمَ ٱلْيَوْمَ إِنسِيًّا ﴿٢٦﴾

In the above verses, another form of abstention - from speaking - is ordained for certain persons for a limited amount of time. The Quran refers in this respect to the cases of Prophet Zakariyya (Zachariah) and Maryam (Mary), the mother of 'Isa (Jesus), who were both blessed with children in a supernatural way; the former when he had become old, and the latter when she was a virgin and unmarried [3:40, 47; 19:8-9, 20-21]. Since both were miraculous blessings of God, the two persons were ordered by Him to refrain from speaking to any person for a certain amount of time, although gestures were allowed to express the passing needs [3:41; 19:10-11, 29]. This might be understood as a sign of a spiritual situation or worship in which one has a special contact with God that should not be interrupted by talking to people, and such a sign may remind people that everything belongs in its origin to God the Creator, who has the power to do everything [3:40, 47; 19:9, 21]. In this way, total refrainment from speech may be more expressive, significant and revealing than any words. However, such a form of worship or spiritual practice is not ordained or required in Islam, which only forbids talking to others during the prayers.

And complete [the acts of] pilgrimage and "'umra" [the worshipping visit to the House] in full devotion to God; but if you are held back [from completing your pilgrimage], give instead whatever offering is easily feasible. And shave not your heads, till the offering reaches its place [and end] of sacrifice; but any of you who is sick or suffers from an ailment of the head, shall redeem himself [/herself] by fasting, or offering charity, or [any] other offering [to God as an act of worship]. Then when you are safe, the one who takes advantage of a [concise] visit [to Mecca; 'umra] before the acts of pilgrimage has to give whatever offering is easily feasible. But one who does not find any, shall fast for three days during the pilgrimage and for seven days after returning home, making ten days in all; and all this only relates to one who does not live near the Inviolable House of Worship.

وَ أَتِمُّوا ٱلْحَجَّ وَ ٱلْعُمْرَةَ لِلَّهِ ۚ
فَإِنْ أُحْصِرْتُمْ فَمَا ٱسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ ٱلْهَدْىِ ۖ
وَ لَا تَحْلِقُوا رُءُوسَكُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ ٱلْهَدْىُ
مَحِلَّهُۥ ۚ فَمَن كَانَ مِنكُم مَّرِيضًا أَوْ بِهِۦٓ
أَذًى مِّن رَّأْسِهِۦ فَفِدْيَةٌ مِّن صِيَامٍ أَوْ
صَدَقَةٍ أَوْ نُسُكٍ ۚ فَإِذَآ أَمِنتُمْ فَمَن تَمَتَّعَ
بِٱلْعُمْرَةِ إِلَى ٱلْحَجِّ فَمَا ٱسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ
ٱلْهَدْىِ ۚ فَمَن لَّمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ ثَلَٰثَةِ أَيَّامٍ
فِى ٱلْحَجِّ وَ سَبْعَةٍ إِذَا رَجَعْتُمْ ۗ تِلْكَ
عَشَرَةٌ كَامِلَةٌ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَن لَّمْ يَكُنْ أَهْلُهُۥ
حَاضِرِى ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ ۚ وَ ٱتَّقُوا

And remain conscious of God, and know that God is severe in retribution. [2:196]

ٱللَّهَ وَ ٱعۡلَمُوٓاْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ شَدِيدُ ٱلۡعِقَابِ ﴿١٩٦﴾

And no believer should kill another, unless it be by error. And if any believer kills another by error, then let him [/her] set free a believing human being from bondage, and pay an indemnity to the victim's family, unless they forgo it as an act of generosity and magnanimity. But if the victim himself [/herself] belongs to people who are at war with you and is a believer, let the killer set free a believing human being from bondage. Whereas if he [/she] belongs to a people with whom you have a bond, then an indemnity is to be paid to his [/her] family, in addition to setting free a believing human being from bondage. But one who finds not the means, let him [/her] fast two consecutive months: an atonement ordained by God; and God is All-knowing, All-wise. [4:92]

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤۡمِنٍ أَن يَقۡتُلَ مُؤۡمِنًا إِلَّا
خَطَـٔٗاۚ وَمَن قَتَلَ مُؤۡمِنًا خَطَـٔٗا فَتَحۡرِيرُ
رَقَبَةٖ مُّؤۡمِنَةٖ وَدِيَةٞ مُّسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَىٰٓ أَهۡلِهِۦٓ
إِلَّآ أَن يَصَّدَّقُواْۚ فَإِن كَانَ مِن قَوۡمٍ عَدُوّٖ
لَّكُمۡ وَهُوَ مُؤۡمِنٞ فَتَحۡرِيرُ رَقَبَةٖ مُّؤۡمِنَةٖۖ
وَإِن كَانَ مِن قَوۡمِۭ بَيۡنَكُمۡ وَبَيۡنَهُم مِّيثَٰقٞ
فَدِيَةٞ مُّسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَىٰٓ أَهۡلِهِۦ وَتَحۡرِيرُ رَقَبَةٖ
مُّؤۡمِنَةٖۖ فَمَن لَّمۡ يَجِدۡ فَصِيَامُ شَهۡرَيۡنِ
مُتَتَابِعَيۡنِ تَوۡبَةٗ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ
عَلِيمًا حَكِيمٗا ﴿٩٢﴾

God will not hold against you a [n unintentional] slip in your oaths; but He will [only] hold you responsible for such oaths with which you have bound yourselves. Thus, the expiation for breaking [such] an oath is to feed ten needy persons with the average of the food you serve to your own families, or to clothe them or to free a human being from bondage; and if any finds not the means [for any of these], let him [/her] fast for three days. That is the expiation of your oaths when you have sworn; but be mindful of your oaths. Thus, God makes clear to you His messages, so that you might be grateful. [5:89]

لَا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ ٱللَّهُ
بِٱللَّغۡوِ فِيٓ أَيۡمَٰنِكُمۡ وَلَٰكِن يُؤَاخِذُكُم
بِمَا عَقَّدتُّمُ ٱلۡأَيۡمَٰنَۖ فَكَفَّٰرَتُهُۥٓ إِطۡعَامُ
عَشَرَةِ مَسَٰكِينَ مِنۡ أَوۡسَطِ مَا تُطۡعِمُونَ
أَهۡلِيكُمۡ أَوۡ كِسۡوَتُهُمۡ أَوۡ تَحۡرِيرُ رَقَبَةٖۖ
فَمَن لَّمۡ يَجِدۡ فَصِيَامُ ثَلَٰثَةِ أَيَّامٖۚ ذَٰلِكَ
كَفَّٰرَةُ أَيۡمَٰنِكُمۡ إِذَا حَلَفۡتُمۡۚ وَٱحۡفَظُوٓاْ
أَيۡمَٰنَكُمۡۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمۡ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ
لَعَلَّكُمۡ تَشۡكُرُونَ ﴿٨٩﴾

O you who have attained to faith! Kill no game while you are in the sanctified state of pilgrimage. And whoever of you kills it intentionally, a requital of livestock equivalent in number to what he[/she] has killed as ruled by two persons of

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُواْ لَا تَقۡتُلُواْ ٱلصَّيۡدَ وَأَنتُمۡ حُرُمٞۚ
وَمَن قَتَلَهُۥ مِنكُم مُّتَعَمِّدٗا فَجَزَآءٞ مِّثۡلُ مَا
قَتَلَ مِنَ ٱلنَّعَمِ يَحۡكُمُ بِهِۦ ذَوَا عَدۡلٖ مِّنكُمۡ

moral acceptability and probity has to be brought as an offering to the Ka'bah [for feeding the poor], or an [other] expiation by feeding the needy, or by what makes up for this in fasting, [and this is ordained] in order that he[/she] should taste the gravity of his[/her] evil-doing. "God has pardoned what is past, but whoever offends again, God will inflict his retribution on him [/her], and God is All-mighty, Retributor of evil. [5:95]

هَدْيًۢا بَٰلِغَ ٱلْكَعْبَةِ أَوْ كَفَّٰرَةٌ طَعَامُ
مَسَٰكِينَ أَوْ عَدْلُ ذَٰلِكَ صِيَامًا لِّيَذُوقَ
وَبَالَ أَمْرِهِۦ ۗ عَفَا ٱللَّهُ عَمَّا سَلَفَ ۚ وَمَنْ
عَادَ فَيَنتَقِمُ ٱللَّهُ مِنْهُ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ ذُو
ٱنتِقَامٍ ﴿٩٥﴾

And those who separate themselves from their wives by saying, "You are as unlawful to me as my mother's back," and thereafter would go back on what they have said, [their expiation] shall be the freeing of a human being from bondage before the couple may touch one another again; this is what you are exhorted to do, and God is fully aware of all that you do. But whoever finds not the means, then let him[/her] fast instead for two consecutive months before the couple may touch one another again, and one who is unable to do this shall feed sixty needy persons; this [is ordained] so that you might prove your faith in God and the Conveyor of His message. And these are the bounds set by God, and grievous suffering [in the life to come] awaits all who stubbornly deny the truth [and God's laws]. [58:3-4]

وَٱلَّذِينَ يُظَٰهِرُونَ مِن نِّسَآئِهِمْ ثُمَّ
يَعُودُونَ لِمَا قَالُوا۟ فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مِّن
قَبْلِ أَن يَتَمَآسَّا ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ تُوعَظُونَ بِهِۦ ۚ
وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ﴿٣﴾ فَمَن لَّمْ
يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ شَهْرَيْنِ مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ مِن قَبْلِ أَن
يَتَمَآسَّا ۖ فَمَن لَّمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَإِطْعَامُ سِتِّينَ
مِسْكِينًا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ لِتُؤْمِنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ
وَرَسُولِهِۦ ۚ وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ ٱللَّهِ ۗ
وَلِلْكَٰفِرِينَ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٤﴾

There are certain wrong-doings that the Quran ordained to be atoned for by the individuals who have committed them, without any involvement of the state law or the state authorities. Shari'a is keen to limit the state laws which have to be, naturally, enforced by the state authorities, and which would burden the courts and their judges, especially with regard to the penal law. The offenses that have fixed penalties in Quran and Sunna are very limited in number, and the door is left open for human discretion to respond to changing social circumstances through human legislative or judicial initiatives, known as *ta'zir* [see "Penal Law" under "Laws"]. The *hisba* institution was a kind of "quick" or "summary" justice which stood in the middle between the administrative and judicial authorities, and could always be referred or appealed to the court whenever the concerned party wanted. The above verses mostly deal with offenses which are related to pure religious matters, namely worship and oaths that are sworn privately not in courts, with the exception of unintentional killing. The offender in this case must financially make amends

for his/her unintentional offense, but the state may add another suitable penalty when this becomes necessary for deterrence.

The offender must make up for offenses which are related to worship and oaths by making expiation or atonements, *kaffarat*, which combine in their nature worship and penalty. Shari'a aims to reach, in its reform, the depth of the human self from within, in addition to securing social justice and public education, rather than inflicting restrictive penalties on the offender personally. Even in crimes punished by the common penal law, when genuine repentance can be proved before the punishment is inflicted on the defendant, it may have its effects in lightening, or even suspending or obstructing the punishment, and it is met by God's grace at any time [e.g. 5:34, 39; 24:5, and see the section on "Penal Law"].

In each case of expiation or atonement indicated in the above verses, fasting can make up for the offense if no other means are possible. When one fails to fulfill certain acts of pilgrimage, he/she has to offer a sacrifice for feeding the poor, and if this is not possible, such a person has to fast for three days during the pilgrimage, and for seven days after returning home, for one who does live near the Inviolable House of Worship [2:196]. Pilgrimage is meant to train the pilgrims, during their worship, towards peacefulness in dealing with human beings [2:197], and also with animals [5:95]. Any intentional killing of game during the acts of pilgrimage, or during *'umra*, which is limited to a worshipping visit to the Inviolable House of God in Mecca, is forbidden, and if it occurs, the violator must offer a sacrifice to the poor around the Ka'ba, that is the same in kind and number to the animal(s) which he/she killed, or feed the needy as an expiation. An alternative of equivalent fasting here is also allowed for a pilgrim who may not be able to afford the two previously indicated atonements. No specific period is mentioned for fasting in this case, nor is indicated a specific number of needy to be fed.

It is significant that setting a human being free from bondage is made the first priority in cases of an expiation for unintentional manslaughter [4:92], as well as in cases of following the pre-Islamic Arab custom in separating a husband from his wife by saying, "You are as unlawful to me as my mother" (*zihar*), and then going back on what they have said [58:3-4]. Setting a slave free from bondage is even indicated as an atonement for breaking an oath. Islam thus opened many ways out of slavery through individual and state obligations and encouragement.

A substitute of fasting for two consecutive months is ordained in the first two instances when setting a human being free from bondage is not possible (a substitute period of fasting for three days is ordained as atonement for breaking an oath if freeing a human being from bondage is not possible). This long period of fasting, which is double that of the annual mandatory fast of the month of Ramadan, underlines the seriousness and evil of the offence of manslaughter and of suspending the spouses' physical relation, following a *Jahiliyya* custom which might be considered as a kind of moral "womanslaughter". Feeding sixty needy persons is allowed for one who cannot fast for two consecutive months in a case of *zihar*, but a similar chance was not given in the case of unintentional manslaughter, in which the fasting for two consecutive months is the only atonement when the offender cannot find a way to liberate a slave and paying the indemnity. Imprisonment or work for public service or utility may also be considered in this instance.

In addition to all these modes of fasting, in order to make the most out of the spiritual, moral, and behavioral benefits of fasting, additional fasting, *nawafil*, can be offered on particular days according to the Prophet's advice in the Sunna, just as additional prayers are recommended there besides the obligatory ones. The additional fasting should be distributed throughout the week or the month, and should exclude fasting on the feast days. A friday is also excluded unless it is connected with other day(s) before or after it. A constant fast throughout one's whole life is also forbidden [reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Hanbal, al-Nasa'i, al-Tirmidhi, and Ibn Majah].

For all men and women who have submitted themselves unto God, and all believing men and believing women, and all devout men and devout women, and all truthful men and truthful women, and all men and women who patiently endure [through all the vicissitudes of life], and all men and women who humble themselves [before God], and all men and women who give in charity, and all men and women who fast [and have self-restraint], and all men and women who guard their private parts [and chastity], and for all men and women who remember and invoke God unceasingly: for them -all- has God readied forgiveness and a mighty reward. [33:35]

إِنَّ
ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ وَ ٱلْمُسْلِمَٰتِ وَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ
وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ وَ ٱلْقَٰنِتِينَ وَ ٱلْقَٰنِتَٰتِ
وَٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ وَ ٱلصَّٰدِقَٰتِ وَ ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ
وَٱلصَّٰبِرَٰتِ وَ ٱلْخَٰشِعِينَ وَ ٱلْخَٰشِعَٰتِ
وَٱلْمُتَصَدِّقِينَ وَ ٱلْمُتَصَدِّقَٰتِ وَ ٱلصَّٰٓئِمِينَ
وَ ٱلصَّٰٓئِمَٰتِ وَ ٱلْحَٰفِظِينَ فُرُوجَهُمْ
وَٱلْحَٰفِظَٰتِ وَ ٱلذَّٰكِرِينَ ٱللَّهَ كَثِيرًا
وَٱلذَّٰكِرَٰتِ ۙ أَعَدَّ ٱللَّهُ لَهُم مَّغْفِرَةً وَ أَجْرًا
عَظِيمًا ﴿٣٥﴾

Although the masculine plural may be used in Arabic to include men and women together, the above verse uses both masculine and feminine plurals to stress the equal and independent religious and moral responsibility of women in the Muslim society [see also 2:221; 3:195; 4:124; 9:71-72; 16:97; 24:12, 30-31; 33:36, 58, 73; 40:40; 47:19; 48:5, 25; 49:13; 57:12; 71:28; 85:10]. Among the merits of Muslim men as well as Muslim women that are mentioned in the above verse, besides the faith , devotion, truthfulness, patient endurance, humbleness to God, and giving to the needy, are fasting, abstaining from what is wrong and guarding the chastity. Since fasting is meant to develop self-control and self-restraint, it has to go beyond the limits of refraining from eating and drinking and having sex for a certain number of hours, to God-consciousness and observance of morality in all areas, all the time [2:183]. Due to this consideration, the Prophet describes fasting as "a protection" and "a prevention" from misbehavior and verbal or physical offenses against others [reported by al-Hanbali, al-Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, al-Bayhaqi in *Shu'ab al-Iman* and *al-Sunan*, and al-Tabari in *al-Kabir*]. The Prophet evaluates the moral yield of fasting as "a half of patience" [reported by Ibn Majah]. He teaches that God has no need in requiring one who does not abstain from saying and doing what is false to abstain from food and drink [reported by al-Bukhari, Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi, al-Nasa'i, and Ibn Majah].

PILGRIMAGE " HAJJ"

And when We made the House [of Worship] a destination to which people may turn repeatedly and a sanctuary: take, then, the place whereon Ibrahim [Abraham] once stood as your place of prayer. And thus did We commit Abraham and Isma'il [Ishmael]: "Purify My House for those who will walk around it, and those who stay beside it for worship, and those who bow down and prostrate themselves in prayer.

And when Abraham said, "O my Lord! Make this a land secure, and grant its people with sustenance from its yield, such of them as believe in God and the Last Day." [God] said "And whoever stubbornly denies the truth I will let him [/her] enjoy [this life's pleasures] for a short while, but in the end I shall drive to suffering through fire, and how awful a journey's end."

And when Abraham, and Ishmael with him, raised up the foundations of the House [of Worship, praying], "O our Lord! Accept this from us; You are All-hearing, All-knowing.

" O our Lord! Make us submissive to You, and make out of our offspring a people submissive to You, and show us Your ways of worship, and accept our repentance; surely, You are the Acceptor of Repentance, the Most Gracious.

"O Our Lord! Raise up to them [our offspring] a conveyor of [Your] message from among themselves, who shall convey to them Your messages and teach them the divine writ and the wisdom as well, and cause them to grow in purity; You are the All-mighty, the All-wise." [2:125-129]

وَ إِذْ جَعَلْنَا ٱلْبَيْتَ
مَثَابَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَ أَمْنًا وَ ٱتَّخِذُوا۟ مِن
مَّقَامِ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ مُصَلًّى ۖ وَ عَهِدْنَآ إِلَىٰٓ
إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ وَ إِسْمَٰعِيلَ أَن طَهِّرَا بَيْتِىَ
لِلطَّآئِفِينَ وَ ٱلْعَٰكِفِينَ وَ ٱلرُّكَّعِ ٱلسُّجُودِ
﴿١٢٥﴾ وَ إِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ رَبِّ ٱجْعَلْ هَٰذَا
بَلَدًا ءَامِنًا وَ ٱرْزُقْ أَهْلَهُۥ مِنَ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ
مَنْ ءَامَنَ مِنْهُم بِٱللَّهِ وَ ٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ ۖ
قَالَ وَ مَن كَفَرَ فَأُمَتِّعُهُۥ قَلِيلًا ثُمَّ أَضْطَرُّهُۥٓ
إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ ٱلنَّارِ ۖ وَ بِئْسَ ٱلْمَصِيرُ
﴿١٢٦﴾ وَ إِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ ٱلْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ
ٱلْبَيْتِ وَ إِسْمَٰعِيلُ رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّآ ۖ
إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿١٢٧﴾ رَبَّنَا
وَ ٱجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمَيْنِ لَكَ وَ مِن ذُرِّيَّتِنَآ أُمَّةً
مُّسْلِمَةً لَّكَ وَ أَرِنَا مَنَاسِكَنَا وَ تُبْ
عَلَيْنَآ ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلتَّوَّابُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ
﴿١٢٨﴾ رَبَّنَا وَ ٱبْعَثْ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ
يَتْلُوا۟ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَٰتِكَ وَ يُعَلِّمُهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ
وَ ٱلْحِكْمَةَ وَ يُزَكِّيهِمْ ۚ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ
ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿١٢٩﴾

"O our Lord! I have settled some of my offspring in a valley where the land is not arable, close to Your

رَبَّنَآ إِنِّىٓ
أَسْكَنتُ مِن ذُرِّيَّتِى بِوَادٍ غَيْرِ ذِى زَرْعٍ

Sanctified House [of worship], so that, O our Lord, they might keep up prayers; so cause people's hearts to yearn towards them, and grant them sustenance from land produce, so that they might feel grateful [for Your blessing]." [14:37]

عِندَ بَيْتِكَ ٱلْمُحَرَّمِ رَبَّنَا لِيُقِيمُوا۟
ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ فَٱجْعَلْ أَفْـِٔدَةً مِّنَ ٱلنَّاسِ تَهْوِىٓ
إِلَيْهِمْ وَٱرْزُقْهُم مِّنَ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

The House of God in Mecca was established by Ibrahim (Abraham) and his elder son Isma'il (Ishmael). It was a sacred place that was to be respected by the different parties. All fighting was forbidden within its limits, as it is forbidden now, since it was recognized by the Arab custom as inviolable for the pursuit of revenge or violence. Being in an isolated and unpopulated place, Abraham prayed to God to provide sustenance for the area in which his son Ishmael and his mother, and his family, would live.

The House became a place of prayer, and developed as a religious center in the whole peninsula around which commercial and cultural activities grew in time. Abraham and Ishmael prayed to God to make them always submit to Him, to make all of their community also submitters to God, and to guide them on how they would worship Him in the House that they had established for that purpose. This submission to God is called in Arabic "Islam". As devoted prophets, Abraham and Ishmael looked for a prophet who would be sent from among the future population of Mecca to convey to them God's message and wisdom in judgement and behavior, and cause them to grow in purity morally, intellectually, and behaviorally, individually and socially.

Behold, al-Safa and al-Marwa are among the ritual marks set up by God [for pilgrimage] and thus whoever comes to the House [of worship] for pilgrimage or for a worshipping visit [to it,'umra,] nothing is held against him [/her] in striding to and fro between these two. And whoever does good more than he [/she] is bound to do, be sure that God is He who is responsive to all that is good and is All-knowing. [2:158]

إِنَّ ٱلصَّفَا
وَٱلْمَرْوَةَ مِن شَعَآئِرِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ فَمَنْ حَجَّ
ٱلْبَيْتَ أَوِ ٱعْتَمَرَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِ أَن
يَطَّوَّفَ بِهِمَا ۚ وَمَن تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَإِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ شَاكِرٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٥٨﴾

According to tradition, Hajar/Haggar, the wife of Abraham and the mother of the infant Ishmael, looked for water in the parched desert, and in her search between the rocks of Safa and Marwa, she saw the "Zamzam" spring. This urgent search for water between the two rocks became a part of the pilgrimage practice, as a commemoration of Haggar's motherly care and trust in God. Some Muslims, during the period when there were idols in the area, were reluctant to perform the rite, until the Prophet entered Mecca and ordered that these idols be destroyed.

The Quranic verse, however, points out that until the House became again devoted to the worship of the One God, pilgrimage, or a worshipping visit to the House, *'umra*,

could be practiced in full in spite of the existence of these idols.

And complete [the acts of] pilgrimage and "'umra"[the worshipping visit to the Inviolable House in Mecca,] in full devotion to God; but if you are held back [from completing your pilgrimage], give instead whatever offering is easily feasible. And shave not your heads, till the offering reaches its place [and end] of sacrifice; but any of you who is sick or suffers from an ailment of the head, shall redeem himself [/herself] by fasting, or offering charity, or [any] other offering [to God as an act of worship]. Then when you are safe, the one who takes advantage of " 'umra" before the acts of pilgrimage has to give whatever offering is easily feasible. But one who does not find any, shall fast for three days during the pilgrimage and for seven days after returning home, making ten days in all; and all this only relates to one who does not live near the Inviolable House of Worship. And remain conscious of God, and know that God is severe in retribution.

The pilgrimage must be performed in certain months appointed for it and well known. And whoever undertakes the pilgrimage in its [appointed] time shall, while on pilgrimage, abstain from sexual contact, from wrongdoing, and from disputing; and whatever good you may do, God is aware of it. And make provision for yourselves, but - surely - the best of all provisions is God-consciousness; remain then conscious of Me, O you who have minds. It is not held against you if you [during the pilgrimage] seek bounty from your Lord. Then, when you surge downwards in multitudes from [Mount] Arafat, remember and invoke God at the sacred place [where the Prophet prayed at Muzdalifa], and remember and invoke Him as He has guided you while before this you were among those who had gone astray. Then surge onward together with all other people who surge onward, and ask for

وَأَتِمُّوا الْحَجَّ وَالْعُمْرَةَ لِلَّهِ ۚ
فَإِنْ أُحْصِرْتُمْ فَمَا اسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ الْهَدْيِ ۖ
وَلَا تَحْلِقُوا رُءُوسَكُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ الْهَدْيُ
مَحِلَّهُ ۚ فَمَن كَانَ مِنكُم مَّرِيضًا أَوْ بِهِ
أَذًى مِّن رَّأْسِهِ فَفِدْيَةٌ مِّن صِيَامٍ أَوْ
صَدَقَةٍ أَوْ نُسُكٍ ۚ فَإِذَا أَمِنتُمْ فَمَن تَمَتَّعَ
بِالْعُمْرَةِ إِلَى الْحَجِّ فَمَا اسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ
الْهَدْيِ ۚ فَمَن لَّمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ ثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ
فِي الْحَجِّ وَسَبْعَةٍ إِذَا رَجَعْتُمْ ۗ تِلْكَ
عَشَرَةٌ كَامِلَةٌ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَن لَّمْ يَكُنْ أَهْلُهُ
حَاضِرِي الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا
اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ
﴿١٩٦﴾ الْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَّعْلُومَاتٌ ۚ فَمَن
فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ
وَلَا جِدَالَ فِي الْحَجِّ ۗ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ
خَيْرٍ يَعْلَمْهُ اللَّهُ ۗ وَتَزَوَّدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ
الزَّادِ التَّقْوَىٰ ۚ وَاتَّقُونِ يَا أُولِي
الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿١٩٧﴾ لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَن
تَبْتَغُوا فَضْلًا مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ ۚ فَإِذَا أَفَضْتُم مِّنْ
عَرَفَاتٍ فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ عِندَ الْمَشْعَرِ
الْحَرَامِ ۖ وَاذْكُرُوهُ كَمَا هَدَاكُمْ وَإِن
كُنتُم مِّن قَبْلِهِ لَمِنَ الضَّالِّينَ ﴿١٩٨﴾ ثُمَّ
أَفِيضُوا مِنْ حَيْثُ أَفَاضَ النَّاسُ

God's forgiveness; surely God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious. And when you have performed your acts of worship, [continue to] bear God in mind, as you would bear your own fathers in mind, or with a yet keener remembrance; there are people who say, "O Our Lord! Give to us in this world!" And such shall not partake in the [eternal] life to come. But there are others who say, "O Our Lord! Give us good in this world and good in the life to come, and keep us safe from the suffering through the fire!" These shall have their portion [of happiness] in return for what they have earned, and God is swift in reckoning. And keep remembering God and invoking Him during the appointed days [of pilgrimage], but if one hastens [to leave] in two days, it is not held against him [/her], and if one delays [his stay] it is not held against him [/her], since he[/she] is [truly] conscious of God. And, remain conscious of God, and know that unto Him you shall surely be gathered. [2:196-203]

وَٱسْتَغْفِرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ
﴿١٩٩﴾ فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُم مَّنَاسِكَكُمْ فَٱذْكُرُوا۟
ٱللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ ءَابَآءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا ۗ
فَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَآ ءَاتِنَا فِى
ٱلدُّنْيَا وَمَا لَهُۥ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَٰقٍ
﴿٢٠٠﴾ وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَآ ءَاتِنَا فِى
ٱلدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً
وَقِنَا عَذَابَ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿٢٠١﴾ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ
نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا۟ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ سَرِيعُ
ٱلْحِسَابِ ﴿٢٠٢﴾ ۞ وَٱذْكُرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ فِىٓ
أَيَّامٍ مَّعْدُودَٰتٍ ۚ فَمَن تَعَجَّلَ فِى يَوْمَيْنِ
فَلَآ إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ وَمَن تَأَخَّرَ فَلَآ إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ ۚ
لِمَنِ ٱتَّقَىٰ ۗ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟
أَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٢٠٣﴾

A complete practice of pilgrimage, "hajj", with its main acts of worship, takes place during the first thirteen days of the last month of the Arab lunar calendar, "Dhu-l-hijja." A worshipping visit to the Inviolable House in Mecca, " 'umra", is a simpler practice that can be done at any time of the year. In either case, the men who may intend pilgrimage commence by putting on a simple two-piece wrapper of unsewn cloth before reaching Mecca. Women wear normal, modest and simple dress. Putting on the pilgrim's garb, or wrapper, symbolizes his/her renouncement of the vanities of the world and spiritual devotion to his/her sacred duty. As soon as this is done and until the end of the pilgrimage, the pilgrim must refrain from daily life habits such as wearing customary sewn clothes, shaving, cutting or trimming the hair, having sexual intimacy, hunting etc. In both hajj and 'umrah, the worshipper is required to walk seven times around the ka`ba, the cubic building established by Abraham and Ishmael, and to stride seven times between the rocks of al-Safa and al-Marwa. Furthermore, during hajj one must attend the gathering on the high plain of Arafat on the ninth of the month of Dhu-l-hijja. The completion of the pilgrimage is symbolized by the shaving or cutting of some of the hair of the head for men and the cutting off a little hair of the head for women, then one can change into ordinary clothes.

The above verses indicate that a person undertaking the pilgrimage must complete it, and that it must be done not for worldly ends, but purely to worship God. If one is prevented, for any reason, from completing the acts of pilgrimage, a sacrifice should be

offered at the time and place where he/she becomes unable to carry out the acts of pilgrimage. If any one becomes ill after putting on the *ihram* wrapper, and therefore has to put on other clothes, or if one has trouble or skin disease and cannot refrain from cutting the hair, he/she should fast, or feed the poor, or offer a sacrifice which will be distributed to the poor.

People who may arrive in Mecca before the exact pilgrimage days may use the extra time to make "'*umra*". In this case they may either remain in their pilgrim's garb, *ihram*, and observe all the restrictions from the time they commence the acts of 'umrah until they complete the full acts of pilgrimage, or they may have an interval between the two and follow what is required in such a case, including offering a sacrifice that would be distributed to the poor.

The pilgrim must prepare himself/herself for the journey with provisions that would satisfy his/her need during the period of pilgrimage. The best of such provisions for this end is God - consciousness and spiritual preparation. The obligations and restrictions practiced during the pilgrimage nurture this feeling. While one is performing the pilgrimage, he/she must abstain from sexual contacts, and all unacceptable behavior in general, such as conflicts and quarrels with others. This is part of the test and training for God-consciousness during the pilgrimage which should prove its effectiveness throughout the pilgrim's life afterwards. An act of worship does not aim to isolate the Muslim from worldly life; instead it aims to guide him/her to a balanced and spiritually profitable life so that a person is beneficial to as many people as possible; ""*O Our Lord! Give us good in this world and good in the life to come, and keep us safe from the suffering through the fire!" These shall have their portion [of happiness] in return for what they have earned*" [2:201-202]. The proper Islamic attitude is neither to renounce this world nor to be so engrossed in it so as to forget the future life which is the eternal one.

Say: "God has spoken the truth; follow, then, the creed of Ibrahim (Abraham), who turned away from all that is false, and was not of those who associate any with God." The first House [of worship] established for the people was indeed the one at Bakka [Makka/ Mecca], blessed and guiding to all people; therein are clear signs and messages from where Abraham once stood, and whoever enters it feels secure [and finds inner peace]. And pilgrimage unto the House is a duty of all people towards God, any who is able to make his [/her] way there. And as for those who stubbornly deny the truth, surely, God is All-sufficient and never needs any being. [3:95-97]

قُلْ صَدَقَ ٱللَّهُ ۗ
فَٱتَّبِعُوا۟ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ حَنِيفًا ۖ وَمَا كَانَ
مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٩٥﴾ إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ
لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِى بِبَكَّةَ مُبَارَكًا وَهُدًى
لِّلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٩٦﴾ فِيهِ ءَايَٰتٌۢ بَيِّنَٰتٌ مَّقَامُ
إِبْرَٰهِيمَ ۖ وَمَن دَخَلَهُۥ كَانَ ءَامِنًا ۗ
وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى ٱلنَّاسِ حِجُّ ٱلْبَيْتِ مَنِ ٱسْتَطَاعَ
إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا ۚ وَمَن كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَنِىٌّ
عَنِ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٩٧﴾

The Quran repeatedly emphasizes that the message of Muhammad is just a following of the creed of Abraham. Thus, the pilgrimage to Mecca - which can be pronounced as Bakka - where the most ancient House of worshipping the One God was established by Abraham, with the help of his elder son Ishmael, became an Islamic obligation for all the believers who are able to undertake it. This Islamic pilgrimage commemorates the pioneering efforts of Abraham in spreading the message to worship the One God wherever he went, and securing a center of monotheism in Arabia which was able to survive until the time of the Prophet Muhammad, and from which the message of Islam could spread in all directions.

O you who have attained to faith! Kill no game while you are in the sanctified state of pilgrimage. And whoever of you kills it intentionally, a requital of livestock equivalent in number to what he[/she] has killed as ruled by two persons of moral acceptability and probity has to be brought as an offering to Ka'bah [for feeding the poor], or an [other] expiation by feeding the needy, or by what makes up for this in fasting, [and this is ordained] in order that he[/she] should taste the gravity of his[/her] evil-doing. "God has pardoned what is past, but whoever offends again, God will inflict his retribution on him [/her], and God is All-mighty, Retributor of evil.
Lawful to you is all water-game and the food brought forth from it, as a provision for you [who are residents there], and for the travellers as well, but forbidden to you is hunting on land as long as you remain in pilgrim sanctity (ihram). And be conscious of God, unto whom you shall all be gathered. [5:95-96]

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُواْ لَا تَقْتُلُواْ ٱلصَّيْدَ وَأَنتُمْ حُرُمٌ ۚ
وَمَن قَتَلَهُۥ مِنكُم مُّتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَآءٌ مِّثْلُ مَا
قَتَلَ مِنَ ٱلنَّعَمِ يَحْكُمُ بِهِۦ ذَوَا عَدْلٍ مِّنكُمْ
هَدْيًۢا بَـٰلِغَ ٱلْكَعْبَةِ أَوْ كَفَّـٰرَةٌ طَعَامُ
مَسَـٰكِينَ أَوْ عَدْلُ ذَٰلِكَ صِيَامًا لِّيَذُوقَ
وَبَالَ أَمْرِهِۦ ۗ عَفَا ٱللَّهُ عَمَّا سَلَفَ ۚ وَمَنْ
عَادَ فَيَنتَقِمُ ٱللَّهُ مِنْهُ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ ذُو
ٱنتِقَامٍ ﴿٩٥﴾ أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ صَيْدُ ٱلْبَحْرِ
وَطَعَامُهُۥ مَتَـٰعًا لَّكُمْ وَلِلسَّيَّارَةِ ۖ وَحُرِّمَ
عَلَيْكُمْ صَيْدُ ٱلْبَرِّ مَا دُمْتُمْ حُرُمًا ۗ
وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ ٱلَّذِىٓ إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾

The pilgrimage is a training period for peacefulness in behavior, during which there should be no disputes and quarrels with other human beings [2:197], and even with regard to animals, there should be no hunting [5:95]. One has to make up for any violation with an offering near the Ka'ba that is equal in number and kind to the animals killed in hunting, and this should be distributed to the poor. The violator may also feed the poor in any other way, and if one cannot afford this, equivalent fasting may be a substitute, although the exact number of the poor who ought to be fed, or the exact number of days that ought to be fasted, are to be determined in proportion to the number of animals killed during the state of sanctity, *ihram*.

And when We settled for Abraham the place of the House [of Worship, and unto him God said], "Associate not any with Me, and purify My House for those who walk around it and those who stand up at it [for worship], and those who bow down and prostrate themselves [therein in prayer]. And proclaim among people the pilgrimage, they will come unto you on foot and on every fast mount, coming from every remote path [on earth], so that they might experience that which shall be of benefit to them, and that they might extol the name of God, during the days appointed [for sacrifice], over the livestock [they offer] which He has provided for them as sustenance: eat, then thereof and feed the wretched poor." Then let them bring to an end their state of self-denial and let them fulfill their vows, and let them walk [once again] around the ancient House [of worship].

That [is what is ordained by God for pilgrimage] and whoever venerates God's sacred commandments, it is for his [/her] own good with his [/her] Lord. And lawful to you [for offering and eating] are the livestock except those mentioned to you [as forbidden]; avoid, then, the loathsomeness [in beliefs and practices] of the idols, and avoid saying what is false and untrue.

[Being] pure and true in faith to God, and never associating any with Him, since one who associates any with God is as if he [/she] has fallen down from the skies whereupon the birds snatch him [/her] away, or the wind sweeps him [/her headlong] and into a place far away. That [is to be kept in mind,] and whoever venerates the acts of worship indicated by God [for worship], this but reflects the true God-consciousness firmly-settled in their hearts. In these [offerings and acts of worship] you have had benefits for a certain time, and they end at the ancient House [of Worship].

Unto every people [who have ever believed]

وَ إِذْ بَوَّأْنَا لِإِبْرَٰهِيمَ مَكَانَ ٱلْبَيْتِ أَن لَّا
تُشْرِكْ بِى شَيْـًٔا وَ طَهِّرْ بَيْتِىَ لِلطَّآئِفِينَ
وَ ٱلْقَآئِمِينَ وَ ٱلرُّكَّعِ ٱلسُّجُودِ ﴿٢٦﴾
وَأَذِّن فِى ٱلنَّاسِ بِٱلْحَجِّ يَأْتُوكَ رِجَالًا
وَعَلَىٰ كُلِّ ضَامِرٍ يَأْتِينَ مِن كُلِّ فَجٍّ عَمِيقٍ
﴿٢٧﴾ لِّيَشْهَدُوا۟ مَنَٰفِعَ لَهُمْ وَ يَذْكُرُوا۟ ٱسْمَ
ٱللَّهِ فِىٓ أَيَّامٍ مَّعْلُومَٰتٍ عَلَىٰ مَا رَزَقَهُم
مِّنۢ بَهِيمَةِ ٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ ۖ فَكُلُوا۟ مِنْهَا
وَأَطْعِمُوا۟ ٱلْبَآئِسَ ٱلْفَقِيرَ ﴿٢٨﴾ ثُمَّ
لْيَقْضُوا۟ تَفَثَهُمْ وَ لْيُوفُوا۟ نُذُورَهُمْ
وَلْيَطَّوَّفُوا۟ بِٱلْبَيْتِ ٱلْعَتِيقِ ﴿٢٩﴾ ذَٰلِكَ
وَمَن يُعَظِّمْ حُرُمَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّهُۥ عِندَ
رَبِّهِۦ ۗ وَ أُحِلَّتْ لَكُمُ ٱلْأَنْعَٰمُ إِلَّا مَا
يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ ۖ فَٱجْتَنِبُوا۟ ٱلرِّجْسَ مِنَ
ٱلْأَوْثَٰنِ وَ ٱجْتَنِبُوا۟ قَوْلَ ٱلزُّورِ ﴿٣٠﴾
حُنَفَآءَ لِلَّهِ غَيْرَ مُشْرِكِينَ بِهِۦ ۚ وَ مَن
يُشْرِكْ بِٱللَّهِ فَكَأَنَّمَا خَرَّ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ
فَتَخْطَفُهُ ٱلطَّيْرُ أَوْ تَهْوِى بِهِ ٱلرِّيحُ فِى
مَكَانٍ سَحِيقٍ ﴿٣١﴾ ذَٰلِكَ وَ مَن يُعَظِّمْ
شَعَٰٓئِرَ ٱللَّهِ فَإِنَّهَا مِن تَقْوَى ٱلْقُلُوبِ
﴿٣٢﴾ لَكُمْ فِيهَا مَنَٰفِعُ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى
ثُمَّ مَحِلُّهَآ إِلَى ٱلْبَيْتِ ٱلْعَتِيقِ ﴿٣٣﴾

did We appoint [offerings] as an act of worship, so that they might extol the name of God over what He has provided them from the livestock as sustenance. Thus, Your God is the One and Only God: submit then your whole selves unto Him; and give the good tidings [of God's acceptance] unto those who are humble [before Him], those whose hearts tremble with awe whenever God is mentioned, and who endure patiently whatever befalls them, and who keep up the prayer, and spend [on those who are in need] out of what We provide for them as sustenance.

And the [sacrifice of] camels [and other livestock that you offer in pilgrimage] We have assigned them as an act of worship, in which there is [much] good for you. So, extol the name of God over them as they are lined up [for sacrifice]; taken when they are down on their sides; eat you thereof, and feed the poor [persons] who is contented [with what may be given to him/her without begging] or the one who begs [for charity]. Thus have We made them subservient to your needs so that you might be grateful. It is neither their flesh nor their blood that reach God; it is only your God-consciousness that reaches Him. He has thus made them subservient to your needs, so that you might glorify God for that He has guided you; and give you [O Muhammad] good tidings unto all the doers of good. [22:26-37]

وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ جَعَلْنَا مَنسَكًا لِّيَذْكُرُوا اسْمَ
اللَّهِ عَلَىٰ مَا رَزَقَهُم مِّن بَهِيمَةِ الْأَنْعَامِ ۗ
فَإِلَٰهُكُمْ إِلَٰهٌ وَاحِدٌ فَلَهُ أَسْلِمُوا ۗ
وَبَشِّرِ الْمُخْبِتِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ
اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَالصَّابِرِينَ عَلَىٰ
مَا أَصَابَهُمْ وَالْمُقِيمِي الصَّلَاةِ وَمِمَّا
رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾ وَالْبُدْنَ جَعَلْنَاهَا
لَكُم مِّن شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ لَكُمْ فِيهَا خَيْرٌ ۖ
فَاذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا صَوَافَّ ۖ فَإِذَا
وَجَبَتْ جُنُوبُهَا فَكُلُوا مِنْهَا وَأَطْعِمُوا
الْقَانِعَ وَالْمُعْتَرَّ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ سَخَّرْنَاهَا لَكُمْ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ لَن يَنَالَ اللَّهَ
لُحُومُهَا وَلَا دِمَاؤُهَا وَلَٰكِن يَنَالُهُ
التَّقْوَىٰ مِنكُمْ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ سَخَّرَهَا لَكُمْ
لِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَاكُمْ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ
الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾

As the pilgrimage time approaches, Muslims come to respond to God's call from every area on earth, near or far, on foot or mounted, in spite of whatever difficulties of travel they may face. This is because the pilgrims bear in mind the moral - and for some the material - benefits that they will gain from their pilgrimage in this life and in the life to come. Travel, even by modern fast and comfortable means of transportation, has, besides its known benefits, its physical, psychological and social disadvantages, and this is especially the case for the pilgrimage journey. One has to stay in a tent, and face different weather and life circumstances, in addition to the emotional burden that such a person may be facing if he/she has left his/her beloved ones behind. However, a pilgrim gains knowledge about new places, people and history, in addition to what business people may come across by way of chances for trade and business relations.

But, naturally, the most valuable gains are spiritual. The pilgrim feels his/her closeness to God at His ancient House of Worship, where the continuation of His message through the generations of successive prophets from Abraham and Ishmael to Muhammad went on. Clearly, such a universal annual gathering manifests the equality of human beings, and the universal fraternity of all those who follow the message of Islam, regardless of their geographic, ethnic, political, educational, or socio-economic differences. Knowing others and mutual help become a daily matter in pilgrimage. An offering may be made in pilgrimage by those who can afford it for the benefit of the poor, but a significant declaration in this respect has been made by the Quran: *"It is neither the flesh [of the offerings] nor their blood that reaches God; it is only your God-consciousness that reaches Him."*

God consciousness is the goal of every act of worship; *"Say, "Truly, my prayer and [all] my acts of worship and my living and my dying, are for God [alone], the Lord of All-being; no associate has He; for thus have I been bidden, and I shall [always] be foremost among those who submit themselves to Him"* [6:162-163].

OTHER ACTS OF WORSHIP

SUPPLICATION " DU'A' "

وَ إِذَا
سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِى عَنِّى فَإِنِّى قَرِيبٌ ۖ
أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ ٱلدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ ۖ
فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِى وَ لْيُؤْمِنُوا بِى لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَرْشُدُونَ ﴿١٨٦﴾

And if my servants ask you about Me, I am indeed close [to them]; I respond to the prayer of one who calls on Me when he [/she] calls; let them, then respond to Me, and believe in Me so they might follow the right way. [2:186]

إِنَّ فِى خَلْقِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ
وَ ٱخْتِلَٰفِ ٱلَّيْلِ وَ ٱلنَّهَارِ لَأَيَٰتٍ لِّأُو۟لِى
ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ﴿١٩٠﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ ٱللَّهَ
قِيَٰمًا وَ قُعُودًا وَ عَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ
وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِى خَلْقِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ
رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَٰذَا بَٰطِلًا سُبْحَٰنَكَ فَقِنَا
عَذَابَ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿١٩١﴾ رَبَّنَآ إِنَّكَ مَن تُدْخِلِ
ٱلنَّارَ فَقَدْ أَخْزَيْتَهُۥ ۖ وَ مَا لِلظَّٰلِمِينَ
مِنْ أَنصَارٍ ﴿١٩٢﴾ رَّبَّنَآ إِنَّنَا سَمِعْنَا
مُنَادِيًا يُنَادِى لِلْإِيمَٰنِ أَنْ ءَامِنُوا بِرَبِّكُمْ
فَـَٔامَنَّا ۚ رَبَّنَا فَٱغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَ كَفِّرْ
عَنَّا سَيِّـَٔاتِنَا وَ تَوَفَّنَا مَعَ ٱلْأَبْرَارِ ﴿١٩٣﴾
رَبَّنَا وَ ءَاتِنَا مَا وَعَدتَّنَا عَلَىٰ رُسُلِكَ
وَلَا تُخْزِنَا يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۗ إِنَّكَ لَا تُخْلِفُ
ٱلْمِيعَادَ ﴿١٩٤﴾ فَٱسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ أَنِّى
لَآ أُضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَٰمِلٍ مِّنكُم مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ
أُنثَىٰ ۖ بَعْضُكُم مِّنۢ بَعْضٍ ۚ فَٱلَّذِينَ

Surely, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, there are indeed signs[and messages] for people who really have minds. Those who remember and invoke God when they stand and when they sit and when they lie down on their sides, reflecting upon the creation of the heavens and the earth, [and saying,] "O our Lord! You have not created this in vain [without meaning or purpose]. Glory be to You! Keep us safe, then, from suffering through the fire.

"O our Lord! Whomsoever you shall commit to the fire, truly You have brought him [/her] to disgrace, and evildoers shall have no supporters.

"O our Lord! We have heard a voice calling [us] unto faith: 'Believe in your Lord', and so we have believed. O our Lord! Forgive us, then, our wrong-doing, and acquit us of our bad deeds, and let us be when we die with the virtuous.

"O our Lord! Grant us what you have promised us through the conveyors of Your messages, and disgrace us not on the Day of Resurrection. Surely, you never fail to fulfill your promise."

And thus does their Lord answer them: "Never do I waste the work of any of you who works [in My way], be you male or female:

you are related to one another [and of the same entity]. Hence, those who have left their homes, and have been driven out therefrom and have been hurt in My cause and have fought [for it] and have lost their lives; surely, them I shall surely acquit of bad deeds, and I shall surely bring them into gardens through which running waters flow, as a reward from God, and with God is the most beauteous of rewards. [3:190-195]

فَٱلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا۟ وَأُخْرِجُوا۟ مِن دِيَٰرِهِمْ
وَأُوذُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِى وَقَٰتَلُوا۟ وَقُتِلُوا۟
لَأُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِهِمْ وَلَأُدْخِلَنَّهُمْ
جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ ثَوَابًا
مِّنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عِندَهُۥ حُسْنُ
ٱلثَّوَابِ ﴿١٩٥﴾

One can remember God and communicate with Him in any circumstances, since this communication is not limited to the regular prayers. For example, one may be fascinated by one of the wonders of God's creation during his/her work in a laboratory or an observatory, or during watching the sunrise or sunset, or any aspect of nature's beauty. One may feel certain pressures and may like to pray for God's help or support, or he/she may feel puzzled about something in his/her life and may want to ask God for His guidance to the right direction. One may feel how God has been gracious to him/her and may want to express his/her thankfulness and gratefulness to Him. Whenever one feels such a need to communicate with the Lord to express what he/she likes and ask for what he/she wants, the divine doors are always open and no formalities are required. Such a spiritual flow is the essence of worship and cannot be limited to a specific time or form, and God's grace, hearing, and response to those who are fully conscious of Him are always unlimited. God shall never lose sight of anyone who follows His guidance and works to seek His help, whatever that person's wealth, potential, race, color, or other circumstances may be. Men and women are equal as human beings and believers; thus they are equal in their rights and responsibilities, in making their prayers and having them answered, and in doing good and receiving the full reward from God for their work.

Call unto your Lord humbly and in the secrecy of your hearts; He loves not those who transgress the bounds of what is right. [7:55]

ٱدْعُوا۟
رَبَّكُمْ تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفْيَةً ۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُحِبُّ
ٱلْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾

And remember your Lord in the depth of your own self, humbly and with awe, and avoid raising your voice, at morn and in the evenings, and be not among the heedless. [7:205]

وَٱذْكُر رَّبَّكَ فِى نَفْسِكَ تَضَرُّعًا وَخِيفَةً
وَدُونَ ٱلْجَهْرِ مِنَ ٱلْقَوْلِ بِٱلْغُدُوِّ
وَٱلْـَٔاصَالِ وَلَا تَكُن مِّنَ ٱلْغَٰفِلِينَ ﴿٢٠٥﴾

Whenever one prays to God and asks Him for protection from something bad or a favor for something good, he/she should do this in true humbleness and in the sincere secrecy of the heart, without showing off in a loud demonstration. If exceeding the bounds

of what is right is condemned in general, it is worthy of condemnation in particular if it is done before our Lord while we are asking Him for His bounties and favors.

And God's [alone] are the most beautiful attributes [or names]; call unto Him, then, by these, and leave all those who distorting the attributes [or names]; they shall be requited for all that they have done. [7:180]

وَلِلَّهِ ٱلْأَسْمَآءُ
ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ فَٱدْعُوهُ بِهَا ۖ وَذَرُوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ
يُلْحِدُونَ فِىٓ أَسْمَٰٓئِهِۦ ۚ سَيُجْزَوْنَ مَا
كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٨٠﴾

Say, "Call upon God, or call upon the All-merciful, by whatever name you call upon Him, [He is always the One], and hence be sure that His are the most beautiful names [and attributes of perfection]. And be not loud in your prayer, nor say it in too low a voice, but seek a way in between. [17:110]

قُلِ ٱدْعُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ أَوِ ٱدْعُوا۟
ٱلرَّحْمَٰنَ ۖ أَيًّا مَّا تَدْعُوا۟ فَلَهُ
ٱلْأَسْمَآءُ ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ ۚ وَلَا تَجْهَرْ بِصَلَاتِكَ
وَلَا تُخَافِتْ بِهَا وَٱبْتَغِ بَيْنَ ذَٰلِكَ سَبِيلًا
﴿١١٠﴾

God alone has the most beautiful attributes or names which represent in their number the various sides of His wholeness and excellence that He combines together. While indicating power, might and glory, they also emphasize mercy, grace, kindness, compassion and peace, as well as creation, forming and shaping. He is unique in His might and grace, going beyond any limits experienced or imagined at any level: "*No vision can encompass Him, whereas He encompasses all vision, and He alone is All-subtle [and unfathomable], All-aware*" [6:103], "*His is the loftiest and most sublime ideal in the heavens and on earth, and He alone is the All-mighty, the All-wise*" [30:27], "*there is nothing like Him, and He alone is All-hearing, All-seeing*" [42:11]. This multi-faceted perfection helps the human being, on the one side, to understand the multi-faceted glory and merits of God the Lord and Creator which can never be combined together at such a high zenith except in God the Lord and Creator. On the other hand, they enlighten the human being about the variety of merits that he/she has to put before him/her as a guiding ideal to guide him/her to the ultimate goal of perfection in different situations, and their inter-function together, although he/she can never reach in quantity or quality the divine merits, and can never combine all these attributes together at the peak of each as they are combined in God. Thus, the human being is guided by such a high multi-dimension standard of excellence and completeness, but he/she always keeps in mind that he/she can only achieve what is within the limits of the human creature, who is merely the worshipper and servant of God.

Those who believe, and whose hearts find their rest in the remembrance of God; surely in the remembrance of God do hearts find their rest. [13:28]

ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَتَطْمَئِنُّ
قُلُوبُهُم بِذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ
تَطْمَئِنُّ ٱلْقُلُوبُ ﴿٢٨﴾

The human being is merely a creature of God, and in spite of all the various abilities granted to him/her by the Creator, he/she feels the need for support from a source that is beyond all his/her power. This is an intellectual and psychological need of every individual whatever the extent of his/her power may be, since everyone needs support through the vicissitudes of life and the physical and social challenges that he/she faces from nature and from people. The human relationship to God is not something external: it is something internal, something in a person's mind, heart, and soul. It depends on a person's inner spiritual experience. If one turns to God, then he/she will have that spiritual and psychological-intellectual experience. If anyone does not fulfill this need, God will not force him/her to do so but he/she will be the loser, since he/she misses the source of genuine and continuous support, comfort, balance and stability. In the ups and downs of life in this world, remembrance of God will provide a person with instant self control and self-correction, which will protect him/her against arrogance, selfishness, shortsightedness and hopelessness.

And the human being prays for evil, as fervently as he [/she] prays for good, and the human being is ever hasty. [17:11]

وَيَدْعُ ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ
بِٱلشَّرِّ دُعَآءَهُۥ بِٱلْخَيْرِ ۖ وَكَانَ ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ
عَجُولًا ﴿١١﴾

The human being in his/her ignorance or haste may not know what is good for him/her and what is bad, and he/she may ask for what he/she does not possess at a certain moment, although it may not bring him/her any benefit or may even cause him/her harm. The wise and enlightened person has patience and intelligence, and so is not trapped in shortsighted reactions, but follows the guidance of the All-knowing and All-wise. Accordingly, he/she ought not to selfishly, inconsiderately and/or hastily use or abuse the open channel to God in asking the All-merciful, the All- forgiving, the All-gracious to cause harm to his/her own self or to others who may or may not be related to him/her. Under certain pressures, the human being may ask God to afflict bad things on himself/herself, or on those who are close to him/her such as his/her children. The Quran reports that the stubborn deniers of the truth asked God: *"O God! If this be indeed the truth from You, then rain down upon us stones from the skies, bring us [another] painful chastisement"* [8:32]. One should be fully aware of the seriousness of his/her stand before God, and should not misuse this invaluable chance in stupid demands. Also, although it is understandable and justifiable for one who is seriously and unjustly wronged to complain to the All-mighty, Supreme Lord, it would be better and fairer for such a person to ask God for His absolute justice leaving to Him to determine what is just and fair, or to ask Him only to remove the injustice that has befallen him/her, while leaving the requital of the one who has committed that injustice to Him alone.

And your Lord says, "Call upon Me; and I will respond to you"; surely those who are too haughty to worship Me shall enter hell, utterly abased. [40:60]

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمُ ٱدْعُونِىٓ
أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ
عِبَادَتِى سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ ﴿٦٠﴾

As this life is not endless or perfect, and we have to seek fulfillment of the human potential and absolute justice in the life to come, we have only to pray for this achievement to the Lord of all being, the Lord of this world and the world to come. He will hear us, guide us, forgive us and make our path smooth in this life and the hereafter. Arrogance will inevitably be connected with failure and humiliation in the next life to come, and even in this life as is often the case. It is a human need to feel the support of limitless wisdom and power, and one who ignores this intellectual, psychological and spiritual need is the loser who will be forced one day to suffer humiliation and helplessness.

However, one who prays to God to bring him/her something, or to protect him/her from something, should be fully aware that any human judgement about what is good or bad is relative and has its limits. God the All-knowing All-wise has His judgement and decisions, which are better in the long term for the person who has prayed, and for the other concerned parties, with regard to God's plans and laws in their totality. The Prophet teaches that a Muslim who prays to God for anything that is not evil nor breaking the kinship ties, will be answered by God in one of three ways: an immediate fulfillment of the very prayers in this life, a better fulfillment in the life to come, or a parallel protection from something bad [reported by Ibn Hanbal].

Although appealing to God can occur at all times and circumstances, the Prophet's traditions teach that certain appeals may be very close to God, such as those of the parent for his/her children, the traveller until he/she comes home, one who is fasting until he/she breaks the fast, and one who has suffered injustice [reported by Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, and al-Tirmidhi]. It is obvious that in all these appeals to God, one has to be fully aware of his/her need for the All-mighty, and totally sincere in asking for His limitless help and support. The parent will not always be alive or able to help his/her children, and the traveller who feels his/her weakness away from his/her home, and the one who is fasting and the one who suffers injustice all realize their weakness and their need for the support of the All-mighty. A prayer to God for the benefit of another human being who does not know about it is answered positively, as a reward for such altruism [reported by Muslim, Abu Dawud, and al-Tirmidhi].

Particular times may have certain merits for supplication. Thus the time of prostration in prayer, after the call for each regular prayer, after the end of each regular prayer, during the last one third of the night and before dawn, during Ramadan, and during the day of 'Arafa (the ninth of Dhu-l-Hijja) are all such times. Furthermore, the Prophet, being God-conscious through the ever-changing circumstances of life, guides, in His rich Sunna, to supplications to God in various situations such as the coming of the day and night, going to bed and rising from it, going out of the house and coming back to it, eating, drinking, putting on clothes, riding, seeing the new moon or experiencing different natural vicissitudes, experiencing a difficulty, anger, good happenings etc. His comprehensive supplications are a guide for healthiness and wholeness in all dimensions, such as praying to the Lord for His forgiveness and blessings of safety and wholeness in this world's life and in the life to come [reported by Ibn Majah], and for His protection from serious worry and grief, from being incapable or lazy, from being cowardly or miserly, from being overburdened with debt or oppressed by people [reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi, and al-Nasa'i].

The Prophet frequently repeated the Quranic prayer: "*O Our Lord! Grant us good in this world's life and good in the life to come, and keep us safe from suffering through the fire*" [2:201; the Prophet's use of the verse is reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim]. One of the supplications goes with the verse: "O God! Let my commitment to the faith be good for it is the control of all my matters, and let my life in this world be good for in it there is my earning of living, and let my life to come be good for it is my [certain and eternal] return" [reported by Muslim]. The supplications in the Quran and Sunna remind the believer of the conceptual, moral and behavioral values and ideals that he/she should always have throughout the different circumstances, and express them concisely and impressively. It is clear that some of these supplications that cover the various aspects of the life of the individual, his/her family, and other human beings, would make the best and strongest conclusion to this work, and thus the last chapter, is dedicated to "Supplications"

It goes without saying that praying to God for His guidance and help, requires humbleness and a psychological realization of human weakness and divine almightiness, as well as compliance with His guidance, or at least a strong willingness for such compliance, behaviorally. It is inconsistent to pray for God's help through certain words, while one is challenging His whole message and guidance in action and behavior.

REMEMBRANCE OF GOD, PRAISING AND THANKING HIM "Hamd", EXTOLLING HIS GLORY "Takbir, Tasbih", INVOKING HIS MOST BEAUTIFUL NAMES"Dhikr", REPENTANCE "Tawbah", AND PRAYING FOR GOD'S FORGIVENESS"Istighfar"

So remember Me, and I remember you; and be grateful unto Me, and do not stubbornly deny Me, nor deny My favors. [2:152]

فَٱذْكُرُونِىٓ
أَذْكُرْكُمْ وَٱشْكُرُوا۟ لِى وَلَا تَكْفُرُونِ ﴿١٥٢﴾

So when you have performed your acts of worship, [continue to] bear God in mind, as you would bear your own fathers in mind, or with a yet keener remembrance; there are people who say, "O Our Lord! Give to us in this world!" And such shall not partake in the [eternal] life to come. But there are others who say, "O Our Lord! Give us good in this world and good in the life to come, and keep us safe from the suffering through the fire!" These shall have their portion [of happiness] in return for what they have earned, and God is swift in reckoning. [2:200-202]

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُم مَّنَـٰسِكَكُمْ فَٱذْكُرُوا۟
ٱللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ ءَابَآءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا ۗ
فَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَآ ءَاتِنَا فِى
ٱلدُّنْيَا وَمَا لَهُۥ فِى ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَـٰقٍ
﴿٢٠٠﴾ وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَآ ءَاتِنَا فِى
ٱلدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِى ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً
وَقِنَا عَذَابَ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿٢٠١﴾ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ
نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا۟ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ سَرِيعُ
ٱلْحِسَابِ ﴿٢٠٢﴾

وَيَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلْمَحِيضِ قُلْ هُوَ أَذًى
فَٱعْتَزِلُوا۟ ٱلنِّسَآءَ فِى ٱلْمَحِيضِ ۖ وَلَا
تَقْرَبُوهُنَّ حَتَّىٰ يَطْهُرْنَ ۖ فَإِذَا تَطَهَّرْنَ
فَأْتُوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَمَرَكُمُ ٱللَّهُ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
يُحِبُّ ٱلتَّوَّٰبِينَ وَيُحِبُّ ٱلْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ ﴿٢٢٢﴾

... Surely, God loves those who turn to Him in repentance, and loves those who keep themselves pure. [2:222]

لَا يُكَلِّفُ ٱللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ۚ لَهَا مَا
كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا ٱكْتَسَبَتْ ۚ رَبَّنَا لَا
تُؤَاخِذْنَآ إِن نَّسِينَآ أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا ۚ رَبَّنَا
وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَآ إِصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُۥ
عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِنَا ۚ رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا
مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِۦ ۖ وَٱعْفُ عَنَّا
وَٱغْفِرْ لَنَا وَٱرْحَمْنَآ ۚ أَنتَ مَوْلَىٰنَا
فَٱنصُرْنَا عَلَى ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٢٨٦﴾

... "O our Lord! Take us not to task if we forget, or make a mistake.
"Our Lord! Lay not upon us a burden such as You did lay upon those before us.
"Our Lord! Do not require us to bear burdens beyond what we can bear. Pardon us, and forgive us, and bestow Your mercy on us; You are our Protector; succor us, then, against those who stubbornly reject the truth." [2:286]

ٱلَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَآ إِنَّنَآ ءَامَنَّا
فَٱغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَقِنَا عَذَابَ ٱلنَّارِ
﴿١٦﴾ ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ وَٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ وَٱلْقَٰنِتِينَ
وَٱلْمُنفِقِينَ وَٱلْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ بِٱلْأَسْحَارِ
﴿١٧﴾

Those who say, "O our Lord! We believe [in You]; forgive us, then, our wrongdoing, and keep us safe from suffering through the fire"; those who are patiently enduring [what may befall them], and are true to their word, and truly devout, and who spend [on the needy], and pray for forgiveness before day break. [3:16-17]

قَالَ رَبِّ
ٱجْعَل لِّىٓ ءَايَةً ۖ قَالَ ءَايَتُكَ أَلَّا تُكَلِّمَ
ٱلنَّاسَ ثَلَٰثَةَ أَيَّامٍ إِلَّا رَمْزًا ۗ وَٱذْكُر رَّبَّكَ
كَثِيرًا وَسَبِّحْ بِٱلْعَشِىِّ وَٱلْإِبْكَٰرِ ﴿٤١﴾

Zakariyya (Zachariah) said, "My Lord! Appoint for me a sign." Said [the angels], "Your sign shall be that for three days you shall not speak to people other than by gestures. And keep remembering and invoking your Lord unceasingly, and extol His limitless glory by night and by day." [3:41]

وَٱلَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا۟
فَٰحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ
فَٱسْتَغْفَرُوا۟ لِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَمَن يَغْفِرُ ٱلذُّنُوبَ

And those who, having committed a shameful deed or wronged their own selves, remember God and pray that their wrong-doing be forgiven, and who but God forgives the wrong-doing? And they do

not knowingly persist in doing whatever [wrong] they might have done. These shall have as their reward forgiveness from their Lord, and gardens beneath which running waters flow, therein to abide, and how excellent is the reward for those who [whole-heartedly] work. [3:135-136]

إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ وَ لَمْ يُصِرُّوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلُوا
وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٣٥﴾ أُولَٰٓئِكَ جَزَآؤُهُم
مَّغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَ جَنَّٰتٌ تَجْرِى مِن
تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ وَ نِعْمَ
أَجْرُ ٱلْعَٰمِلِينَ ﴿١٣٦﴾

And all that they said was: "O our Lord! Forgive us our wrongdoing and what we do exceeding the right limits, and make firm our steps, and support us against people who stubbornly reject the truth." Whereupon God grants them the rewards of this world's life, and what is better of the rewards of the life to come, and God loves the doers of good. [3:147-148]

وَ مَا كَانَ قَوْلَهُمْ إِلَّآ أَن قَالُوا
رَبَّنَا ٱغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَ إِسْرَافَنَا فِىٓ
أَمْرِنَا وَ ثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَنَا وَ ٱنصُرْنَا عَلَى
ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿١٤٧﴾ فَـَٔاتَىٰهُمُ ٱللَّهُ
ثَوَابَ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَ حُسْنَ ثَوَابِ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۗ
وَ ٱللَّهُ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٤٨﴾

And it was by God's grace that you [O Prophet] did deal gently with your followers; and if you have been harsh and hard of heart, they would have indeed broken away from you. Pardon them, then, and pray that they be forgiven, and take counsel with them in matters [that need such counselling], and when you have decided upon what has to be done [as a result of the counselling], put your trust in God; surely, God loves those who put their trust in Him. [3:159]

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ
مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ لِنتَ لَهُمْ ۖ وَ لَوْ كُنتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ
ٱلْقَلْبِ لَٱنفَضُّوا۟ مِنْ حَوْلِكَ ۖ فَٱعْفُ عَنْهُمْ
وَ ٱسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَ شَاوِرْهُمْ فِى ٱلْأَمْرِ ۖ
فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ ﴿١٥٩﴾

Those who remember and invoke God when they stand and when they sit and when they lie down on their sides, reflecting upon the creation of the heavens and the earth, [and saying,] "O our Lord! You have not created this in vain [without meaning or purpose]. Glory be to You! Keep us safe, then, from suffering through the fire." [3:191]

ٱلَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ ٱللَّهَ
قِيَٰمًا وَ قُعُودًا وَ عَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ
وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِى خَلْقِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ
رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَٰذَا بَٰطِلًا سُبْحَٰنَكَ فَقِنَا
عَذَابَ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿١٩١﴾

"O our Lord! We heard a voice calling to faith: 'Believe in your Lord,' and so we believed. Our Lord, forgive us, then, our wrongdoing, and acquit us of our bad deeds, and let us when we die be with the virtuous." [3:193]

رَبَّنَآ إِنَّنَا سَمِعْنَا
مُنَادِيًا يُنَادِى لِلْإِيمَٰنِ أَنْ ءَامِنُوا۟ بِرَبِّكُمْ
فَـَٔامَنَّا ۚ رَبَّنَا فَٱغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَكَفِّرْ
عَنَّا سَيِّـَٔاتِنَا وَتَوَفَّنَا مَعَ ٱلْأَبْرَارِ ﴿١٩٣﴾

Surely, God's acceptance of repentance is only for those who do evil out of ignorance, and then shortly repent, and it is they unto whom God turns in His grace, and God is All-knowing, All-wise. But repentance is not accepted from those who do evil deeds until when death approaches any of them, and then say, "I am now repenting," nor from those who die as stubborn deniers of the truth; and it is these for whom we have readied a grievous suffering. [4:17-18]

إِنَّمَا ٱلتَّوْبَةُ عَلَى
ٱللَّهِ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ ٱلسُّوٓءَ بِجَهَٰلَةٍ ثُمَّ
يَتُوبُونَ مِن قَرِيبٍ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ يَتُوبُ ٱللَّهُ
عَلَيْهِمْ ۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٧﴾
وَلَيْسَتِ ٱلتَّوْبَةُ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ
ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَهُمُ
ٱلْمَوْتُ قَالَ إِنِّى تُبْتُ ٱلْـَٰٔنَ وَلَا ٱلَّذِينَ
يَمُوتُونَ وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَعْتَدْنَا
لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٨﴾

And We have never sent a conveyor of [Our] message, but to be heeded by God's leave; if, when they wronged their own selves, they came to you and prayed for God's forgiveness, and the conveyor of [God's] message prayed for their forgiveness, they would assuredly find God an Acceptor of Repentance, Most Gracious. [4:64]

وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَا
مِن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَلَوْ
أَنَّهُمْ إِذ ظَّلَمُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ جَآءُوكَ
فَٱسْتَغْفَرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱسْتَغْفَرَ لَهُمُ ٱلرَّسُولُ
لَوَجَدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ تَوَّابًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿٦٤﴾

And when you have finished the prayer, remember God, when you stand and when you sit and when you lie down on your sides, and when you are once again secure, keep up your prayers [fully in the regular way]; surely, the prayers are ordained on the believers at particular times. [4:103]

فَإِذَا
قَضَيْتُمُ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ فَٱذْكُرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ قِيَـٰمًا
وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِكُمْ ۚ فَإِذَا ٱطْمَأْنَنتُمْ
فَأَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ كَانَتْ
عَلَى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَـٰبًا مَّوْقُوتًا ﴿١٠٣﴾

But whoever repents after his [/her] transgression and makes amends,

فَمَن تَابَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ ظُلْمِهِۦ وَأَصْلَحَ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ

God will accept his [/her] repentance; God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious. [5:39]

يَتُوبُ عَلَيْهِ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٣٩﴾

[Moses prayed,] "... It is but a trial from you, whereby you let go astray whom you will [as he/she has freely chosen], and guide aright whom You will [as he/she has chosen]. You are the One who cares about us and supports us; grant us, then, forgiveness and have mercy on us, and You are the best of all those who forgive. [7:155]

وَٱخْتَارَ مُوسَىٰ قَوْمَهُۥ سَبْعِينَ رَجُلًا
لِّمِيقَٰتِنَا ۖ فَلَمَّآ أَخَذَتْهُمُ ٱلرَّجْفَةُ قَالَ
رَبِّ لَوْ شِئْتَ أَهْلَكْتَهُم مِّن قَبْلُ وَإِيَّىَّ
أَتُهْلِكُنَا بِمَا فَعَلَ ٱلسُّفَهَآءُ مِنَّآ ۖ إِنْ
هِىَ إِلَّا فِتْنَتُكَ تُضِلُّ بِهَا مَن تَشَآءُ
وَتَهْدِى مَن تَشَآءُ ۖ أَنتَ وَلِيُّنَا فَٱغْفِرْ لَنَا
وَٱرْحَمْنَا ۖ وَأَنتَ خَيْرُ ٱلْغَٰفِرِينَ ﴿١٥٥﴾

And remember your Lord in the depth of your own self, humbly and with awe, and avoid raising your voice, at morn and in the evenings, and be not among the heedless. [7:205]

وَٱذْكُر رَّبَّكَ فِى نَفْسِكَ تَضَرُّعًا وَخِيفَةً
وَدُونَ ٱلْجَهْرِ مِنَ ٱلْقَوْلِ بِٱلْغُدُوِّ
وَٱلْءَاصَالِ وَلَا تَكُن مِّنَ ٱلْغَٰفِلِينَ ﴿٢٠٥﴾

O you who have attained to faith! Whenever you meet a [belligerent] force, stand firm, and keep God in your mind, so that you may attain success. And obey God and the Conveyor of His Message: and do not let yourselves fall into dispute with one another, lest you lose heart and your power departs; and be patient and persevering [in facing challenges and pressures] for God is with those who patiently persevere. And be not like those who came out [to confront you] from their homes swaggering boastfully and showing off to people, trying to turn others away from the way of God; but God encompasses all that they do. [8:45-47]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِذَا
لَقِيتُمْ فِئَةً فَٱثْبُتُوا۟ وَٱذْكُرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ كَثِيرًا
لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾ وَأَطِيعُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ
وَرَسُولَهُۥ وَلَا تَنَٰزَعُوا۟ فَتَفْشَلُوا۟ وَتَذْهَبَ
رِيحُكُمْ ۖ وَٱصْبِرُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَعَ
ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾ وَلَا تَكُونُوا۟ كَٱلَّذِينَ
خَرَجُوا۟ مِن دِيَٰرِهِم بَطَرًا وَرِئَآءَ
ٱلنَّاسِ وَيَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ
وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطٌ ﴿٤٧﴾

Do they not know that it is God alone who accepts the repentance of His servants and is the One who [truly] receives the charity that is offered [for His sake], and that God alone is the Acceptor of Repentance, the Most Gracious. [9:104]

أَلَمْ
يَعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ يَقْبَلُ ٱلتَّوْبَةَ عَنْ
عِبَادِهِۦ وَيَأْخُذُ ٱلصَّدَقَٰتِ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ
ٱلتَّوَّابُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٠٤﴾

And ask your Lord to forgive you [your wrongdoing], and then turn towards Him in [true] repentance, He will grant you a goodly enjoyment of life [in this world] until a term set [by Him]; and [in the life to come] He will grant everyone of a merit [a full reward]of his [/her] merit. But if you turn away, I dread for you the suffering on that awesome day! Unto God you all must return, and He has the power to do everything. [11:3-4]

وَ أَنِ ٱسْتَغْفِرُوا۟ رَبَّكُمْ ثُمَّ تُوبُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهِ
يُمَتِّعْكُم مَّتَٰعًا حَسَنًا إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى
وَ يُؤْتِ كُلَّ ذِى فَضْلٍ فَضْلَهُۥ ۖ وَ إِن
تَوَلَّوْا۟ فَإِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ
كَبِيرٍ ﴿٣﴾ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ ۖ وَ هُوَ
عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٤﴾

[Said Hud,] "And O my people! Ask your Lord to forgive you your evil-doing and then turn to Him in [true] repentance, He will shower upon you heavenly blessings abundant, and will add strength to your strength; and do not turn away as people lost in evil-doing." [11:52]

وَ يَٰقَوْمِ ٱسْتَغْفِرُوا۟ رَبَّكُمْ
ثُمَّ تُوبُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهِ يُرْسِلِ ٱلسَّمَآءَ عَلَيْكُم
مِّدْرَارًا وَ يَزِدْكُمْ قُوَّةً إِلَىٰ قُوَّتِكُمْ وَ لَا
تَتَوَلَّوْا۟ مُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾

Those who believe, and whose hearts find their rest in the remembrance of God; surely in the remembrance of God hearts do find their rest. [13:28]

ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَ تَطْمَئِنُّ
قُلُوبُهُم بِذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ
تَطْمَئِنُّ ٱلْقُلُوبُ ﴿٢٨﴾

[Ibrahim/Abraham prayed,]..." O our Lord! Grant Your forgiveness unto me and my parents and all the believers, on the Day when the reckoning will come to pass." [14:41]

رَبَّنَا ٱغْفِرْ لِى وَ لِوَٰلِدَىَّ
وَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ ٱلْحِسَابُ ﴿٤١﴾

And well do We know that your chest [O Muhammad] is straightened by what they say; but extol you your Lord's glory and be of those who prostrate themselves [before Him in worship], and worship your Lord until certainty comes to you. [15:97-99]

وَ لَقَدْ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ يَضِيقُ
صَدْرُكَ بِمَا يَقُولُونَ ﴿٩٧﴾ فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ
رَبِّكَ وَ كُن مِّنَ ٱلسَّٰجِدِينَ ﴿٩٨﴾ وَ ٱعْبُدْ
رَبَّكَ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَكَ ٱلْيَقِينُ ﴿٩٩﴾

And then surely your Lord -unto those who do evil out of ignorance and afterwards repent and live righteously-, surely your Lord thereafter is All-forgiving, Most Gracious. [16:119]

ثُمَّ
إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لِلَّذِينَ عَمِلُوا۟ ٱلسُّوٓءَ بِجَهَٰلَةٍ ثُمَّ
تَابُوا۟ مِنۢ بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ وَ أَصْلَحُوٓا۟ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ
مِنۢ بَعْدِهَا لَغَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١١٩﴾

And say, "All praise is due to God, who begets no offspring, and has no associate in His dominion, nor has He any need for a supporter [to aid Him] on account of any humbleness [that He has never had and will never have]" and extol His Limitless Greatness. [17:111]

وَ قُلِ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى لَمْ يَتَّخِذْ
وَلَدًا وَ لَمْ يَكُن لَّهُۥ شَرِيكٌ فِى ٱلْمُلْكِ
وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُۥ وَلِىٌّ مِّنَ ٱلذُّلِّ ۖ
وَ كَبِّرْهُ تَكْبِيرًا ﴿١١١﴾

"Go forth [O Moses, then], you and your brother, with my signs and messages, and never be weakened in remembering Me." [20:42]

ٱذْهَبْ أَنتَ وَ أَخُوكَ
بِـَٔايَـٰتِى وَ لَا تَنِيَا فِى ذِكْرِى ﴿٤٢﴾

Yet, I surely forgive all the evil-doing unto whoever repents and attains to faith and does righteous deeds, and thereafter keeps to the right path. [20:82]

وَ إِنِّى لَغَفَّارٌ لِّمَن تَابَ وَ ءَامَنَ وَ عَمِلَ
صَـٰلِحًا ثُمَّ ٱهْتَدَىٰ ﴿٨٢﴾

Therefore, bear with patience with whatever they [who stubbornly reject the truth] may say, and extol the limitless glory of your Lord, and praise Him [as an act of worship], before the rising of the sun, and before its setting, and extol His glory, too, for some of the night and of the day, so that you might attain self-satisfaction. [20:130]

فَٱصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا
يَقُولُونَ وَ سَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ
ٱلشَّمْسِ وَ قَبْلَ غُرُوبِهَا ۖ وَ مِنْ ءَانَآئِ
ٱلَّيْلِ فَسَبِّحْ وَ أَطْرَافَ ٱلنَّهَارِ لَعَلَّكَ
تَرْضَىٰ ﴿١٣٠﴾

And [O believer,] say: "O my Lord! Grant me forgiveness and bestow Your mercy [upon me]; and You are the Best of all the merciful." [23:118]

وَ قُل رَّبِّ ٱغْفِرْ
وَٱرْحَمْ وَ أَنتَ خَيْرُ ٱلرَّٰحِمِينَ ﴿١١٨﴾

In houses [of worship] which God has allowed to be raised up, and His name to be remembered and devoutly pronounced therein, there [are such that] extol His glory in the mornings and evening, people whom neither [worldly] trade nor any profitable business would divert from remembering God and praising Him, and from keeping up the prayer and offering the purifying [welfare] dues, fearing a Day on which all hearts and eyes shall be turned about, [and looking for] that God may reward them in accordance

فِى بُيُوتٍ أَذِنَ ٱللَّهُ أَن تُرْفَعَ
وَيُذْكَرَ فِيهَا ٱسْمُهُۥ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُۥ فِيهَا بِٱلْغُدُوِّ
وَ ٱلْـَٔاصَالِ ﴿٣٦﴾ رِجَالٌ لَّا تُلْهِيهِمْ
تِجَـٰرَةٌ وَ لَا بَيْعٌ عَن ذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ وَ إِقَامِ
ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَ إِيتَآءِ ٱلزَّكَوٰةِ ۚ يَخَافُونَ
يَوْمًا تَتَقَلَّبُ فِيهِ ٱلْقُلُوبُ وَ ٱلْأَبْصَـٰرُ
﴿٣٧﴾ لِيَجْزِيَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ أَحْسَنَ مَا عَمِلُوا۟

with the best that they ever did, and give them more out of His bounty; and God provides whomsoever He will, without reckoning. [24:36-38]

وَيَزِيدَهُم مِن فَضْلِهِۦ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ يَرْزُقُ مَن
يَشَآءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿٣٨﴾

And place your trust in the Living One who dies not, and extol His glory and your thankfulness to Him, and none is as sufficiently aware of His servants' wrongdoing as He. [25:58]

وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱلْحَىِّ ٱلَّذِى لَا
يَمُوتُ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِهِۦ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِهِۦ
بِذُنُوبِ عِبَادِهِۦ خَبِيرًا ﴿٥٨﴾

Convey [unto others] what has been revealed to you of this divine writ, and keep up the prayer; prayer restrains [the human being] from loathsome behavior and from that which runs counter to reason [and common sense]; and the remembrance of God is indeed far greater [in its value and reward in this world's life and in the life to come. And God knows all that you do. [29:45]

ٱتْلُ مَآ أُوحِىَ إِلَيْكَ
مِنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَأَقِمِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ ۖ إِنَّ
ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ ٱلْفَحْشَآءِ
وَٱلْمُنكَرِ ۗ وَلَذِكْرُ ٱللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ
يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

Surely, in the Conveyor of God's message you have a good example for whoever looks forward [with hope and awe] to God and the Last Day, and remembers God frequently. [33:21]

لَّقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِى
رَسُولِ ٱللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ
يَرْجُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱلْيَوْمَ ٱلْءَاخِرَ وَذَكَرَ ٱللَّهَ
كَثِيرًا ﴿٢١﴾

O you who have attained to faith! Remember God frequently and extol His glory at early morning and at evening. [33:41-42]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱذْكُرُوا۟
ٱللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا ﴿٤١﴾ وَسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً
وَأَصِيلًا ﴿٤٢﴾

All praise is due to God, to whom all that is in the heavens and all that is on earth belong, and to Him will be due all praise in the life to come; and He alone is All-wise, All-aware. [34:1]

ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى لَهُۥ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَهُ ٱلْحَمْدُ فِى
ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ٱلْخَبِيرُ ﴿١﴾

Glory be to your Lord, the Lord of almightiness, [exalted] above anything with which people may describe or define [Him], and peace be upon

سُبْحَٰنَ رَبِّكَ رَبِّ
ٱلْعِزَّةِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿١٨٠﴾ وَسَلَٰمٌ عَلَى

all conveyors of His message, and all praise is due to God alone, the Lord of all being. [37:180-182]

ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٨١﴾ وَ ٱلْحَمْدُ
لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٨٢﴾

Say: "O My people who have transgressed against your own selves! Despair not of God's mercy; surely, God forgives wrong-doing together, and He alone is All-forgiving, Most Gracious. And turn towards your Lord and submit yourselves unto Him [alone] before the suffering comes upon you, and then you will not be succored.

And before that suffering comes upon you of a sudden, while you are unaware [of its approach], follow the most goodly [guidance] that has been sent down to you by your Lord, lest any human being should say [on the Day of Judgement]. "Alas for me for having neglected what is due to God: and for having been indeed one of those who scoffed [at the truth]." Or lest he[/she] should say, "If only God had guided me, I should have been among those who are conscious of Him." Or lest he [/she] should say when he [/she] becomes aware of the suffering [that awaits him/her], "Would that I had a second chance to be among the doers of good." Yea, indeed! My messages did come unto you, but you denounced them as lies, and you were haughty and among those who stubbornly denied the truth. [39:53-59]

قُلْ يَٰعِبَادِيَ ٱلَّذِينَ
أَسْرَفُوا۟ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا۟ مِن
رَّحْمَةِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ ٱلذُّنُوبَ
جَمِيعًا ۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلْغَفُورُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٥٣﴾
وَ أَنِيبُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ وَ أَسْلِمُوا۟ لَهُۥ مِن
قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَكُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ ثُمَّ لَا تُنصَرُونَ
﴿٥٤﴾ وَ ٱتَّبِعُوٓا۟ أَحْسَنَ مَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُم
مِّن رَّبِّكُم مِّن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَكُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ
بَغْتَةً وَ أَنتُمْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾ أَن تَقُولَ
نَفْسٌ يَٰحَسْرَتَىٰ عَلَىٰ مَا فَرَّطتُ فِى
جَنۢبِ ٱللَّهِ وَ إِن كُنتُ لَمِنَ ٱلسَّٰخِرِينَ
﴿٥٦﴾ أَوْ تَقُولَ لَوْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ هَدَىٰنِى لَكُنتُ
مِنَ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾ أَوْ تَقُولَ حِينَ تَرَى
ٱلْعَذَابَ لَوْ أَنَّ لِى كَرَّةً فَأَكُونَ مِنَ
ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾ بَلَىٰ قَدْ جَآءَتْكَ
ءَايَٰتِى فَكَذَّبْتَ بِهَا وَ ٱسْتَكْبَرْتَ وَ كُنتَ
مِنَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٥٩﴾

And remain patiently enduring [O Muhammad]; surely, God's promise always comes true, and ask forgiveness for whatever wrong you might do, and extol your Lord's glory and praise by night and by day. [40:55]

فَٱصْبِرْ إِنَّ وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَ ٱسْتَغْفِرْ
لِذَنۢبِكَ وَ سَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ بِٱلْعَشِىِّ
وَ ٱلْإِبْكَٰرِ ﴿٥٥﴾

He is the Ever-living, there is no god save Him, call, then, unto Him [alone], sincere in your faith in Him; all praise is due to God, the Lord of all-being. [40:65]

هُوَ ٱلْحَىُّ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَٱدْعُوهُ
مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ ٱلدِّينَ ۗ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ
ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٦٥﴾

And it is He who accepts repentance from His servants, and pardons wrong doing, and knows all that you do. [42:25]

وَ هُوَ ٱلَّذِى يَقْبَلُ ٱلتَّوْبَةَ
عَنْ عِبَادِهِۦ وَ يَعْفُواْ عَنِ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ وَ يَعْلَمُ
مَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾

And it is He who has created all parallels [complementary though perhaps opposite], and has provided for you ships and animals on which you ride, so that you may well settle yourselves on their backs, and when you are well-settled over them you might remember your Lord's blessings and say, "Limitless in His glory is He who has subjected these to our use; we would not have been able to achieve this [on our own]. Surely unto our Lord we shall all be returning." [43:12-14]

وَ ٱلَّذِى
خَلَقَ ٱلْأَزْوَٰجَ كُلَّهَا وَ جَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنَ
ٱلْفُلْكِ وَ ٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ مَا تَرْكَبُونَ ﴿١٢﴾
لِتَسْتَوُۥاْ عَلَىٰ ظُهُورِهِۦ ثُمَّ تَذْكُرُواْ نِعْمَةَ
رَبِّكُمْ إِذَا ٱسْتَوَيْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ وَ تَقُولُواْ
سُبْحَٰنَ ٱلَّذِى سَخَّرَ لَنَا هَٰذَا وَ مَا كُنَّا لَهُۥ
مُقْرِنِينَ ﴿١٣﴾ وَ إِنَّآ إِلَىٰ رَبِّنَا لَمُنقَلِبُونَ
﴿١٤﴾

Know, then, that there is no god save the One God, and ask forgiveness for whatever wrongdoing you might do, and for [the wrongdoing] of all other believing men and believing women; and God knows all your coming and going as well as your lodging. [47:19]

فَٱعْلَمْ أَنَّهُۥ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ وَ ٱسْتَغْفِرْ
لِذَنۢبِكَ وَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ
وَ ٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مُتَقَلَّبَكُمْ وَ مَثْوَىٰكُمْ ﴿١٩﴾

And so await with patience your Lord's judgement, and you are well under Our eyes, and extol your Lord's glory and praise whenever you rise up, and extol His glory at night, and at the time when the stars retreat. [52:48-49]

وَ ٱصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ
رَبِّكَ فَإِنَّكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا وَ سَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ
حِينَ تَقُومُ ﴿٤٨﴾ وَ مِنَ ٱلَّيْلِ فَسَبِّحْهُ
وَ إِدْبَٰرَ ٱلنُّجُومِ ﴿٤٩﴾

Is it not time that the hearts of all who have attained to faith should feel humble at the remembrance of God and the truth that has been sent down, and that they should not become like those who were given the Book aforetime, and whose hearts have hardened with the passing of time, and many of them have perverted? [57:16]

أَلَمْ
يَأْنِ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ أَن تَخْشَعَ قُلُوبُهُمْ
لِذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ وَ مَا نَزَلَ مِنَ ٱلْحَقِّ وَ لَا
يَكُونُواْ كَٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُواْ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ مِن قَبْلُ
فَطَالَ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْأَمَدُ فَقَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ
وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَٰسِقُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

Satan has gained mastery over them and has caused them to remain oblivious of the remembrance of God. Such as these are Satan's folk; surely, it is the folk of Satan that will truly be the losers. [58:19]

اسْتَحْوَذَ عَلَيْهِمُ الشَّيْطَانُ فَأَنسَاهُمْ
ذِكْرَ اللَّهِ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ حِزْبُ الشَّيْطَانِ ۚ
أَلَا إِنَّ حِزْبَ الشَّيْطَانِ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

And those who come later after them pray, "O our Lord! Forgive us, and our brethren who preceded us in faith, and let not our hearts have any hard feelings against those who have attained to faith. O our Lord! Verily, You are All-compassionate, Most Gracious." [59:10]

وَالَّذِينَ
جَاءُو مِن بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا
وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ
وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِّلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٠﴾

God is He, save whom there is no god; the One who knows all that is beyond the reach of any being's perception and all that can be witnessed by a creature's senses or mind; He, the All-merciful, the Most Gracious. God is He, save whom there is no god, the Sovereign Supreme, the All-holy, the All-peace, the Giver of faith, the All-master, the All-mighty, the Irresistible [the One who subdues wrong and restores right,] the One to whom all greatness belongs. Utterly remote is God in His limitless glory, from any they may associate [with Him]. He is God, the Creator, the Originator, the One who shapes all forms and appearances. His [alone] are the most beautiful manners. All that is in the heavens or on earth extols His limitless glory; and He alone is the All-mighty, the All-wise. [59:22- 24]

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ
عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ ۖ هُوَ الرَّحْمَٰنُ
الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٢٢﴾ هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا
هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ
الْمُهَيْمِنُ الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ ۚ
سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ هُوَ اللَّهُ
الْخَالِقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ ۖ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ
الْحُسْنَىٰ ۚ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٢٤﴾

"O our Lord! Keep us from being a temptation for those who might reject the truth [in their rejection of the truth, and/or their persecution of the believers], and forgive any wrongdoing on our side; Our Lord, You alone are the All-mighty, the All-wise." [60:5]

رَبَّنَا لَا تَجْعَلْنَا فِتْنَةً لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
وَاغْفِرْ لَنَا رَبَّنَا ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ الْعَزِيزُ
الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٥﴾

يُسَبِّحُ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ لَهُ ٱلْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ ٱلْحَمْدُ ۖ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١﴾

All that is in the heavens and all that is on earth extol God's limitless glory: His is all dominion, to Him all praise is due; and He has the power over everything. [64:1]

فَقُلْتُ ٱسْتَغْفِرُوا۟ رَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ غَفَّارًا ﴿١٠﴾ يُرْسِلِ ٱلسَّمَآءَ عَلَيْكُم مِّدْرَارًا ﴿١١﴾ وَيُمْدِدْكُم بِأَمْوَٰلٍ وَبَنِينَ وَيَجْعَل لَّكُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ وَيَجْعَل لَّكُمْ أَنْهَٰرًا ﴿١٢﴾

[Said Noah] "And I said [to my people,] "Ask your Lord to forgive you your evil-doing; and surely He is All-forgiving! He will shower upon you heavenly blessings abundant, and will provide you with worldly goods and children, and will grant you gardens and grant you running waters." [71:10-12]

وَرَبَّكَ فَكَبِّرْ ﴿٣﴾

And your Lord's greatness glorify. [74:3]

سَبِّحِ ٱسْمَ رَبِّكَ ٱلْأَعْلَى ﴿١﴾ ٱلَّذِي خَلَقَ فَسَوَّىٰ ﴿٢﴾ وَٱلَّذِي قَدَّرَ فَهَدَىٰ ﴿٣﴾

Extol the limitless glory of your Lord's name[the glory] of the All-Highest, who creates and properly shapes [every thing in accordance with what it is meant to be], and who determines [the nature and natural laws of all that exists] and thereupon guides [towards its fulfillment]. [87:1-3]

إِذَا جَآءَ نَصْرُ ٱللَّهِ وَٱلْفَتْحُ ﴿١﴾ وَرَأَيْتَ ٱلنَّاسَ يَدْخُلُونَ فِي دِينِ ٱللَّهِ أَفْوَاجًا ﴿٢﴾ فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَٱسْتَغْفِرْهُ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ تَوَّابًا ﴿٣﴾

When the succour of God and [His] victory come, and you see people accept the faith in God and His message in multitudes, extol your Lord's limitless glory and praise Him, and seek His forgiveness; He is ever the Acceptor of Repentance. [110:1-3; revealed in Mina during the Farewell Pilgrimage and counted as Madani]

The human being should always bear in mind that he/she is merely a creation of God, submit to His will and guidance, and never feel arrogance or self-sufficiency. This is a state of conception and feeling that ought to be kept permanently in mind, and to be reflected in all of human behavior in any time or place. Yet, one may need to remind himself/herself, nurture and stress such a spiritual-psychological-intellectual consciousness and cognizance by verbal statements.

This is practiced through prayers, supplications and the recitation or reading of the Quran. The name of God is mentioned during all these acts of worship, when the believer may state that there is no god but He (*tahlil*), or extol His limitless glory (*tasbih*), or describe Him as the Greatest (*takbir*), or address due gratitude and praise to Him alone (*hamd*). Besides, one may pronounce these statements about God separately and independently, as is recommended after each of the five due prayers through the day. One can also constantly remind oneself of God through this repetition of His beautiful names and attributes according to the guidance of the Prophet's traditions, Sunna. Remembering God, invoking His beautiful names, extolling His glory and greatness, and expressing thankfulness and praise to Him can occur at all times or circumstances and for any number of times [e.g. 3:191; 4:103]. However, some traditions of the Prophet may recommend particular forms of dhikr in particular times such as during the acts of prayers or pilgrimage, and after the regular prayers. At the end of any meeting or sitting one can make up for any wrong that might have occurred during it by saying, "Limitless is your glory O God; thankfulness and praise to you; I bear witness that there is no god but you; I pray for Your forgiveness and turn to You in repentance" [reported by Abu Dawud and al-Hakim in *al-Mustadrak*].

Since the human being is not perfect, and may forget or do wrong from time to time, he/she ought to ask repeatedly for God's pardon and forgiveness. If one commits a serious error, or continues for some time in a state of heedlessness and negligence and deviation from the right way, repentance and a return to the right way is required, but this should be felt and practiced as soon as possible, and before death approaches the person. If the iniquitous act comprises a violation of others rights (e.g. theft, fraud, slander etc.), repentance must be connected with restoring the material rights of others and returning to them what is theirs, as well as with acknowledging their moral integrity in cases of previous offence against them.

The Quran opens all doors for repentance, and assures that God's grace is limitless, and that any evil-doing can be met by God's forgiveness and subsequent good deeds. God's reward of genuine repentance is beyond any human imagination: "they who repent and attain to faith and do righteous deeds, it is they whose [erstwhile] bad deeds God will change into good deeds, and God is ever All-forgiving, Most Gracious" [25:70]. Even a legal penalty can be dropped if irresistible evidence of repentance and behavioral change occurred before the arrest of the defendant [see 5:33-34].

The general attitude of the Islamic penal law is to encourage repentance and moral-behavioral reform as long as this is possible, rather than to inflict penalties.

RECITING THE QURAN

Do you bid people to be virtuous and forget your own-selves, while you recite the Book? Will you not, then, use your reason? [2:44]

أَتَأْمُرُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ بِٱلْبِرِّ
وَتَنسَوْنَ أَنفُسَكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ تَتْلُونَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ ۚ
أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

Those unto whom We have given the Book, they recite it [and commit themselves to their guidance] as it ought to be recited [and followed]; it is they who [truly] believe in it; whereas all who choose to deny stubbornly the truth - it is they who are the losers. [2:121]

ٱلَّذِينَ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ
يَتْلُونَهُۥ حَقَّ تِلَاوَتِهِۦٓ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ يُؤْمِنُونَ
بِهِۦ ۗ وَمَن يَكْفُرْ بِهِۦ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ
ٱلْخَٰسِرُونَ ﴿١٢١﴾

Will they not, then, think over the Quran? Had it been from any but God, they would surely have found within it many a contradiction [or an inconsistency]. [4:82]

أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ ۚ وَلَوْ
كَانَ مِنْ عِندِ غَيْرِ ٱللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا۟ فِيهِ
ٱخْتِلَٰفًا كَثِيرًا ﴿٨٢﴾

And when the Quran is voiced, give your ear to it and listen carefully in silence, so that you might be graced with God's mercy. [7:204]

وَإِذَا قُرِئَ ٱلْقُرْءَانُ فَٱسْتَمِعُوا۟
لَهُۥ وَأَنصِتُوا۟ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿٢٠٤﴾

O you have attained to faith! Pay heed unto God and the Conveyor of His message, and do not turn away from Him while you have been hearing [His message], and be not like those who say, "We have heard," while they really hear not. [8:20-21]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَطِيعُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ وَلَا
تَوَلَّوْا۟ عَنْهُ وَأَنتُمْ تَسْمَعُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَلَا
تَكُونُوا۟ كَٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوا۟ سَمِعْنَا وَهُمْ لَا
يَسْمَعُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

And whatever matter you may find yourself occupied with, and whatever of the Quran you may be reciting, and whatever work you may do, We are your witness, from whenever you press on it; and not even an atom's weight on earth or in heaven escapes your Lord's knowledge, and neither is there anything smaller than that or larger but is recorded in [His] clear surveillance. [10:61]

وَمَا تَكُونُ فِى شَأْنٍ وَمَا تَتْلُوا۟ مِنْهُ مِن
قُرْءَانٍ وَلَا تَعْمَلُونَ مِنْ عَمَلٍ إِلَّا كُنَّا
عَلَيْكُمْ شُهُودًا إِذْ تُفِيضُونَ فِيهِ ۚ وَمَا
يَعْزُبُ عَن رَّبِّكَ مِن مِّثْقَالِ ذَرَّةٍ فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِى ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَلَآ أَصْغَرَ مِن
ذَٰلِكَ وَلَآ أَكْبَرَ إِلَّا فِى كِتَٰبٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٦١﴾

And We have given you seven of the oft-repeated [verses] and the glorious Quran. [15:87]

وَلَقَدْ
ءَاتَيْنَٰكَ سَبْعًا مِّنَ ٱلْمَثَانِى وَٱلْقُرْءَانَ
ٱلْعَظِيمَ ﴿٨٧﴾

فَإِذَا قَرَأْتَ
ٱلْقُرْءَانَ فَٱسْتَعِذْ بِٱللَّهِ مِنَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ
ٱلرَّجِيمِ ﴿٩٨﴾ إِنَّهُۥ لَيْسَ لَهُۥ سُلْطَٰنٌ عَلَى
ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ
﴿٩٩﴾ إِنَّمَا سُلْطَٰنُهُۥ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ
يَتَوَلَّوْنَهُۥ وَٱلَّذِينَ هُم بِهِۦ مُشْرِكُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

Now whenever you read the Quran, seek refuge with God from Satan, the accursed. He has no power over those who have attained to faith and in their Lord place their trust; he has power only over those who side with him and who associate him [with God]. [16:98-100]

وَإِذَا
قَرَأْتَ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ جَعَلْنَا بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَ
ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ حِجَابًا
مَّسْتُورًا ﴿٤٥﴾ وَجَعَلْنَا عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ
أَكِنَّةً أَن يَفْقَهُوهُ وَفِىٓ ءَاذَانِهِمْ وَقْرًا ۚ
وَإِذَا ذَكَرْتَ رَبَّكَ فِى ٱلْقُرْءَانِ وَحْدَهُۥ
وَلَّوْا۟ عَلَىٰٓ أَدْبَٰرِهِمْ نُفُورًا ﴿٤٦﴾

But whenever you recite the Quran, We place an invisible barrier [of their stubbornness] between you and those who [stubbornly] do not believe in the life to come; and over their hearts we have laid veils which prevent them from grasping its message, and into their ears heaviness. And so, whenever you do mention, while reciting the Quran, your Lord as the One and the only One, they turn their backs [unto you] in aversion. [17:45-46]

أَقِمِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ
لِدُلُوكِ ٱلشَّمْسِ إِلَىٰ غَسَقِ ٱلَّيْلِ
وَقُرْءَانَ ٱلْفَجْرِ ۖ إِنَّ قُرْءَانَ ٱلْفَجْرِ كَانَ
مَشْهُودًا ﴿٧٨﴾

Keep up prayers from when the sun passes its zenith till the coming darkness of the night, and [be ever mindful of] the recital of the Quran at dawn, for its recital at dawn is witnessed. [17:78]

قُل لَّئِنِ ٱجْتَمَعَتِ ٱلْإِنسُ
وَٱلْجِنُّ عَلَىٰٓ أَن يَأْتُوا۟ بِمِثْلِ هَٰذَا
ٱلْقُرْءَانِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِۦ وَلَوْ كَانَ
بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيرًا ﴿٨٨﴾

Say: "If all human beings and all invisible beings (jinn) would come together in order to produce the like of the Quran, they could not produce its like even if they would all be backing one another [in this purpose]." [17:88]

وَٱتْلُ مَآ أُوحِىَ إِلَيْكَ مِن
كِتَابِ رَبِّكَ ۖ لَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمَٰتِهِۦ وَلَن
تَجِدَ مِن دُونِهِۦ مُلْتَحَدًا ﴿٢٧﴾

And recite whatever has been revealed to you of your Lord's Book; none can alter His words, and you can find no refuge apart from Him. [18:27]

وَلَقَدْ صَرَّفْنَا فِي هَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانِ
لِلنَّاسِ مِن كُلِّ مَثَلٍ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ
أَكْثَرَ شَيْءٍ جَدَلًا ﴿٥٤﴾

And thus, indeed, many facets [of guidance] have We given to people in this Quran, but the human being is above all else, always given to disputation. [18:54, see also 17:89; 30:58; 39:27-28]

أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِم مِّنَ
ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ مِن ذُرِّيَّةِ ءَادَمَ وَمِمَّنْ حَمَلْنَا مَعَ
نُوحٍ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّةِ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَإِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ
وَمِمَّنْ هَدَيْنَا وَٱجْتَبَيْنَآ ۚ إِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ
ءَايَٰتُ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ خَرُّوا۟ سُجَّدًا وَبُكِيًّا
﴿٥٨﴾

These were some of the prophets upon whom God bestowed His blessings, of the seed of Adam and of those whom We caused to be borne [in the ark] with Noah, and of the seed of Ibrahim (Abraham) and Israel, and those whom We guided and chose [for Our messages]; whenever the messages of the All-merciful were recited to them, they would fall down [before Him] prostrating themselves and weeping. [19:58]

وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَنزَلْنَٰهُ
قُرْءَانًا عَرَبِيًّا وَصَرَّفْنَا فِيهِ مِنَ ٱلْوَعِيدِ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ أَوْ يُحْدِثُ لَهُمْ ذِكْرًا ﴿١١٣﴾

And thus have We sent down this Quran in Arabic, and have given therein many facets to all manners of warning, so that people might be conscious of Us or that it might fresh arouse an awareness in them. [20:113]

إِنَّمَآ
أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ رَبَّ هَٰذِهِ ٱلْبَلْدَةِ ٱلَّذِى
حَرَّمَهَا وَلَهُۥ كُلُّ شَىْءٍ ۖ وَأُمِرْتُ أَنْ
أَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٩١﴾ وَأَنْ أَتْلُوَا۟
ٱلْقُرْءَانَ ۖ فَمَنِ ٱهْتَدَىٰ فَإِنَّمَا يَهْتَدِى
لِنَفْسِهِۦ ۖ وَمَن ضَلَّ فَقُلْ إِنَّمَآ أَنَا۠ مِنَ
ٱلْمُنذِرِينَ ﴿٩٢﴾

Say: "I have been bidden to worship the Lord of this City - Him who has made it sacred, and unto Him belongs everything, and I have been bidden to be of those who submit themselves to Him; and to recite this Quran: whoever, then chooses to follow the right way, he [/she] follows it but for his [/her] own good; and as for any who wills to go astray, I am but a warner." [27:91-92]

ٱتْلُ مَآ أُوحِىَ إِلَيْكَ
مِنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَأَقِمِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ ۖ إِنَّ
ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ ٱلْفَحْشَآءِ
وَٱلْمُنكَرِ ۗ وَلَذِكْرُ ٱللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ

Convey [unto others] what has been revealed to you of this divine writ, and keep up the prayer; the prayer restrains [the human being] from loathsome behavior and from that which runs counter to reason [and common sense]; and the remembrance of God is indeed far greater [in its value

and reward in this world life and in the life to come]. And God knows all that you do. [29:45]

يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

And they say, "Why have no miraculous signs ever been sent down to him from his Lord?" Say, "Miracles are in the power of God alone; and I am but a plain warner." Is it not enough for them that We have sent down this Book unto you, recited to them. Surely, in that there is grace [from Us] and a reminder to people who [deeply think and thus] believe. [29:50-51]

وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا أُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ ءَايَٰتٌ مِّن
رَّبِّهِۦ ۖ قُلْ إِنَّمَا ٱلْءَايَٰتُ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ
وَإِنَّمَآ أَنَا۠ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٥٠﴾ أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِهِمْ
أَنَّآ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ
إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَرَحْمَةً وَذِكْرَىٰ لِقَوْمٍ
يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

And We have not imparted to him [the Prophet] poetry, nor would it have suited this [message]; it is but a reminder and a Quran that has clearly spelled out [the truth]. [36:69]

وَمَا
عَلَّمْنَٰهُ ٱلشِّعْرَ وَمَا يَنۢبَغِى لَهُۥٓ ۚ إِنْ هُوَ
إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ وَقُرْءَانٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٦٩﴾

And those who are bent on stubbornly denying the truth say [to one another], "Do not give ear to this Quran, but rather talk frivolously about it, haply you might prevail." [41:26]

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لَا
تَسْمَعُوا۟ لِهَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانِ وَٱلْغَوْا۟ فِيهِ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَغْلِبُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

They who stubbornly deny the truth of this reminder when it comes to them; surely, it is a sublime Book. No falsehood can ever attain to it from before it nor from behind it; it is a bestowal from on high by the One who is All-wise, ever due to Him all praise. [41:41-42]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟
بِٱلذِّكْرِ لَمَّا جَآءَهُمْ ۖ وَإِنَّهُۥ لَكِتَٰبٌ
عَزِيزٌ ﴿٤١﴾ لَّا يَأْتِيهِ ٱلْبَٰطِلُ مِنۢ بَيْنِ
يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِۦ ۖ تَنزِيلٌ مِّنْ حَكِيمٍ
حَمِيدٍ ﴿٤٢﴾

And if We had made it a discourse in a non-Arabic tongue, they would surely have said, "If such messages have been made clear, why is a non-Arabic [book sent down] to Arabs?"
Say, "Unto all who have attained to faith, this is a guidance and a source of healing and soundness; and those who stubbornly believe not, on their ears is a heaviness, and to them

وَلَوْ جَعَلْنَٰهُ
قُرْءَانًا أَعْجَمِيًّا لَّقَالُوا۟ لَوْلَا فُصِّلَتْ
ءَايَٰتُهُۥٓ ۖ ءَأَعْجَمِىٌّ وَعَرَبِىٌّ ۗ قُلْ هُوَ
لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ هُدًى وَشِفَآءٌ ۖ وَٱلَّذِينَ لَا
يُؤْمِنُونَ فِىٓ ءَاذَانِهِمْ وَقْرٌ وَهُوَ عَلَيْهِمْ

it is blindness; those are [the people] being called from too far away." [41:44]

عَمًى ۚ أُولَٰٓئِكَ يُنَادَوْنَ مِن مَّكَانٍۭ بَعِيدٍ ﴿٤٤﴾

Will they not, then, think over this Quran, or are there locks upon their hearts? [47:24]

أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ
ٱلْقُرْءَانَ أَمْ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَآ ﴿٢٤﴾

And indeed We made this Quran easy to bear in mind; is there any, then, who is willing to take this to heart? [54:17, 22, 32, 40]

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا ٱلْقُرْءَانَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ
﴿١٧﴾

Keep awake [in prayer] at night, all but a small part, of one-half thereof, or make it little less than that, or add to it [according to your will and ability], and recite the Quran quietly and distinctly. [73:2-4]

قُمِ ٱلَّيْلَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا
﴿٢﴾ نِّصْفَهُۥٓ أَوِ ٱنقُصْ مِنْهُ قَلِيلًا ﴿٣﴾ أَوْ
زِدْ عَلَيْهِ ۖ وَرَتِّلِ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ تَرْتِيلًا ﴿٤﴾

Behold [O Prophet], your Lord knows that you stay in prayer nearly two thirds of the night, or a half of it, or a third of it, together with some of those who follow you. And God determines [the length of] night and day, and knows that you cannot entirely pass over it [in prayer], and so He has turned to you in His grace. Recite, then, as much of the Quran as you can with ease. He knows that there will be among you sick people, and others who will go about the land to earn of God's bounty, and others who will fight in God's cause. Recite, then, [only] as much of it as you can with ease, and keep up the prayer, and spend [on others in need] the purifying dues (zakat), and lend unto God a goodly loan; and whatever good you may offer for your ownself, you shall truly find it, with God better and mightier in reward. And [always] seek God's forgiveness; surely God is All- forgiving, Most Gracious. [73:20]

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ تَقُومُ
أَدْنَىٰ مِن ثُلُثَيِ ٱلَّيْلِ وَنِصْفَهُۥ وَثُلُثَهُۥ
وَطَآئِفَةٌ مِّنَ ٱلَّذِينَ مَعَكَ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ يُقَدِّرُ
ٱلَّيْلَ وَٱلنَّهَارَ ۚ عَلِمَ أَن لَّن تُحْصُوهُ
فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ ۖ فَٱقْرَءُوا۟ مَا تَيَسَّرَ مِنَ
ٱلْقُرْءَانِ ۚ عَلِمَ أَن سَيَكُونُ مِنكُم
مَّرْضَىٰ ۙ وَءَاخَرُونَ يَضْرِبُونَ فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ يَبْتَغُونَ مِن فَضْلِ ٱللَّهِ ۙ
وَءَاخَرُونَ يُقَٰتِلُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ
فَٱقْرَءُوا۟ مَا تَيَسَّرَ مِنْهُ ۚ وَأَقِيمُوا۟
ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتُوا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَأَقْرِضُوا۟
ٱللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا ۚ وَمَا تُقَدِّمُوا۟
لِأَنفُسِكُم مِّنْ خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ هُوَ
خَيْرًا وَأَعْظَمَ أَجْرًا ۚ وَٱسْتَغْفِرُوا۟
ٱللَّهَ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٢٠﴾

Behold, it is for Us to gather it [the Quran] and to cause it to be read [as it ought to be read]. Thus, when We

إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا جَمْعَهُۥ وَقُرْءَانَهُۥ ﴿١٧﴾ فَإِذَا

recite it, follow its recitation. And, then, behold it will be for Us to make its meaning clear. [75:17-19]

قَرْءَانَهُۥ ﴿١٨﴾ ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا
بَيَانَهُۥ ﴿١٩﴾

Then, why they do not believe? And why when the Quran is recited to them, they do not fall down in prostration. [84:20-21]

فَمَا لَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَإِذَا قُرِئَ
عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْقُرْءَانُ لَا يَسْجُدُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

Recite, in the name of your Lord, who has created, has created the human being of a suspending mixture [of sperm and egg]. Read, and your Lord is the Most Bountiful, who has taught [the human being] through the pen, taught the human being what he did not know. [96:1-5]

ٱقْرَأْ بِٱسْمِ رَبِّكَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ﴿١﴾ خَلَقَ
ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ﴿٢﴾ ٱقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ
ٱلْأَكْرَمُ ﴿٣﴾ ٱلَّذِى عَلَّمَ بِٱلْقَلَمِ ﴿٤﴾ عَلَّمَ
ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ ﴿٥﴾

The Quran, with its characteristic structure, style and rhythm, is God's guidance as revealed to Prophet Muhammad who was bidden by Him to convey it to the people gradually as it was revealed. It is not poetry, but it is also not ordinary prose, since it has its internal harmony and its attraction for the reader and listener, which make its reading, listening to and memorizing smooth and appealing. Reciting and listening to the Quran are among the acts of worship for a Muslim.

It is mandatory to recite the Quran in the five due prayers of the day, but it is recommended that it be recited or listened to as much as possible. The reciter of the Quran must start by seeking the protection of God against Satan who is never hopeless of fulfilling what he swore to do, even when a person is abiding by God's guidance and not defying it. The reciter of the Quran is reminding himself/herself of the constantly challenging enemy, and of his/her constantly retorting challenge of Satan through the guidance of God, the All-knowing , All-wise Lord and Cherisher. One who recites the Quran as an act of worship should recite it quietly and distinctly, while the listener should listen with respect and devotion. Both the reciter and the listener have to concentrate on the content, and not be satisfied with just needing the external form of the style and tone. At certain appointed points of the Quran, prostration is required from both the reciter and the listener. Although anyone who is concentrating on and interacting with the Quranic text may be so impressed and touched, that he/she cannot control his/her tears, the most evident effect of the Quran as God's guidance is the benefit that one receives from it and the reward that is fulfilled in this world's life, as well as the greater reward in the life to come that awaits the reciter of the Quran or one who listens to it and abides by its guidance.

It is significant that the miraculous evidence for the authenticity of the message of Muhammad has been the Quran, a book that addresses the human mind and heart in every time and place, not a supernatural material miracle which challenges the human senses of only the contemporary witnesses or those who may be close to them. Reciting the Quran, or listening to it, is an act of worship and a means of education. The Quran combines faith,

worship, moral values and laws in an inter-woven totality which has its conceptual and artistic harmony and polyphony. One can follow through the successive messages of God as reported in the Quran, the human spiritual and social history. Adam and his wife, in their curiosity and search for the forbidden that brought them out of eternity into the limited life on earth with its sexual relations and reproduction, Satan with his arrogance and rebellion, swearing to lead the children of Adam astray, the conflict of the two children of Adam about their acceptance by God and the early murder among humankind. the development of God's messages from Nuh (Noah) to Ibrahim (Abraham), Isma'il (Ishmael), Ishaq (Isaac) and Lut (Lot), to Ya'qub (Jacob) and the descendants on one side, and from Hud the Prophet of the tribe of 'Ad to Salih the Prophet of the tribe of Thamud to Shu'ayb the Prophet of Madyan (Midian) on the other - all these are significant spiritual and socio-cultural milestones in early human history. Later we come to the stage of Musa (Moses), 'Isa (Jesus) and Muhammad, who we now feel are nearer to us because of the presence of Judaism, Christianity and Islam in our contemporary world.

In spite of the common grounds of the three Abrahamic faiths, the differences and particulars are characteristic. The Quran reads: *"So, then, because of the evil-doing committed by those who followed the Jewish faith did We deny unto them certain good things of life [aforetime] that had been allowed to them"* [4:160], *"And [I (Jesus) have come] to confirm the truth of the Torah that preceded me, and to make lawful unto you some of the things which [aforetime] were forbidden to you"* [3:50], *"[Prophet Muhammad] who enjoins upon them the doing of what is right and forbids the doing of what is wrong, and makes lawful to them the good things of life and forbids them the bad things, and lifts from them their burdens and the shackles that were upon them"* [7:157].

Furthermore, the reader of the Quran feels the isolation of the Prophets Nuh, Hud, Salih, Lut and Shu'ayb from their limited folks, and their direct approach in presenting the message to warning them of the immediate punishment of God in this world's life, and asking God to inflict punishment when they were rejected and threatened: *"They said, 'If you do not give over, O Noah, you shall assuredly be stoned to death.' He prayed, 'O my Lord, My people have given me the lie; hence, lay you wide open to the truth between me and them, and save me and the believers who are with me,' and so We saved him and those who were with him in the fully laden ark, and then We caused those who stayed behind to drown"* [26:116-120], *"Long before did Noah's people call it a lie.... Thereupon he called out to his Lord, 'Verily, I am defeated; come You then to my succor.' And so We caused the gates of heaven to open with water pouring down in torrents, and caused the earth to burst forth with springs and so the waters met for a purpose pre-ordained. And We bore him on that [vessel] planked and caulked"* [54:9-13], *"And this was revealed unto Noah: 'None of your people shall believe except those who have already believed; so be not distressed by that which they may be doing. Make you the Ark under Our eyes and according to Our inspiration, and do not appeal to Me concerning those who have done evil, they shall be drowned"* [11:36-37], *"And so, when Our judgement came to pass, by Our grace We saved Hud and those who believed with him, and We saved them from a severe suffering"* [11:58], *"And so, when Our judgement came to pass, by Our grace We saved Salih and those who believed with him, and We saved them from the ignominy of that day"* [11:66], *"And so when Our judgement came to pass, We turned those [sinful towns in*

which Lot was sent] upside down, and rained down upon them stone-hard blows of chastisement one upon another..." [11:82], *"And so when Our judgement came to pass, by Our grace We saved Shu'ayb and those who believed with him, and the evildoers were seized by the blast, and they then lay lifeless in their homes"* [11:94], *"Each [of the evil-doing folks] We seized for their evil-doing, and so upon some of them We let loose a deadly storm wind, and some of them were overtaken by a [sudden] blast, and some of them We caused to be swallowed by the earth; and some of them We caused to drown. And it was not God who wronged them, but it was their ownselves whom they had wronged"* [29:40].

Parallel to such immediate divine requital of those evil-doing communities, we find the teachings of the Quran, revealed to Prophet Muhammad, to be different, *"But whether We do take you away, We shall inflict our retribution on them; or We show you the fulfillment of what We have promised them; surely We have full power over them. So hold fast unto that which has been revealed to you, and surely this [revelation] shall become [a source of] eminence for you and your people; but in time you will all be called into account [for what you have done for it]"* [43:41-44]. The Quran is emphasizing that its message would not come to an end by the stubborn denial or evil oppression of Quraysh in Mecca, or even by the death of the Prophet before the prevalence of his message, nor does it definitely promise an immediate divine punishment for the evildoers. It keeps different options open, and reminds the Prophet and the believers that it is an open and constant message - and meanwhile an eminence - for successive generations for which they are held responsible. It is not a message limited to a closed and isolated community, but is open to all peoples, times, and places, and the earliest believers had only the chronological privilege of the beginning of the message.

Accordingly, the message and its believers basically face the permanent natural laws and rely on their sincere hard efforts in supporting righteousness against evil and aggression: *"And how could you not fight in the cause of God and [for the support of] the oppressed men and women and children..."* [4:75], *"Those whom the angels gather in death while they are wronging their ownselves, they [the angels] say to them, 'What was wrong with you?' They answer, 'We were too weak and thus oppressed on earth." They [the angels] say, 'Was, then, God's earth not wide enough for you to move through [leaving the place of oppression]...'"* [4:97], *"And be not faint of heart when you seek out the [belligerent] host. If you may suffer pain, they suffer pain as you suffer it, but you are hoping from God what they cannot hope for"* [4:104], *"If a suffering touches you, a similar suffering has touched the others before, and it is by turns that We apportion unto people such days [of happiness and adversity, and [this] to the end that God might mark out those who have attained to faith, and choose from among you such as [with their lives] bear witness to the truth, and God does not love evildoers... Do you think that you could enter paradise without God's cognizance of [your efforts in] striving hard [in His cause] and your patience in adversity?"* [3:140-142]. The Quran, while establishing and nurturing the faith in God the All-mighty and His judgement and requital in the life to come, settles the relation between the human being and this world's life with its permanent laws which deal equally with all human beings regardless of their faith [e.g. 11:15; 17:18-20], and removes any contradiction or misconception in this respect: *"And had God so willed, He could*

punish them [,those who fight against the truth and the believers in it, Himself openly] but [He wills] to test you by means of one another" [47:4].

The Quran is a genuine source and a true companion in following the constant human spiritual search for the truth, and the constant divine grace of guidance. What learning and worship are made available to the readers of the Quran and those who listen to it!

VOWS FOR OFFERING WORSHIP OR CHARITY "Nudhur"

And whatever you spend [on those who are in need and on what the whole society needs, or whatever you may pledge [to spend in this way], be sure that God knows it all, and the wrong-doers shall have no supporters. [2:270]

وَمَآ أَنفَقْتُم مِّن نَّفَقَةٍ أَوْ نَذَرْتُم مِّن نَّذْرٍ
فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعْلَمُهُۥ ۗ وَمَا لِلظَّٰلِمِينَ مِنْ
أَنصَارٍ ﴿٢٧٠﴾

[The worshippers of God are] those who fulfill their vows, and stand in awe of a Day the woe of which is bound to spread far and wide. [76:7]

يُوفُونَ بِٱلنَّذْرِ وَيَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا
كَانَ شَرُّهُۥ مُسْتَطِيرًا ﴿٧﴾

The believer may vow or commit himself/herself to offer additional voluntary worship or charity, "*nadhr* pl. *nudhur,*" as an expression of his/her gratitude to God for His favors in general, or for a certain favor in particular. The vow may be conditional or suspended when it has been made in advance and a certain good comes or a certain bad is removed. Such vows have been known throughout history before Islam: "*when a woman of [the house of] 'Imran said, 'O my Lord! Unto You do I vow what is within my womb to be devoted to your service. Accept this from me; You alone are the All-hearing, the All-knowing' " [3:34], "And if you should see a human being [O Miriam/ Mary] say, 'I have vowed to the All- merciful an abstinence from speech, and so today I will not speak to any human being' "* [19:26]. Even the Arab polytheists before Islam had their vows: "*And out of whatever He has created of the tillage and cattle, they assign unto God a portion, saying, 'This belongs to God,' - so they claim - 'and this is for those that we believe to be associates [with Him]'...*" [6:126]. Islam prefers that a believer does good initially and unconditionally [a Prophet's tradition reported by Bukhari and Muslim], and so commentators interpret the vow/*nadhr* in the verse 7:76, and even also the verse 2:270 as the general commitment to the guidance of Islam. However, there is a Prophet's tradition that reads: "Whoever vows something that represents an obedience to God, he[/she] should do this, but whoever vows a disobedience he[/she] should never do it" [reported by al-Bukhari, Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi, al-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah]. Other traditions [reported by Ibn Majah, al-Tirmidhi, and al-Tabari] consider the vow of offering an additional worship or charity as an oath, so whenever one has vowed to do such a thing and does not fulfill this vow for any reason, he/she has to atone for it in the same way as the expiation for an oath [see the verse 5:89].

CHAPTER SIX

MORAL VALUES
AND MANNERS

INTRODUCTION:
MORALITY, THE ESSENCE OF GOD'S MESSAGES

God has sent His messages to the human beings for their own benefit. They submit themselves to their Creator and Lord who guides them to fulfill their potentials, individually and together, and to deal with one another fairly and kindly. God is not biased with or against any race, ethnicity, or gender, so His guidance secures absolute justice. Submitting one's self only to God means liberating it from selfishness and greed, as well as from both complexes of arrogance desperation that develop from different situations. Accordingly, the worshipper of the One God develops good relations with fellow human beings, and seeks the goodly acceptance of God in dealing with others, and the rewards of the eternal life to come through working in this world's life.

Since the creation of the first man and woman, God has stated that He would send His guidance to the human species, so that it would be saved from fear, grief and hardship [e.g. 2:38-9; 21:23-4]. In the behavior of the two sons of Adam, we see how the guidance of God inspires and nurtures the positive attitude and inclinations of the human being, and how it reaches even the wrongdoer to let him/her realize the wrongdoing and feel regret and sorrow [5:27-31]. An early Conveyor of God's message in Arabia warned the people against unfair measurement and spreading corruption on earth [e.g.17:85; 11:84-88]. God's message to the children of Israel as reported in the Quran spells out the essential moral values [2:83], which are also obvious in the Ten Commandments as reported in the Bible. The reader of the Quran does not find himself/herself far from those moral values [e.g. 6:151-3; 7:33; 16:90-1; 17:23-38; 25:63-76 etc.]. Prophet Muhammad, in summing up his mission, states that he has only been sent to support and elaborate on the ethical

virtues [reported by al-Bukhari in *al-Adab*, al-Hakim in *al-Mustadrak*, and al-Bayhaqi in *Shu'ab al-Iman*].

Moral values are connected in the Quran by the human nature as it is created by God [e.g. 30:30; 76:3; 90:10; 91:7-10]. As the human being can recognize good and evil through common sense and a sound mind, in the Quran good is called *al-ma'ruf,* the recognized [by sound nature and common sense], and evil is called *al-munkar*, the rejected [by sound nature and common sense] [e.g. 7:157; 3:104, 110; 9:71, 112; 22:41]. Both words are not only used for the message of Muhammad, but for the message of God as it has been revealed to other Prophets and conveyed by them to their peoples [e.g. 3:114; 5:78-9]. The Prophet commended actions of generosity and justice among Arabs before his message, and so praised Hatim from the tribe of Tayyi', and the alliance of the nobles, *hilf al-fudul* in which clan members pledged to be together in defending justice and fighting against injustice [reported by Ibn Hanbal]. The belief in God, His judgement, and His requital in the eternal life to come comprehensively and thoroughly guards the human morality from its depth [e.g. 2:177, 204-9; 3:133-6; 4:36; 6:151-3; 7:33, 85, 157; 11:84-88; 16:90-97, 105; 17:23-38; 23:1-11 etc.]. A tradition of the Prophet explicitly states that a believer's commitment of wrongs such as adultery, stealing, drinking and others, occurs during the absence of faith and God-consciousness [reported by Ibn Majah]. Acts of worship are meant to nurture the religiosity and morality of the believer, and this ought to be reflected in the behavior of the worshipper [e.g. 2:177; 9:54; 29:45; 107:1-7]. The law and the state aim to secure and defend moral values [22:41]. Enjoining the doing of what is right and good, *al-ma'ruf*, and forbidding the *munkar* is considered a basic responsibility of the individual, the family, different social groups, and the whole society. Every individual is required to speak up to enjoin *al-ma'ruf* and reject *al-munkar*, provided that he/she knows well what they are, and that he/she acts wisely and effectively. When freedom of expression is not secured, the believer ought to be clear in his/her mind and conscience about what should be and what should not be according to the tradition of the Prophet [reported by Muslim, Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi, al-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah]. Luqman's advice to his son in the Quran represents the family responsibility in nurturing the moral commitment in the children [31:17]. Social groups should be organized for this purpose [3:104], and the society as a whole has a common responsibility towards the social morality [3:110; 4:114].

Morality has been considered essential and should be examined thoroughly in the acceptance of a witness, the appointment of a public official, and in reporting the Prophet's traditions. A state institution, *hisba*, to inspect the public places such as streets, markets, shops, and other open areas, to secure justice and guard public safety, order, health, and decency, was connected with the moral responsibility of the state in enjoining *al-ma'ruf* and forbidding *al-munkar*. The traditions of the Prophet and his life represent an elaboration on morality in its concepts and practices, and prophethood itself was meant, according to the Quran, to be an embodiment and personification of the virtues to which God's message calls the people to follow [e.g. 2:123, 283; 3:31, 131-4, 159; 6:52, 90; 9:128; 11:88; 18:28; 33:21; 60:4-6; 68:4; 80:1-12; 93:6-11]. The moral models in the society and its moral traditions and consciousness are essential in guarding and developing morality among the individuals, families and different social groups [e.g. 2:140; 3:110; 7:164;

11:116-7; 25: 74]. The individuals, especially those gifted with leading personalities, families, and nuclear groups have their influence on the society, just as the society has its impact on its components [e.g. 5:78-9,105; 8:25,92; 11:117; 67:71]. Through interaction, individuals and society complement and support one another by nurturing, guarding, defending, and extending the moral essence of God's message.

MORAL VALUES
IN THE FAMILY, NEIGHBORHOOD, SOCIETY, AND ALL OF HUMANITY

Do you bid people to be virtuous while you forget your ownselves, and yet you recite the Book? Will you not, then, use your reason? [2:44]

أَتَأْمُرُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ بِٱلْبِرِّ
وَتَنسَوْنَ أَنفُسَكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ تَتْلُونَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ ۚ
أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

It is basic to any moral teaching that those who enjoin virtue on people should apply it to their own behavior since "*Enormously hateful is it to God that you say what you do not do*" [61:3]. The faithful should represent in their deeds what they call for in their words. The language of action can be understood by everyone whatever his/her tongue, intelligence and education may be, and it is more impressive and effective. No credibility can be given either to those who present a certain message to people, or to the message itself, unless the expounders represent the values that they preach in both their individual and their social behavior.

O you who have attained to faith! Why do you say [and preach] what you do not practice? Enormously hateful is it to God that you say what you do not practice. [61:2-3]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا
تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٢﴾ كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ أَن
تَقُولُوا۟ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٣﴾

Practicing what one preaches is basic for true faith and morality. This moral element and axiom is deepened in the believer's heart and mind by his/her consciousness of God, who "*knows the furtive glance in the eyes and whatever [is] concealed in the minds*" [40:19]. It is guided by the divine teachings which warn against making the genuine faith a mere verbal claim or formal ritual [2:44, 174], and against self-deception and deception of others [e.g. 2:204-207], and remind everyone that God knows the reality and cannot be deceived. It is essential that one who preaches certain values by words practice these values in his/her daily life. Prophets were sent to represent the values that they preached in all their dealings with people, and to be a practical example and personalized model for the ideals for which they called, and thus they provided "a light" in which the divine revelation is read [e.g. 5:15-16 according to some interpretations; 6:90; 16:44]. The character of Prophet Muhammad was described by his wife 'A'isha as a "living representation of the Quran."

وَ إِذْ
أَخَذْنَا مِيثَٰقَ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ لَا تَعْبُدُونَ
إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ وَ بِٱلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَ ذِى
ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ وَ ٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰ وَ ٱلْمَسَٰكِينِ
وَقُولُوا۟ لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا وَ أَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ
وَ ءَاتُوا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا
مِّنكُمْ وَ أَنتُم مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿٨٣﴾

And [remember] when We took this solemn pledge from the Children of Israel: "Worship none but God alone, and be good to your parents and kin, and the orphans and the needy, and speak good to people and keep up prayer, and render the purifying [welfare] dues (zakat);" then did you turn away, save a few among you, swerving aside. [2:83]

The moral values are almost identical in all the messages of God. Worshipping none but God alone should mean a consciousness of Him and an observance of His guidance in all human activities. It should be reflected in doing good and being kind to parents and relatives and to all who need help. Kind words to all people whether they are close to the person or far from him/her are as equally required as kind deeds. Keeping up the constant communication with God through prayer and paying the purifying welfare dues, *zakat*, to all those who are in need, would guard and nurture the consciousness of Him which becomes of great benefit to the individual and the society in developing the general moral values and helpfulness. However, many may not observe the moral values and genuine virtues taught by God's message, although they might continue to boast that they were its followers for a long time, or superficially observe certain required formalities.

وَ لَنَبْلُوَنَّكُم
بِشَىْءٍ مِّنَ ٱلْخَوْفِ وَ ٱلْجُوعِ وَ نَقْصٍ مِّنَ
ٱلْأَمْوَٰلِ وَ ٱلْأَنفُسِ وَ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ
وَبَشِّرِ ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ ﴿١٥٥﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ إِذَآ
أَصَٰبَتْهُم مُّصِيبَةٌ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَ إِنَّآ
إِلَيْهِ رَٰجِعُونَ ﴿١٥٦﴾ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ
صَلَوَٰتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَ رَحْمَةٌ ۖ وَ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ
هُمُ ٱلْمُهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾

And surely We will try you with something of fear and hunger, and loss of worldly goods, and of lives and of yield, but give good tidings unto the patient, who, when they are visited by an affliction, say, "Surely we belong to God, and to Him we return." It is those upon whom blessings and grace from their Lord are bestowed, and it is they who are truly guided [on the right path]. [2:155-157]

People in this life are tested through challenges of temptation and stress. What maintains human balance and stability in all cases is the constant remembrance that "*To God we surely all belong, and to Him we all return.*" [2:156] The faith in God and the eternal life to come saves the human energy from any waste as a result of conceitedness or hopelessness. Such a human balance which the worshippers of God feel is a unique blessing of faith in this life, through which these worshippers recognize constantly His favors, right guidance and grace. In the eternal life to come, the rewards of faith are far beyond any calculation or expectation: "*Surely, those who are patient in adversity will be given their reward in full, beyond all reckoning*" [39:10].

لَّيْسَ ٱلْبِرَّ أَن تُوَلُّوا۟ وُجُوهَكُمْ
قِبَلَ ٱلْمَشْرِقِ وَ ٱلْمَغْرِبِ وَ لَٰكِنَّ ٱلْبِرَّ
مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِٱللَّهِ وَ ٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْأٓخِرِ
وَ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ وَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَ ٱلنَّبِيِّۦنَ وَ ءَاتَى
ٱلْمَالَ عَلَىٰ حُبِّهِۦ ذَوِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ
وَ ٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰ وَ ٱلْمَسَٰكِينَ وَ ٱبْنَ ٱلسَّبِيلِ
وَ ٱلسَّآئِلِينَ وَ فِى ٱلرِّقَابِ وَ أَقَامَ
ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَ ءَاتَى ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَ ٱلْمُوفُونَ
بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَٰهَدُوا۟ ۖ وَ ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ فِى
ٱلْبَأْسَآءِ وَ ٱلضَّرَّآءِ وَ حِينَ ٱلْبَأْسِ
أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا۟ ۖ وَ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ
ٱلْمُتَّقُونَ ﴿١٧٧﴾

True piety and virtuousness is not in [merely] turning your faces towards the east or the west, but true piety and virtuousness is [represented] in one who believes in God and the Last Day, and the angels, and the [divine] writ[s], and the prophets, and spends of his [/her] possessions - however cherished they may be - upon the near of kin, and the orphans, and the needy, and the wayfarer, and those who ask [for help], and for the freeing of human beings from bondage, and keeps up prayer, and renders the purifying [welfare] dues (zakat); and [truly pious and virtuous are] those who keep their word whenever they promise, and are patient [and persevere] in adversity and hardship and peril. It is they who have proved themselves true, and it is they who are conscious of God. [2:177]

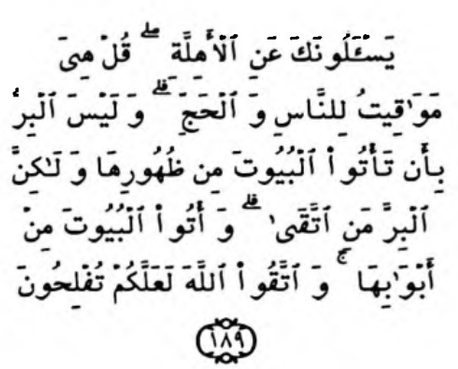
The above verse is a clear indication of what true virtue and righteousness mean in the sight of God and in His message, and a warning against being trapped by superficial formalism. Facing a certain direction in prayers should remind the believer of directing his/her whole self and all his/her energy, thoughts, and actions towards God and His guidance. The direction in prayer is not meant for itself, as east and west and all directions belong to God [2:115, 142]. The real virtue is in the genuine belief in God and the life to come and the belief in His revelation and messages, and such a genuine belief should have its implications and effects during all times and through all the avenues of life. Faith ought to be reflected in deeds, and the most important of these is resisting the temptations of selfishness and covetousness, and instead spending from one's possessions on any person who needs help, whether he/she asks for it or whether this need can be detected through any other way.

It is significant that among those who may need help is "the wayfarer". This word refers to anyone who is far from home due to his/her beliefs or for economic or political reasons. The Quran emphasizes the width of the earth through which one can move as an alternative to accepting oppression and sacrificing human dignity and rights [e.g. 4:97, 100; 29:56]. Helping and supporting one who is forced to move and leave home under pressure is taught in many verses throughout the Quran [also 2:177, 215; 4:36; 8:41; 17:26; 30:38].

Spending on freeing people from bondage is not less significant. It means that securing human freedom has been one of the main objectives of Islam for which it mobilizes all individual, social and governmental efforts in order to change the undesirable state of slavery that Islam found but never created or encouraged. The public treasury must allocate money from the collection of welfare dues (zakat) to free those who are in bondage [9:60].

Along with spending on those who need help, there are more behavioral virtues that reflect and represent the true faith, such as keeping one's word, and patience in hardship or adversity or in times of fear. Keeping up the prayer and paying the purifying welfare dues (zakat) represents permanent means to communicate with the Creator and with others in the society who need help, and so guard and nurture God-consciousness, morality and togetherness. Those who enjoy such genuine qualities are the truly virtuous, righteous and pious, while those who observe only the form and ignore the essence are not [see also 4:77; 22:37; 29:45; 107:1-7].

They ask you concerning the new moons. Say: "They serve to appoint times for people, and [so they indicate the appointed time] for the pilgrimage". It is not piety and virtue for you to go into houses through their rear; but [true] piety and virtue is to be conscious of God, and so approach houses through their proper doors, and remain conscious of God, so that you might attain success and happiness. [2:189]


يَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلْأَهِلَّةِ ۖ قُلْ هِىَ
مَوَٰقِيتُ لِلنَّاسِ وَ ٱلْحَجِّ ۗ وَ لَيْسَ ٱلْبِرُّ
بِأَن تَأْتُوا۟ ٱلْبُيُوتَ مِن ظُهُورِهَا وَ لَٰكِنَّ
ٱلْبِرَّ مَنِ ٱتَّقَىٰ ۗ وَ أْتُوا۟ ٱلْبُيُوتَ مِنْ
أَبْوَٰبِهَا ۚ وَ ٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ
١٨٩

The appearance of a new moon should be seen as a natural phenomenon, without metaphysical or superstitious connotations. It can be used for indicating a new month in the year, since in Arabia, a country which did not rely heavily on agriculture, a lunar calendar was followed on the eve of Islam, and has continued there until now. Accordingly, the religious yearly duty of pilgrimage was practiced even before Islam according to that lunar calendar, and the four sacred months in which any fighting had been forbidden were also appointed according to that calendar [9:36]. Now, in Islam, fasting and the two yearly feasts, in addition to pilgrimage, are to be practiced in certain months of the lunar year.

Studying a natural phenomenon as something related to the universe and its accurate order and laws, or benefiting practically from it as we benefit from the moon in its light and in appointing the time, represent a direct approach to the phenomenon and the use of the proper door to enter a home. But looking always for a metaphysical and often superstitious meaning for any phenomenon represents a mistaken approach to knowledge and an attempt to enter a house from the rear and to ignore the proper approach to solve a problem. Besides, observing only forms and appointed times in fulfilling religious duties, including pilgrimage, means overlooking the real purpose and the spiritual and moral essence of the religious duty. In this way, the Quran is liberating the human mind from superstition and formality mania. When a solar eclipse coincided with the death of Ibrahim, the beloved son of the Prophet, some looked to it as a miraculous sign of nature's sadness in sympathy with the Prophet. The Prophet clearly stated that stars and planets followed fixed permanent laws, and an eclipse cannot take place just for the death of a human being [reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, al-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah].

So when you have performed your acts of worship, [continue to] bear God in mind, as you would bear your own fathers in mind, or with a yet keener remembrance; there are people who say, "O Our Lord! Give to us in this world!" And such shall not partake in the [eternal] life to come. But there are others who say, "O Our Lord! Give us good in this world and good in the life to come, and keep us safe from the suffering through the fire!" These shall have their portion [of happiness] in return for what they have earned, and God is swift in reckoning. [2:200-202]

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُم مَّنَاسِكَكُمْ فَاذْكُرُوا
ٱللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ ءَابَآءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا ۗ
فَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَآ ءَاتِنَا فِى
ٱلدُّنْيَا وَمَا لَهُۥ فِى ٱلْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَٰقٍ
﴿٢٠٠﴾ وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَآ ءَاتِنَا فِى
ٱلدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِى ٱلْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً
وَقِنَا عَذَابَ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿٢٠١﴾ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ
نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا۟ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ سَرِيعُ
ٱلْحِسَابِ ﴿٢٠٢﴾

In a tribal society the identity of a person's forefathers is always kept in mind, since the person is seen merely as a part of the collective entity and an extension of his/her ancestors. Besides, a human being naturally looks to parents as the closest people to him/her, as well as the ideals and models for his/her behavior. The Quran is urging the believers in God to feel that their relation to God is stronger than any other relation that they may have, and to bear it in mind more sharply and fervently. Besides this, the Quran presents in the above verses two different types of values: one which considers only the gains of this life and accordingly emphasizes the family or tribal prestige, and another which aims to get the good of this life followed by the good of the life to come which is perceived to be inseparable from it. The believers in God enjoy the latter wider perspective, while the former type of values restricts the human being with all his/her faculties and aspirations to egotism and materialistic considerations. A believer in God is not required to ignore the good of this life, but on the other hand he/she should not forget or ignore the eternal life to come "*And seek in what God has granted you [in this world life the good of] the life to come, without forgetting, withal, your own [rightful] share in this world, and do good [to others] as God has done good to you*" [28:77]. The proper Islamic attitude strikes a balance between the present world's life and the eternal future of the life to come, and this shapes how the values of Islamic life should be.

There is among people one whose words about this world's life may please you greatly and who calls on God to witness what is in his[/her] heart; yet such a one is most stubborn in dispute. And when he[/she] turns his[/her] back, he[/she] goes about the earth, spreading corruption and destroying tillage and progeny, and God loves not corruption. And whenever it is said to him[/her], "Be conscious of God," he[/she]

وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ
مَن يُعْجِبُكَ قَوْلُهُۥ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا
وَيُشْهِدُ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا فِى قَلْبِهِۦ وَهُوَ أَلَدُّ
ٱلْخِصَامِ ﴿٢٠٤﴾ وَإِذَا تَوَلَّىٰ سَعَىٰ فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ لِيُفْسِدَ فِيهَا وَيُهْلِكَ ٱلْحَرْثَ
وَٱلنَّسْلَ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلْفَسَادَ ﴿٢٠٥﴾
وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُ ٱتَّقِ ٱللَّهَ أَخَذَتْهُ ٱلْعِزَّةُ

becomes seized by evil arrogance. Hell would suit what he[/she] deserves, and how vile a resting-place.
But there is among people one who offers his[/her] whole self for the goodly acceptance of God, and God is Most Kindly and Compassionate towards His worshippers.
O you who have attained to faith! Enter the peace, all of you, through submitting your whole selves to God, and follow not the footsteps of Satan; he is to you an evident enemy. But if you slip after the clear evidence of truth has come to you, then know that God is All-mighty All-wise. [2:204-209]

بِٱلْإِثْمِ ۚ فَحَسْبُهُۥ جَهَنَّمُ ۚ وَلَبِئْسَ
ٱلْمِهَادُ ﴿٢٠٦﴾ وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَشْرِى
نَفْسَهُ ٱبْتِغَآءَ مَرْضَاتِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ
رَءُوفٌۢ بِٱلْعِبَادِ ﴿٢٠٧﴾ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱدْخُلُوا۟ فِى ٱلسِّلْمِ كَآفَّةً وَلَا
تَتَّبِعُوا۟ خُطُوَٰتِ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَكُمْ
عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٢٠٨﴾ فَإِن زَلَلْتُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ مَا
جَآءَتْكُمُ ٱلْبَيِّنَٰتُ فَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ
عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٠٩﴾

Words should be supported and proved by deeds. However, you may hear from a person impressive words about life and his/her good intentions in it for which God is called as a witness, while this person's deeds, in contrast to his/her beautiful words, spread damage and corruption everywhere. Whenever such a pretender and claimer of values is reminded of the sharp contrast between his/her words and deeds, he/she is seized by evil arrogance and goes further in his/her vicious behavior, but such a person will end in the eternal life to come in hell. Such rhetoric-orientation is perpetually condemned in the Quran [also 2:44, 61:2-3], as it makes words meaningless and undermines trust among people, especially in speaking about values. But on the other hand, there are those who willingly devote their whole selves to God, even without any eloquent speech. A genuine whole peace of the human being should be the goal, and this cannot be achieved except through the submission of one's whole self to God, in thinking, feeling, and doing. Thus one would not be split between contradictory personalities and behaviors with different people and in different circumstances, and between words and deeds.

The parable of those who spend their possessions in the way of God is that of a grain out of which grow seven ears, in every ear a hundred grains; so God multiplies [His blessings] to whom He wills, and God is All-embracing, All-knowing. Those who spend their possessions in the way of God, and do not follow up their spending with stressing their own generosity and hurting [the feelings of] others [on whom they spend] shall have their reward with their Lord, and no fear shall they have, neither shall they grieve.

مَّثَلُ
ٱلَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَٰلَهُمْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ
كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنۢبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلَ فِى كُلِّ
كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنۢبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلَ فِى كُلِّ
سُنۢبُلَةٍ مِّا۟ئَةُ حَبَّةٍ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ يُضَٰعِفُ لِمَن
يَشَآءُ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٦١﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ
يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَٰلَهُمْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ثُمَّ لَا
يُتْبِعُونَ مَآ أَنفَقُوا۟ مَنًّا وَلَآ أَذًى ۙ لَّهُمْ
أَجْرُهُمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا

Kind words and forgiveness are better than giving charity followed by hurting, and God is All-sufficient, All-clement.

O You who have attained to faith! Do not void your giving charity by stressing your generosity and hurting others [whom you give], like one who spends out of his [/her] possessions to show off to people and believes not in God and the Last Day. His[/her] parable is that of a smooth rock with [a little] soil upon it, and then a rainstorm hits it and leaves it hard and bare. Such [persons] shall be unable to gain from all that they have earned, and God guides not those who [stubbornly] reject the truth.

And the parable of those who spend their possessions seeking the acceptance of God and their own self-assertion, is that of a garden, high and fertile: [if] heavy rain falls on it, it would double its yield, and if it receives no heavy rain, a light moisture [would bring forth fruits], and God sees well whatever you do. Would any of you like to have a garden of date-palm and vines, with running waters beneath it, and have all kinds of fruit therein for him[/her], and then be overtaken by old age, having [only] weak children [to look after him/her or the garden] - and then a fiery whirlwind smites it, and it is utterly burned up? Thus does God make the signs clear to you, so that you may give serious thought [for what you should do].

O you who have attained to faith! Spend [on those who are in need and on what the whole society needs] out of the good things which you have legitimately earned, and out of that which We bring forth for you from the earth, and choose not for your spending the bad things which you yourselves would not accept to take unless you close your eyes. And know that God is All-sufficient, Ever to be praised.

Satan assures you a prospect of poverty and bids you to do what is shameful, whereas God promises you His forgiveness and His bounty,

هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٢٦٢﴾ ۩ قَوْلٌ مَّعْرُوفٌ
وَمَغْفِرَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّن صَدَقَةٍ يَتْبَعُهَآ أَذًى ۗ
وَٱللَّهُ غَنِىٌّ حَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٦٣﴾ يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تُبْطِلُوا۟ صَدَقَـٰتِكُم بِٱلْمَنِّ
وَٱلْأَذَىٰ كَٱلَّذِى يُنفِقُ مَالَهُۥ رِئَآءَ ٱلنَّاسِ
وَلَا يُؤْمِنُ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْـَٔاخِرِ ۖ
فَمَثَلُهُۥ كَمَثَلِ صَفْوَانٍ عَلَيْهِ تُرَابٌ
فَأَصَابَهُۥ وَابِلٌ فَتَرَكَهُۥ صَلْدًا ۖ لَّا
يَقْدِرُونَ عَلَىٰ شَىْءٍ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا۟ ۗ
وَٱللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلْكَـٰفِرِينَ ﴿٢٦٤﴾
وَمَثَلُ ٱلَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَٰلَهُمُ ٱبْتِغَآءَ
مَرْضَاتِ ٱللَّهِ وَتَثْبِيتًا مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ كَمَثَلِ
جَنَّةٍۭ بِرَبْوَةٍ أَصَابَهَا وَابِلٌ فَـَٔاتَتْ أُكُلَهَا
ضِعْفَيْنِ فَإِن لَّمْ يُصِبْهَا وَابِلٌ فَطَلٌّ ۗ
وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٢٦٥﴾ أَيَوَدُّ
أَحَدُكُمْ أَن تَكُونَ لَهُۥ جَنَّةٌ مِّن نَّخِيلٍ
وَأَعْنَـٰبٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَـٰرُ لَهُۥ
فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ وَأَصَابَهُ ٱلْكِبَرُ
وَلَهُۥ ذُرِّيَّةٌ ضُعَفَآءُ فَأَصَابَهَآ إِعْصَارٌ فِيهِ
نَارٌ فَٱحْتَرَقَتْ ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمُ
ٱلْـَٔايَـٰتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٦٦﴾ يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا
ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَنفِقُوا۟ مِن طَيِّبَـٰتِ مَا
كَسَبْتُمْ وَمِمَّآ أَخْرَجْنَا لَكُم مِّنَ
ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ وَلَا تَيَمَّمُوا۟ ٱلْخَبِيثَ مِنْهُ
تُنفِقُونَ وَلَسْتُم بِـَٔاخِذِيهِ إِلَّآ أَن
تُغْمِضُوا۟ فِيهِ ۚ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَنِىٌّ
حَمِيدٌ ﴿٢٦٧﴾ ٱلشَّيْطَـٰنُ يَعِدُكُمُ ٱلْفَقْرَ
وَيَأْمُرُكُم بِٱلْفَحْشَآءِ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ يَعِدُكُم

and God is All-embracing, All-knowing. He grants wisdom to whom He wills; and whoever is granted wisdom has indeed been granted bountifully. But none bears this in mind save those who properly use their minds. And whatever you spend [on those who are in need and on what the whole society needs, or whatever you may pledge [to spend in this way], be sure that God knows it all, and the wrongdoers shall have no supporters. If you give charity openly, it is quite praisable, but if you make them reach the needy in secret, it will be even better for you, and will acquit you of some of your wrong-doing, and God is well aware of all that you do.

It is not for you [O Prophet] to make people [actually] follow the right path, since it is God [alone] who guides whom He wills [according to one's choice]. And whatever good you may spend [on the needy or for the society], is for your own good, and you should do so seeking God's acceptance, and whatever good you may spend, shall be rendered back to you in full, and you shall not be wronged.

[And give] to the needy, who because of their commitment to God's cause are restricted from going about the earth [in search of livelihood]. One who is unaware [of their circumstances] may suppose them wealthy, because of their abstinence from begging, but you can recognize them by their [characteristic] mark: they beg not importunately. And whatever of good you may spend, surely, God has knowledge of it all.

Those who spend out of their possessions [for the sake of God] by night and by day, secretly and openly, shall have their reward with their Lord; no fear need they have, and neither shall they grieve. [2:261-274]

مَّغْفِرَةٌ مِّنْهُ وَ فَضْلٌ ۗ وَ ٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ
﴿٢٦٨﴾ يُؤْتِى ٱلْحِكْمَةَ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَ مَن
يُؤْتَ ٱلْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِىَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ۗ
وَ مَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّآ أُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ﴿٢٦٩﴾
وَمَآ أَنفَقْتُم مِّن نَّفَقَةٍ أَوْ نَذَرْتُم مِّن نَّذْرٍ
فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعْلَمُهُۥ ۗ وَ مَا لِلظَّٰلِمِينَ مِنْ
أَنصَارٍ ﴿٢٧٠﴾ إِن تُبْدُوا۟ ٱلصَّدَقَٰتِ فَنِعِمَّا
هِىَ ۖ وَ إِن تُخْفُوهَا وَ تُؤْتُوهَا ٱلْفُقَرَآءَ
فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۚ وَ يُكَفِّرُ عَنكُم مِّن
سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمْ ۗ وَ ٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ
﴿٢٧١﴾ ۞ لَّيْسَ عَلَيْكَ هُدَىٰهُمْ وَ لَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
يَهْدِى مَن يَشَآءُ ۗ وَ مَا تُنفِقُوا۟ مِنْ خَيْرٍ
فَلِأَنفُسِكُمْ ۚ وَ مَا تُنفِقُونَ إِلَّا ٱبْتِغَآءَ
وَجْهِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَ مَا تُنفِقُوا۟ مِنْ خَيْرٍ يُوَفَّ
إِلَيْكُمْ وَ أَنتُمْ لَا تُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٧٢﴾ لِلْفُقَرَآءِ
ٱلَّذِينَ أُحْصِرُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ لَا
يَسْتَطِيعُونَ ضَرْبًا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ يَحْسَبُهُمُ
ٱلْجَاهِلُ أَغْنِيَآءَ مِنَ ٱلتَّعَفُّفِ تَعْرِفُهُم
بِسِيمَٰهُمْ لَا يَسْـَٔلُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ إِلْحَافًا ۗ
وَمَا تُنفِقُوا۟ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِهِۦ عَلِيمٌ
﴿٢٧٣﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَٰلَهُم بِٱلَّيْلِ
وَ ٱلنَّهَارِ سِرًّا وَ عَلَانِيَةً فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِندَ
رَبِّهِمْ وَ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَ لَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ
﴿٢٧٤﴾

One of the essential values in the Quranic teachings is spending on others from whatever one may possess [e.g.2:3]: from one's wealth to give to the poor, from one's knowledge to teach those who need to know, or from one's energy and power to help the weak, etc. Spending is mentioned in the Quran approximately fifty times, and the

believers are warned that accumulating money or spending it only on an individual luxurious life will ruin and destroy the individual as well as the whole society [e.g. 2:195; 9:34-35; 11:116-117; 17:16]. The above verses indicate how immense the reward of spending is, both in this world's life and in the life to come, whether the spending is on the needy individuals or on the society as a whole. The value of the reward can have seven hundred times that of the welfare of the initial spending, or even more [2:262], through the numerous beneficiaries of it in this world's life, and the material and moral returns of such spending on the spender himself/herself. In the eternal life to come, the reward is beyond any imagination: "*(since) no human being can imagine what blissful delights, as yet hidden, await them as a reward for what they were doing*" [32:17].

After this general statement, the verses present ethical issues related to spending. First, helping others may be undermined by boasting of one's benevolence or hurting the feelings of those who need help, and this would be like trying to grow plants on rocks [2:262-5]. Second, spending on social needs should not be a cover for illegitimate earnings, nor be from defective or useless possessions [2:267; also 3:92; 16:62]. One should resist the Satanic idea that spending on others who are in need results in individual poverty [2:268], since individual and social benefits are inseparable and always interacting, and strengthening the society will widen the individual prospects in the long run, since it adds to the potentials of production and consumption. Third, shortsightedness hurts the individual and the society as well, while widening the perspective of thinking means broad-mindedness and wisdom "*and whoever is granted wisdom has indeed been granted bountifully*" [2:269]. Fourth, spending on social needs in secret may be better for one's own morality as it nurtures self-denial, but spending openly is also good, and may be required to encourage others to do the same or even compete and do more [2:271, 274, also e.g. 3:133-134; 57:21; 83:26]. Fifth, spending on social needs should reach all the needy, whatever their beliefs may be, as the individual's responsibility is towards the society as a whole, and it cannot be limited to a certain part of it which has certain beliefs, ethnicity, gender, etc. Social rights should not be offered as a privilege for some or withheld as a pressure on others, and no discrimination is allowed by Islam in this respect as it is not for anyone to "*make people follow the right path*" [2:272]. Sixth, the need for money may be caused temporarily by being unable to move to earn one's living because of working for the cause of God or because of the pressures of its opponents [2:273]. The value of "spending" is essential in Islam, and accordingly inspires and develops many other virtues.

And hold fast, all together, to God's bond, and do not draw apart from one another, and remember God's blessing, when you were enemies and He brought your hearts together, so that by His blessings you became brothers [and sisters]; and you were on the brink of a pit of fire, but He delivered you from it. Thus does God make His messages clear to you, so that you might find guidance.

وَٱعْتَصِمُوا۟ بِحَبْلِ ٱللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا
تَفَرَّقُوا۟ ۚ وَٱذْكُرُوا۟ نِعْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ
إِذْ كُنتُمْ أَعْدَآءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ
فَأَصْبَحْتُم بِنِعْمَتِهِۦٓ إِخْوَٰنًا وَكُنتُمْ عَلَىٰ
شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِّنَ ٱلنَّارِ فَأَنقَذَكُم مِّنْهَا ۗ
كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾ وَلْتَكُن مِّنكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ

Let there be a community from among you that invites to all that is good, and enjoins the doing of what is [known by common sense and sound minds to be] right, and forbids the doing of what is [known by common sense and sound minds to be] wrong, and it is they who attain to success. And be not like those who have drawn apart from one another and have been split up after all evidence of truth has come to them; and for those is tremendous suffering in store.

On the Day [of Judgement] when some faces will shine [with happiness] and some faces will be blackened [with grief]. As for those whose faces will be blackened, [it will be said:] "Did you stubbornly deny the truth after having attained to faith? Taste, then this suffering for having stubbornly denied the truth!" But as for those whose faces will shine, they will be within God's grace, therein to abide forever. These are God's messages; We convey them to you setting forth the truth, and God wills not any injustice to all being. And to God belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on earth; and to God do all matters return. You are the best people that has ever been brought forth for [the good of] humanity: you enjoin the doing of what is [known by common sense and sound minds to be] right and forbid the doing of what is [known by common sense and sound minds to be] wrong, and believe in God. Had the People of the Book attained to [such a] faith, it would have been for their own good; among them are some who have faith, but most of them are iniquitous. [3:103-110]

إِلَى ٱلْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ
وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ ۚ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ
ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾ وَلَا تَكُونُوا۟ كَٱلَّذِينَ
تَفَرَّقُوا۟ وَٱخْتَلَفُوا۟ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَهُمُ
ٱلْبَيِّنَٰتُ ۚ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ
﴿١٠٥﴾ يَوْمَ تَبْيَضُّ وُجُوهٌ وَتَسْوَدُّ
وُجُوهٌ ۚ فَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ٱسْوَدَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ
أَكَفَرْتُم بَعْدَ إِيمَٰنِكُمْ فَذُوقُوا۟ ٱلْعَذَابَ
بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ ﴿١٠٦﴾ وَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ
ٱبْيَضَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ فَفِى رَحْمَةِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ هُمْ
فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿١٠٧﴾ تِلْكَ ءَايَٰتُ ٱللَّهِ
نَتْلُوهَا عَلَيْكَ بِٱلْحَقِّ ۗ وَمَا ٱللَّهُ يُرِيدُ
ظُلْمًا لِّلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٠٨﴾ وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِى
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ وَإِلَى
ٱللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ ٱلْأُمُورُ ﴿١٠٩﴾ كُنتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ
أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ
وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ ۗ
وَلَوْ ءَامَنَ أَهْلُ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُم ۚ
مِّنْهُمُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ ٱلْفَٰسِقُونَ
﴿١١٠﴾

Unity and fraternity of all the believers, males and females, are an essential character of the Muslim society and an inborn bearing of the faith, since the believers are required to "*hold fast all together unto the bond with God*," [2:103] and to be, "*both men and women, in charge of [and responsible for] one another*" [9:71]. However, unity and fraternity do not exclude differences that are normal and legitimate, but these differences have to be handled according to certain ways and ethics required by the teachings of the Quran and Sunna. "*To enjoin the doing of what is right and to forbid the doing of what is wrong*" is both an individual and collective right and responsibility which is connected

with the faith and cannot be violated or forsaken [see also 5:78-79], and it should be carried out by men and women [9:71]. The right of assembly for this purpose, whether it is temporary or permanent, must be secured for every individual who wishes to evolve "*a group of people who invite [others] to all that is good and enjoin the doing of what is right and forbid the doing of what is wrong*" [3:104].

A society or a community, which is united by faith and fraternity, while its individuals and groups are creative and active in maintaining the good, developing the best, and forbidding the evil, should be considered in any fair evaluation "the best that has ever been brought forth for [the good of] humanity." This is not an automatic privilege given to the Muslim by "nature" as a result of his/her relation to the faith or to the community of believers, but it is something acquired as a result of hard efforts to fulfill the moral values in one's behavior and in the society, and to maintain the doctrinal and behavioral unity of the society. The Muslims are not the "chosen people" by birth, or those who reach salvation automatically by mere faith, but they can be praised only and conditionally when they can maintain unity and personalize morality as individuals and as a society.

The believers in the earlier revelations, or the "People of the Book" are urged to adhere to the moral values of the faith as this is the genuine and true essence of the faith in God, rather than to believe in the message of Muhammad in particular "*and if they have attained to faith [inseparable from its consequent moral values], it would have been for their own good*" [3:110].

The belief in the message of Muhammad should follow - or should be ignored - as a consequence of the moral commitment. If one feels that the message is from God and Muhammad says the truth, then he/she should believe in the message and its Conveyor, but if one does not feel like this, sincerely without psychological or material temptation or pressures from individuals or from the society, it is quite natural and moral for such a person to disbelieve in the message of Muhammad and it becomes immoral to contradict by the tongue a deep conviction in the heart and mind.

What is required from the People of the Book is to adhere to the moral values of the faith, and so those who existed in Arabia at the time of the Prophet were described as "among them are believers, but most of them are perverse." They were like this even before the message of Muhammad, as the texts of the existing Bible delineate, and their disbelief in the message of Muhammad had no bearing on the Quranic report. It is a report that appraises the commitment to the moral values of the faith in God in general, not the belief in Muhammad's message in particular.

This understanding of the verse [3:110] is strongly supported by subsequent verses [3:113-115]: "*But not all of them [the People of the Book] are alike: of the People of the Book are those who stand for the right; they recite the messages of God throughout the night, and they prostate themselves [before God]. They believe in God and the Last Day; and they enjoin the doing of what is right and forbid the doing of what is wrong, and vie with one another in doing good works; and these are among the righteous. And whatever good they do, they shall never be denied the reward thereof; for God has full knowledge of those who are conscious of Him.*"

One has to also keep in mind, that these Quranic reports about the People of the Book, in many cases, were related to those of them living in Arabia and known to the

Arabs in the time of the Prophet of Islam specifically, not to all of the People of the Book throughout the whole world. It can be pointed out that much of the Quranic criticism about the moral deviation or indifference of the People of the Book in Arabia at that time may now apply to contemporary Muslims in many places.

وَسَارِعُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ
وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ وَٱلْأَرْضُ
أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٣٣﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ فِى
ٱلسَّرَّآءِ وَٱلضَّرَّآءِ وَٱلْكَٰظِمِينَ ٱلْغَيْظَ
وَٱلْعَافِينَ عَنِ ٱلنَّاسِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ يُحِبُّ
ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٣٤﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا۟
فَٰحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ
فَٱسْتَغْفَرُوا۟ لِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَمَن يَغْفِرُ ٱلذُّنُوبَ
إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ وَلَمْ يُصِرُّوا۟ عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلُوا۟
وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٣٥﴾ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ جَزَآؤُهُم
مَّغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَجَنَّٰتٌ تَجْرِى مِن
تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ وَنِعْمَ
أَجْرُ ٱلْعَٰمِلِينَ ﴿١٣٦﴾

And vie with one another, hastening to forgiveness from your Lord, and to a garden as vast as the heavens and the earth, which has been readied for the God-conscious; those who spend [in His way], whether in time of plenty, or in time of hardship, and who restrain their rage, and pardon the offenses of their fellow-human beings; and God loves the good-doers. And those who, having committed a shameful deed or wronged their own selves, remember God and pray that their wrong-doing be forgiven, and who but God forgives the wrong-doing? And they do not knowingly persist in doing whatever [wrong] they might have done. These shall have as their reward forgiveness from their Lord, and gardens beneath which running waters flow, therein to abide, and how excellent is the reward for those who [whole-heartedly] work. [3:133-136]

The above verses underline certain essentials of Islamic morality. First, competition in good deeds is required and praised; it is motivated by human nature and moralized by the demarcation of borders and the definition of the area of legitimate competition. Second, the human being who is conscious of God is still a human being, and is not changed by his faith in God to become an infallible angel. The God-conscious "*may commit a shameful deed or wrong their own selves,*" but as soon as they go through such an experience, they are sensitive and sensible enough to "*remember God and pray for forgiveness for their wrongdoing and they are never obstinate in knowingly persisting in doing whatever [wrong] they may have done*" [3:135]. What is worse and more evil than the wrongdoing is the moral insensitivity and knowing persistence and indulgence in wrongdoing. A tradition of the Prophet states that all human beings are wrongdoers, but the best among wrongdoers are those who repent [reported by Ibn Hanbal, al-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah and al-Hakim]. Such persons who enjoy this sensitivity towards God's guidance have been assured of God's forgiveness as soon as they pray for it after their wrongdoing, "*and who can forgive the wrong-doing except God?*" [also 39:53-54]. Third, God-consciousness or piety is not merely to believe in certain dogma or to observe certain rituals, but to behave morally in differing circumstances. The God-conscious person should spend from his/her material possessions, knowledge or energy according to his/her means

during his/her times of ease or of hardship on those who need help, and should restrain his/her anger and pardon people when he/she is provoked or acted against wrongfully. Such virtues and moral behavior represent the essence of faith in God, and God-consciousness [also 2:177], and for those who enjoy such virtues and morality, God's blessings and rewards have been readied.

إِن تَجْتَنِبُوا۟ كَبَآئِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ
نُكَفِّرْ عَنكُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمْ وَنُدْخِلْكُم مُّدْخَلًا
كَرِيمًا ﴿٣١﴾

If you avoid the grave offenses that you are forbidden to commit, We shall remit you [minor] wrong doing, and cause you to enter an abode of honor [and bliss]. [4:31]

Islam teaches a realistic idealism, or an idealistic realism. What is enjoined by Islam may be qualified as an obligation or as a mere recommendation, and what is forbidden by Islam may be qualified as prohibited or as merely discouraged. Besides, the wrong deeds may be major or minor ones: "*Those who avoid the [truly] grave evils and shameful deeds, but they sometimes stumble - behold, your Lord is abounding in forgiveness*" [53:32]. Even among the gravest evils, there are some, like killing, which may be more serious than others. Some classical jurists have concluded that three levels can be identified in what Islam orders or forbids: essentials, needs, and refinements [e.g. see *al-Muwafaqat* by al - Shatibi]. This should not, however, permit excuses or justification for doing minor wrongs. The truly God-conscious person would not be inclined to excuse or justify a wrong deed to his/her own self; on the contrary, such a person is more inclined to self-reproach [75:2]. Besides, Muslim jurists and moralists have continuously pointed out that indulging oneself in minor wrongs and practicing them openly affects the personal probity and credibility, and so such a person should not be accepted as a witness. Furthermore, such a conceptual and behavioral habit of doing minor wrongs would more likely lead to the commitment of serious ones.

Such a realistic attitude which does not view everything as black or white is crucial in the evaluation of any human being. It opens the right path in this world's life, as well as God's acceptance and rewards in the life to come for a great number of people who may occasionally have their failures, as all human beings do. Perfectionists are encouraged and praised and will be highly rewarded, but they are urged to look realistically at the others, who are naturally the majority of people. Furthermore, such a realistic approach to idealism always encourages any gradual progress, rather than insisting on a leap towards the ideal, and frustrating all who fail to act in this way. Although God's punishment is deservedly severe for one who deliberately and knowingly commits the evil, God's grace in His guidance and His acceptance is limitless [6:147; 7:156].

وَٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا۟ بِهِۦ شَيْـًٔا ۖ
وَبِٱلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ إِحْسَٰنًا وَبِذِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ
وَٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰ وَٱلْمَسَٰكِينِ وَٱلْجَارِ ذِى

And worship God [alone], and associate not any with Him, and do good to your parents, and near of kin, and to orphans, and the needy, and the neighbor who is of kin and the neighbor who is a

stranger, and the friend by your side, and the way-farer, and those whom you rightfully possess; surely, God loves not the arrogant and boastful, those who are close-fisted, and bid others to be close-fisted, and themselves conceal whatever God has granted them out of His bounty. We have readied a shameful suffering for those who [stubbornly] reject the truth.
And those who spend out of their possessions on others to show off to people, and believe not in God and the Last Day, and any who has Satan as a soul-mate, how evil a soul-mate has he[/she]. And what [harm] would they cause themselves, if they believed in God and in the Last Day, and spent [in His way] out of that with which God has provided them? And God has full knowledge of them. God does not wrong [anyone] by as much as an atom's weight, and if it be a good [deed], He multiplies it [in His recompensation], and grants out of His grace a mighty reward. [4:36-40]

ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ وَ ٱلْجَارِ ٱلْجُنُبِ وَ ٱلصَّاحِبِ
بِٱلْجَنۢبِ وَ ٱبْنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ وَ مَا مَلَكَتْ
أَيْمَـٰنُكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَن كَانَ
مُخْتَالًا فَخُورًا ﴿٣٦﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يَبْخَلُونَ
وَيَأْمُرُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ بِٱلْبُخْلِ وَ يَكْتُمُونَ مَآ
ءَاتَىٰهُمُ ٱللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ ۗ وَ أَعْتَدْنَا
لِلْكَـٰفِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُّهِينًا ﴿٣٧﴾ وَ ٱلَّذِينَ
يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَٰلَهُمْ رِئَآءَ ٱلنَّاسِ وَ لَا
يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَ لَا بِٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْـَٔاخِرِ ۗ
وَمَن يَكُنِ ٱلشَّيْطَـٰنُ لَهُۥ قَرِينًا فَسَآءَ قَرِينًا
﴿٣٨﴾ وَ مَاذَا عَلَيْهِمْ لَوْ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ
وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْـَٔاخِرِ وَ أَنفَقُوا۟ مِمَّا رَزَقَهُمُ
ٱللَّهُ ۚ وَ كَانَ ٱللَّهُ بِهِمْ عَلِيمًا ﴿٣٩﴾ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ ۖ وَ إِن تَكُ حَسَنَةً
يُضَـٰعِفْهَا وَ يُؤْتِ مِن لَّدُنْهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٤٠﴾

Worshipping God alone is connected in God's messages with doing good to people with whom the believer has relationships at different levels. This starts with the parents, and includes those who are close to the person within the family or those who are close to him/her in the residence area such as the neighbors, who may or may not be relatives. Besides this, the first of the above verses enjoins caring for the friend by one's side who may be one's spouse or a close friend, in addition to co-workers and those who work for a person or serve him/her, including, in the past, slaves. Islam does not accept slavery in principle, but allows it to exist with certain rules that would lead to terminating it. Stating human equality, justice and cooperation as principles, restricting the sources of slavery to legitimate war while forbidding kidnapping and slave trade, widening the outlets for the obligatory and voluntary release of slaves by the individuals and the state, and requiring a treatment of the slave equal to that of the master; all such requirements make slavery meaningless. If all these Islamic measures had been properly applied, slavery would have ended.

Doing good must go beyond those who are close to the person so as to include all who are in need in the society as a whole, such as the orphans and the needy. It is significant that Islam includes the "wayfarer" who faces trouble out of his/her home, in its list of those who may need help whatever this person's wealth may be at home. As Islam teaches universality and moving all over the world [e.g. 4:97, 100; 29:56], it helps those who face problems during such moving.

Since spending on the needy persons is a moral value that Islam teaches, two

immoral attitudes are condemned: one is miserliness and the other is showiness. Although spending on the needy just to show off one's generosity may not hurt those who are in need, it hurts morality itself, whether it be the individual's morality or the public's morality. God has full knowledge of intentions and does not ignore an atom's weight in His requital. His guidance aims to develop morality and God-consciousness through good deeds, and to urge good deeds through moral feelings and God-consciousness, without splitting one from the other.

Are you not aware of those who claim purity for [and they are thus commending] themselves? Nay, but it is God only who causes to grow in purity [and judges and commends the inside of] whomever He wills, and they will not be wronged by a single slender thread. Consider, how they attribute the falsehood they forge to God, and that by itself suffices as an evident evil-doing. [4:49-50]

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى
ٱلَّذِينَ يُزَكُّونَ أَنفُسَهُم ۚ بَلِ ٱللَّهُ يُزَكِّى
مَن يَشَآءُ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا ﴿٤٩﴾ ٱنظُرْ
كَيْفَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ٱلْكَذِبَ ۖ
وَكَفَىٰ بِهِۦٓ إِثْمًا مُّبِينًا ﴿٥٠﴾

God does not give an unconditional blank check to any individual or group, "*Not your wishful thinking, nor those of the people of the Book [will decide God's judgement in the life to come]; whoever works evil will be requited for it; and none will he[/she] find besides God as a protector or supporter*" [4:123]. Claiming purity or a privilege with God or salvation cannot be guaranteed by God for any particular person or group, "*And [both] the Jews and the Christians say: 'We are God's children and His beloved.' Say: 'Why, then, does He cause you to suffer for your wrongdoing? Nay, you are but human beings he has created. He forgives whom He wills, and causes to suffer whom He wills; and to God belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth and all that is between them, and with Him is all journey's end*" [5:18]. Muslims should never believe that they may unconditionally and permanently enjoy spiritual purity and perfection or closeness to God. They are "the best community that has ever been brought forth for [the good of] humanity" as long as they "enjoin the doing of what is right and forbid the doing of what is wrong" [3:110]. However, requiring that a believer should not boast about his spiritual purities or closeness to God does not mean that he/she cannot indicate his/her intellectual capabilities and other credentials and experiences as a candidate for a certain position. Prophet Joseph offered a good precedent in this respect when he said to the king of Egypt: "*Place me in charge of the store-houses of the land; behold, I shall be a well-guarding and knowing keeper*" [12:55].

God does command you to render back all with which you have been entrusted to those who are entitled to it, and whenever you rule over people, to rule with justice. Excellent is what God exhorts

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَن تُؤَدُّوا۟ ٱلْأَمَٰنَٰتِ إِلَىٰٓ أَهْلِهَا
وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُم بَيْنَ ٱلنَّاسِ أَن تَحْكُمُوا۟
بِٱلْعَدْلِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُم بِهِۦٓ ۗ إِنَّ

you to do; surely, God is All-hearing, All-seeing. [4:58]

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًۢا بَصِيرًا ﴿٥٨﴾

Here is a clear divine command about honesty in its different forms. God commands that all that one is entrusted with whether it be confidential information, a material deposit or an authority entrusted by the people to a public official, should be kept safe and returned in the best possible shape to whom it is due in the appointed time. It is significant that the following part of the same verse commands one who rules over people or between certain parties to rule with justice, as such a responsibility is included in what one may be entrusted with. Justice is a moral value and a legal principle as well. It is comprehensive, for it covers all human relations and dealings, whether private or public. Justice is required in the family: between spouses, between parents and children, among the children themselves, between the nuclear family and the extended family, and finally between the family and the community at large. At the public level, justice may be political, administrative, socio-economic, judicial and international. The following verse [4:59] deals specifically with the relations between the rulers and the ruled, which is dealt with in a later chapter. Classical jurists emphasized that justice in its comprehensive concept, as well as the human benefit whether individual or social, are the main goals of the Islamic law in all its details.

Whoever intercedes with a fine manner shall have a share in its blessings; and whoever intercedes in a bad way will be held liable [and has to answer for] his[/her] part in it; and God watches and requites for everything. [4:85]

مَّن
يَشْفَعْ شَفَٰعَةً حَسَنَةً يَكُن لَّهُۥ نَصِيبٌ
مِّنْهَا ۖ وَمَن يَشْفَعْ شَفَٰعَةً سَيِّئَةً يَكُن لَّهُۥ
كِفْلٌ مِّنْهَا ۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ
مُّقِيتًا ﴿٨٥﴾

The Quran urges the believer to have a positive and moral stand whenever this is required and is possible. A witness of any event has an obligation to testify and to say the truth [e.g. 2:282-283; 4:112, 114, 135; 5:8, 106-8; 22:30; 25:72; 85:2]. The Muslim community has to enjoin the doing of what is right and forbid the doing of what is wrong. Accordingly, the believer is urged to offer his/her good offices on the condition that this would comply with the Islamic moral values and support justice and righteousness. For example, efforts to achieve reconciliation in the family or the community are encouraged and rewarded [e.g. 2:182, 224, 4:128; 8:1; 49:9-10]. However, there are people who enjoy offering their ill offices to damage human relations, and these originate from what they do or say.

And do not argue on behalf of such as betray their own selves; surely God loves not one who betrays and is vicious. They try to hide themselves from the

وَلَا تُجَٰدِلْ عَنِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَخْتَانُونَ
أَنفُسَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَن كَانَ
خَوَّانًا أَثِيمًا ﴿١٠٧﴾ يَسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ

people while they would never hide themselves from God, since He is with them when they devise in the darkness of night what they say that He does not approve of; and God does encompass [with His knowledge] all that they do. You may well argue on their behalf in this world; but who will argue with God on their behalf on the Day of Resurrection, or who will act for them?

And if anyone does evil or wrongs his own self but thereafter seeks God's forgiveness, he[/she] will find God All-forgiving, Most Gracious. And if any one commits a wrong, he[/she] commits it only to his[/her] own hurt, and God is indeed All-knowing, All-wise. But if anyone commits a wrong or an evil-doing and then casts the blame thereof on one who is innocent, he[/she] burdens himself[/herself] with the guilt of calumny and evident wickedness.

And but for God's favor upon you and His grace, some of those [who betray their own selves] would certainly have endeavored to lead you astray; yet [in fact] they will only lead their own selves astray; and to you they can do no harm in any way, as God has sent down to you the Book and wisdom and taught you the knowledge that you knew not [before]; and tremendous is the grace of God unto you.

No good is there in much of their private conversations, except such as are meant to enjoin charity, or an act of righteousness, or setting things right between people. Whoso does that, seeking God's acceptance, We shall surely grant him [/her] a mighty reward. And as for one who, after guidance has become obvious to him /her], cuts himself[/herself] off from the Conveyor of God's message and follows a path other than that of the believers, We shall leave him[/her] to that which he himself[/she herself] has chosen, and shall cause him/her to endure Hell, and how evil is such an end! [4:107-115]

ٱلنَّاسِ وَلَا يَسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ وَهُوَ
مَعَهُمْ إِذْ يُبَيِّتُونَ مَا لَا يَرْضَىٰ مِنَ
ٱلْقَوْلِ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطًا
﴿١٠٨﴾ هَٰٓأَنتُمْ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ جَٰدَلْتُمْ عَنْهُمْ فِى
ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا فَمَن يُجَٰدِلُ ٱللَّهَ عَنْهُمْ
يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ أَم مَّن يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَكِيلًا
﴿١٠٩﴾ وَمَن يَعْمَلْ سُوٓءًا أَوْ يَظْلِمْ نَفْسَهُۥ
ثُمَّ يَسْتَغْفِرِ ٱللَّهَ يَجِدِ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورًا
رَّحِيمًا ﴿١١٠﴾ وَمَن يَكْسِبْ إِثْمًا فَإِنَّمَا
يَكْسِبُهُۥ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِۦ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلِيمًا
حَكِيمًا ﴿١١١﴾ وَمَن يَكْسِبْ خَطِيٓـَٔةً أَوْ
إِثْمًا ثُمَّ يَرْمِ بِهِۦ بَرِيٓـًٔا فَقَدِ ٱحْتَمَلَ
بُهْتَٰنًا وَإِثْمًا مُّبِينًا ﴿١١٢﴾ وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ
ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ وَرَحْمَتُهُۥ لَهَمَّت طَّآئِفَةٌ
مِّنْهُمْ أَن يُضِلُّوكَ وَمَا يُضِلُّونَ إِلَّآ
أَنفُسَهُمْ ۖ وَمَا يَضُرُّونَكَ مِن شَىْءٍ ۚ
وَأَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ
وَعَلَّمَكَ مَا لَمْ تَكُن تَعْلَمُ ۚ وَكَانَ فَضْلُ ٱللَّهِ
عَلَيْكَ عَظِيمًا ﴿١١٣﴾ ۞ لَّا خَيْرَ فِى كَثِيرٍ
مِّن نَّجْوَىٰهُمْ إِلَّا مَنْ أَمَرَ بِصَدَقَةٍ أَوْ
مَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ إِصْلَٰحٍۭ بَيْنَ ٱلنَّاسِ ۚ وَمَن
يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ ٱبْتِغَآءَ مَرْضَاتِ ٱللَّهِ فَسَوْفَ
نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١١٤﴾ وَمَن يُشَاقِقِ
ٱلرَّسُولَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ ٱلْهُدَىٰ
وَيَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ نُوَلِّهِۦ مَا
تَوَلَّىٰ وَنُصْلِهِۦ جَهَنَّمَ ۖ وَسَآءَتْ مَصِيرًا
﴿١١٥﴾

The fact that the human being may betray "his/her own self" is an essential point in the moral guidance of the Quran. Self-

deception, ego-centrism, shortsightedness, greed and other moral defects may separately or collectively constitute such a complex moral disease. Arguing for a person with such defects or defending him/her may prove that others are deceived and are not able to penetrate to what is hidden in depth. Those who betray their own selves cannot speak openly; they plan secretly how to act or speak in front of people. Through such double lives, the human being loses his/her genuineness and spontaneity, and the continuous betrayal of one's own self ends in the loss of the individuality and originality of the human self. Such a loser of his/her own self cannot admit courageously to the wrong deeds that he/she planned before, and so he/she commits immoral behavior by casting the blame on others, and thus adds lying and cowardice to the behavioral signs of the inner betrayal of one's own self. In this way, the damage that such a person causes to his/her own self and to others spreads deeper and wider day after day.

The Quran presents a strong warning against such vicious betrayal of one's self. It may be significant that the historical occasion that led to the revelation of the above verses, according to some sources, was the accusation of an innocent Jew for a theft that was committed by some Arabs who had embraced Islam. God's guidance used the occasion to teach Muslims how justice should not be shaken by human whims, and how it should be protected against those who betray their own selves. On the opposite side, the Quran presents the picture of those who have found and assured their own selves through positive activities which they practice openly, extending benevolence and goodness in the society and reconciling people who have split from one another [4:114]. Such social and moral activists, who are motivated by God-consciousness, are commended and will be rewarded highly in the eternal life to come.

Another principle of great value has been presented in the above Quranic verses with regard to Islamic morality and legality. Although moral and legal basics can be felt by human intellect and common sense, specific rules should be identified and explained to the public in order to institute true moral or legal responsibility. God's guidance should reach the people in a clear and crystallized form so that they would be responsible for following it [4:115]. Responsibility for violating this guidance can only be constituted after such a moral or legal education is presented to the public, because only then can one be certain that the violator is separating himself/herself knowingly and willingly from the way of the Prophet and following a path other than that of the believers. This significant requirement in the Islamic morality and legality places serious responsibility on all the educational institutions in the Islamic society: the family, the school, the mosque and all houses of worship, the mass media, and the state which is at the head of all institutions, although it should not suppress or dominate them.

Not your wishful thinking, nor that of the People of the Book [will decide God's judgement in the life to come]; whoever works evil will be requited for it; and none will he[/she] find besides God as a protector or supporter. [4:123]

لَّيْسَ
بِأَمَانِيِّكُمْ وَلَآ أَمَانِيِّ أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ ۗ مَن
يَعْمَلْ سُوٓءًا يُجْزَ بِهِۦ وَلَا يَجِدْ لَهُۥ مِن
دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا ﴿١٢٣﴾

According to the Quran, every individual will be judged on the Day of Judgement according to his/her own merits [19:80, 95]. There will be no group privilege to any particular believers, even those who believe in the truth, since a true belief should affect the intentions and deeds or the inward and outward of the believer and these will be a decisive factor in God's judgement and requital. Therefore, intentions and deeds are equally required in God's guidance and cannot be separated from one another [notice the connection of the faith and good deeds in many Quranic verses: e.g. 2:25, 62, 82, 3:57; 5:69; 16:97; 18:30; 88, 107; 34:37, 40:40; see also 7:42, 9:94, 105; 10:14; 16:32; 36:54; 42:15; 99:7-8]. All the believers in God's messages, whether they are Muslims or People of the Book who believe in earlier revelations, are warned in the above verses against wishful thinking about a collective group salvation or reward in the eternal life to come.

Those who come to believe, and then stubbornly deny the truth, and again come to believe, and again stubbornly deny the truth, and thereafter grow stubborn in their denial of the truth, they will have no means for God to forgive them, nor to guide them [against their will] to any [right] way.
Let the hypocrites know that grievous suffering awaits them. Those who take the deniers of the truth as their patrons and supporters; in preference to the believers; do they seek power and high standing with them? But all power and supremacy belong to God [alone].
And He has enjoined upon you in this Book that whenever you hear people stubbornly deny the truth of God's messages and mock at them, you avoid their company until they plunge into some other talk, or else you will surely become like them. God will gather the hypocrites with those who stubbornly deny the truth in hell.
Those who but wait upon you, and if a victory comes to you from God, say, "Were we not on your side?" But if those who deny the truth get a share, they say, "Did we not guard your interest and defend you against the believers [in Muhammad]?" God will judge between you all on the Day of Resurrection; and God will never grant those who deny the truth any way over the believers.
The hypocrites seek to deceive God, while it is He who causes them to be deceived [by their

إِنَّ
ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ثُمَّ كَفَرُوا۟ ثُمَّ ءَامَنُوا۟ ثُمَّ
كَفَرُوا۟ ثُمَّ ٱزْدَادُوا۟ كُفْرًا لَّمْ يَكُنِ ٱللَّهُ
لِيَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ وَلَا لِيَهْدِيَهُمْ سَبِيلًۢا ﴿١٣٧﴾
بَشِّرِ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ بِأَنَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا
﴿١٣٨﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يَتَّخِذُونَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ أَوْلِيَآءَ
مِن دُونِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۚ أَيَبْتَغُونَ عِندَهُمُ
ٱلْعِزَّةَ فَإِنَّ ٱلْعِزَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا ﴿١٣٩﴾
وَقَدْ نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِى ٱلْكِتَٰبِ أَنْ إِذَا
سَمِعْتُمْ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ يُكْفَرُ بِهَا وَيُسْتَهْزَأُ
بِهَا فَلَا تَقْعُدُوا۟ مَعَهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَخُوضُوا۟
فِى حَدِيثٍ غَيْرِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّكُمْ إِذًا مِّثْلُهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ جَامِعُ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ وَٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ فِى
جَهَنَّمَ جَمِيعًا ﴿١٤٠﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يَتَرَبَّصُونَ
بِكُمْ فَإِن كَانَ لَكُمْ فَتْحٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ قَالُوٓا۟ أَلَمْ
نَكُن مَّعَكُمْ وَإِن كَانَ لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ نَصِيبٌ
قَالُوٓا۟ أَلَمْ نَسْتَحْوِذْ عَلَيْكُمْ وَنَمْنَعْكُم مِّنَ
ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۚ فَٱللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ يَوْمَ
ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۚ وَلَن يَجْعَلَ ٱللَّهُ لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ
عَلَى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَبِيلًا ﴿١٤١﴾ إِنَّ
ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ يُخَٰدِعُونَ ٱللَّهَ وَهُوَ خَٰدِعُهُمْ

own selves]. And when they rise to pray, they rise reluctantly, showing off to the people, but seldom do they remember God [sincerely]. They are wavering all the time between these and those, while they are [truly] neither to these nor to those; and any whom God lets go astray, you can never find for him[/her] any [right] way.

O you have attained to faith! Do not take those who stubbornly reject the truth as patrons and supporters in preference to the believers; do you desire to place before God clear evidence against yourselves? Surely the hypocrites shall be in the lowest depth of the fire; and you will find none who could support them; save those who repent and live righteously and hold fast to God ['s guidance] and are sincere in their faith in God alone, as these are together with the believers, and in time God will grant to all believers a mighty reward. [4:137-146]

وَ إِذَا قَامُوٓاْ إِلَى ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ قَامُواْ
كُسَالَىٰ يُرَآءُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ وَ لَا يَذْكُرُونَ
ٱللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿١٤٢﴾ مُّذَبْذَبِينَ بَيْنَ ذَٰلِكَ
لَآ إِلَىٰ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ وَ لَآ إِلَىٰ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ ۚ وَ مَن
يُضْلِلِ ٱللَّهُ فَلَن تَجِدَ لَهُۥ سَبِيلًا ﴿١٤٣﴾
يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا تَتَّخِذُواْ
ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ أَوْلِيَآءَ مِن دُونِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۚ
أَتُرِيدُونَ أَن تَجْعَلُواْ لِلَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ سُلْطَٰنًا
مُّبِينًا ﴿١٤٤﴾ إِنَّ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ فِى ٱلدَّرْكِ
ٱلْأَسْفَلِ مِنَ ٱلنَّارِ وَ لَن تَجِدَ لَهُمْ نَصِيرًا
﴿١٤٥﴾ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ تَابُواْ وَ أَصْلَحُواْ
وَ ٱعْتَصَمُواْ بِٱللَّهِ وَ أَخْلَصُواْ دِينَهُمْ لِلَّهِ
فَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ مَعَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۖ وَ سَوْفَ يُؤْتِ
ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١٤٦﴾

The Quran repeatedly exposes and condemns those who pretend to be Muslims while they hate Islam and Muslims and work continuously but secretly against them [e.g. 2:8-20; 4:88-91; 9:42-59, 61-69, 73-98, 101, 107-110, 124-125; 24:47-50; 33:12-20, 60-62; 47:20-32; 48:6; 15-16, 58:14-19; 59:11-12 60:1-6; 63:1-11]. Hypocrisy is both an individual immorality as it causes the person to conduct his/her life through dishonesty and cowardice, and meanwhile it is a destructive evil for the society and its security as well. It became a serious ill in Medina, since at that time Muslims could reach some power because their early city-state had been established. The internal enemies could not resist this popularity of Islam in Medina, and so they pretended to be Muslims while supporting under the surface any enemy of Islam. The Quran points out their alliance with the enemies while they claimed to be Muslims [59:11-12], and thus exposed their change of face and opportunism. It considers them morally and practically worse than those who stubbornly but openly denied the truth [4:137-145], underlines their cowardice, deceptiveness and lying [9:42- 52], and warns the Muslims against trusting them or considering them as they pretend to be [9:42-3, 56-57, 62, 64-68, 83, 86-87, 93-98, 101; 47:20-32; 63:1-6]. These internal enemies may act openly to split the Muslims through establishing rival institutions and even houses of worship [9:107- 110].

Although the hypocrites might be known by some of their reactions and actions [47:29-30], the Quran has chosen just to warn them [33:60-62] as it might not be suitable for the benefit of the Muslims and for the message of Islam to open an additional battle front with those who pretended to be Muslims. Besides, the Islamic justice requires concrete evidence to judge and act against any people, and such evidence may be impossible

to ascertain about those who hold their emotional and material treachery in the darkness while they always show themselves to be believers. Considering all such circumstances, the Quran gives the hypocrites a chance to reform themselves and follow the way of virtue and righteousness [4:146-147]. A divine message does not rule out any possibility of human change, even with about 150 Quranic verses that expose and condemn the evils of hypocrisy and hypocrites.

God does not like any evil to be mentioned in public, unless it is by one who has [himself/herself] been wronged [thereby in order to complain or defend himself/herself], and God is All-hearing, All-knowing. [4:148]

لَّا يُحِبُّ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْجَهْرَ بِٱلسُّوٓءِ مِنَ
ٱلْقَوْلِ إِلَّا مَن ظُلِمَ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ سَمِيعًا
عَلِيمًا ﴿١٤٨﴾

The Quran emphasizes in this verse a general principle of Islamic justice and morality, and warns against "*spreading slander or scandals among the believers*" [24:19]. Unless one can prove his/her allegations against someone else, one cannot spread these allegations among the people, because the spreader him/herself then becomes liable to be accused of slander or libel. In the verse, the prohibition against recklessly offending others in public seems to go beyond slander or libel. Whether it would be sanctioned by law or left to moral education and observance, such a warning provides a necessary safeguard to protect the integrity of every individual, and to maintain the the public self-trust from being damaged by daily rumors about scandals. This protection also covers groups, as any collective defamation or spread of hatred and hostility against a group on religious, ethnic, professional, or other grounds is morally and legally prohibited [e.g. 49: 11-12].

On the other hand, it is also necessary to enable a wronged party of legitimate self-defence. A wronged party may complain to the authorities in order to defend its interests, even if such complaints, which may be in the form of allegations, are also mentioned in public but through a legitimate available channel for defense of human rights. In some cases, as in those of abuse of authority by a public official, such as a leading political figure, the wronged party may be the whole society, and then allegations of evil doing may be mentioned in public when there are reasonable grounds for them and no malice exists, even if there is no concrete evidence that can stand in court. A balance should always be maintained between individual and public rights in such a sensitive matter.

By means of liquor and gambling Satan seeks only to bring about enmity and hatred among you, and to bar you from the remembrance of God and from prayer. Will you not, then, desist? [5:91]

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ أَن يُوقِعَ
بَيْنَكُمُ ٱلْعَدَٰوَةَ وَٱلْبَغْضَآءَ فِى ٱلْخَمْرِ
وَٱلْمَيْسِرِ وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَن ذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ وَعَنِ
ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ ۖ فَهَلْ أَنتُم مُّنتَهُونَ ﴿٩١﴾

Maintaining the human intellect, and securing the earning of one's living by making a legitimate effort for material and human development, are essential for the human

race and its role in this world. This has been indicated in the Quran and the Prophet's traditions, and pointed out by classical jurists as being among the main goals of the Islamic law "shari'a." All forms of intoxicants, be they liquor or drugs or other forms, can affect the human intellect temporarily and/or permanently, and however hard one may try to keep himself/herself away from drunkenness, alcoholism and drug addiction, one may be unable to do so as long as intoxicants are allowed in principle. They should thus be forbidden in principle, in any amount, for any age. It is contradictory to stress the human intellect as a characteristic merit of Homo sapiens, and then to allow certain things that weaken or stop the intellectual activity of the human being. In the absence of human thinking and self-control or during their weakening, people become unconscious of their religious and moral commitments. They can also be easily provoked against one another, thus damaging their social relations and unity. As for the acquisition of money through gambling or other games of chance, this contradicts the moral values of work for material and human development and is against public interests and social justice.

It has been realized that intoxicants and gambling are a serious waste of human intellectual, psychological and physical energy wherever they are used: legally or illegally, in developed or developing countries. Driving under the influence of alcohol, alcoholism and drug-addiction in general, are the most problematic of social sufferings in the contemporary world, and allowing what is harmful with certain restrictions has proved to be inconsistent and impractical. Closing the door of evil completely is the best policy for individual and social benefits.

Say: "Evil and good are not equal, even though the abundance of the evil may impress you; so be conscious of God, O you who have minds, that [so] you may attain success. O you who have attained to faith! Do not ask about matters which, if they were to be made manifest to you may cause you hardship; if you ask about them while the Quran is being revealed, they will be made manifest to you. God has let them unindicated [and you accordingly unbound] in this respect, for God is All-forgiving, All-clement. [5:100-101]

قُل لَّا يَسْتَوِى ٱلْخَبِيثُ
وَٱلطَّيِّبُ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَكَ كَثْرَةُ ٱلْخَبِيثِ ۚ
فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ يَٰٓأُو۟لِى ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا
تَسْـَٔلُوا۟ عَنْ أَشْيَآءَ إِن تُبْدَ لَكُمْ تَسُؤْكُمْ ۖ
وَإِن تَسْـَٔلُوا۟ عَنْهَا حِينَ يُنَزَّلُ ٱلْقُرْءَانُ
تُبْدَ لَكُمْ ۖ عَفَا ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا ۗ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٌ
حَلِيمٌ ﴿١٠١﴾

Good has its value in itself, not in the number of people who do it, and evil has to be avoided however many are those who may be involved in it and the forms which present it. People who are keen to seek God's guidance should not go far in asking for laws that order and forbid every particular detail. It is now known that a developed society would rely on the family, general and religious education, mass media and social awareness and tradition rather than on law and law enforcement to reform the society. The Prophet teaches in his traditions "Do not ask me about matters which I leave unspoken," and "God has commanded obligations that you should never neglect, and has marked

bounds that you should never transgress, and left knowingly certain matters out of His grace, so do not ask about them" [reported by Ibn Kathir in his commentary on the verse 5:101]. Believers have to know that permissibility is the general principle in human activities other than beliefs and worship, unless something is specifically ordered or forbidden, and that the area of the forbidden is narrow. Moreover, they should keep in mind that education and morality are more effective than legislation and law enforcement, and that God-consciousness can reach where no authority can .

Do not revile those upon whom others call instead of God [or those who call upon them], lest they -out of spite- revile God in their ignorance. Thus have We let each people see their own doing as good as they wish. In the end, to their Lord they must all return, and He shall then make them realize truly all that they did. [6:108]

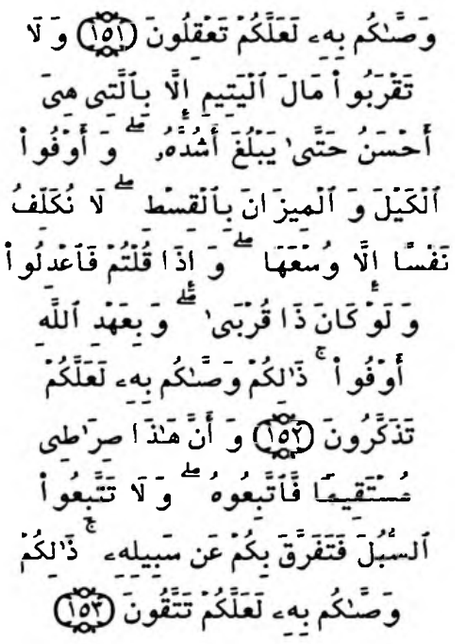
وَلَا تَسُبُّوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ
فَيَسُبُّوا۟ ٱللَّهَ عَدْوًۢا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ
زَيَّنَّا لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ عَمَلَهُمْ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِم
مَّرْجِعُهُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ
١٠٨

A believer can argue with others in the most logical and impressive way [16:125], as long as a dialogue seems to be constructive and leading to a better mutual understanding, but he/she should refrain from any argument that seems futile and offensive [29:46]. In all cases, reviling what others call upon instead of God, or those who call upon them, is neither logical nor wise, since this tarnishes the image of Islam and its followers, and it may provoke others to insult Muslims in their beliefs and revile God. It has been repeatedly emphasized in the Quran that all differences among people in matters of faith will be judged by God on the Day of Judgement, when all human beings return to Him in the life to come, and that He alone knows what is in every person's heart and all his/her circumstances and abilities [e.g. 2:113; 3:55; 4:141; 5:48, 105; 6:60, 108, 164; 10:23, 93; 16: 124; 22:69; 29:8; 31:15; 32:25; 39:3, 7, 46; 43:17]. Accordingly, people of different beliefs should maintain peaceful and constructive co-existence in their relations, and develop mutual understanding and co-operation locally and universally, instead of provoking conflicts or hurt feelings through words or actions without benefit to the truth or to the believers.

Say: "Come, let me convey unto you what God has forbidden to you: that you associate any with Him, and be good to your parents, and kill not your children for fear of poverty; it is We who provide sustenance for you as well for them, and do not come close to [committing] shameful deeds, whether open or secret, and you take not life which God has made sacred except [when you have the] right; this has He

قُلْ تَعَالَوْا۟ أَتْلُ مَا حَرَّمَ رَبُّكُمْ
عَلَيْكُمْ ۖ أَلَّا تُشْرِكُوا۟ بِهِۦ شَيْـًٔا ۖ
وَبِٱلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ إِحْسَٰنًا ۖ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوٓا۟
أَوْلَٰدَكُم مِّنْ إِمْلَٰقٍ ۖ نَّحْنُ نَرْزُقُكُمْ
وَإِيَّاهُمْ ۖ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا۟ ٱلْفَوَٰحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ
مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ ۖ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا۟ ٱلنَّفْسَ
ٱلَّتِى حَرَّمَ ٱللَّهُ إِلَّا بِٱلْحَقِّ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ

enjoined upon you, so that you may learn wisdom .
And do not touch an orphan's property, except to improve it before he/she comes of age, and [in your dealings] give full measure and weight with equity; We do not burden any human being with more than he [/she] is able to bear, and whenever you speak, speak with justice, even if it be about one near of kin, and fulfill your pledge to God; this has been enjoined upon you, so that you may keep it in mind.
And this is My way leading straight; so do follow it, and follow not other ways for they will cause you to deviate from His way: to [all] that has He directed you, so that you might remain conscious of Him. [6:151-153]


وَصَّىٰكُم بِهِۦ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٥١﴾ وَلَا
تَقْرَبُوا۟ مَالَ ٱلْيَتِيمِ إِلَّا بِٱلَّتِى هِىَ
أَحْسَنُ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ أَشُدَّهُۥ ۖ وَأَوْفُوا۟
ٱلْكَيْلَ وَٱلْمِيزَانَ بِٱلْقِسْطِ ۖ لَا نُكَلِّفُ
نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ۖ وَإِذَا قُلْتُمْ فَٱعْدِلُوا۟
وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا قُرْبَىٰ ۖ وَبِعَهْدِ ٱللَّهِ
أَوْفُوا۟ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ وَصَّىٰكُم بِهِۦ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٥٢﴾ وَأَنَّ هَٰذَا صِرَٰطِى
مُسْتَقِيمًا فَٱتَّبِعُوهُ ۖ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا۟
ٱلسُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَن سَبِيلِهِۦ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ
وَصَّىٰكُم بِهِۦ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٥٣﴾

The basic moral values are stressed in all the messages of God through the successive Conveyors of them. Forbidding the killing of children and others except in the pursuit of justice, shameful deeds, taking unfair advantage of orphans, and cheating in dealings and in measure and weight; and enjoining being good to parents and observing justice in speech and deeds in all circumstances can be traced to all divine messages since their earliest revelations [e.g. 2:83-4; 5:27-32, 45; 7:80-85, 11:84-88; 42:13; 57:25]. It may be significant that the verse that follows the above commandments and prohibitions reads: "*And We gave Moses the Book in fulfillment of [Our Message of] doing righteousness, and clearly spelling out all things in detail, and [thus providing] guidance and grace, so that they might have faith in their [final] meeting with their Lord. And this is a Book which We have sent down and is blessed; follow it, then, and be conscious of God, so that you might be graced with His mercy ...*" [6:154-155]. This has also been emphasized in other verses such as "*And We ordained for him [Moses] in the tablets in all matters: exhorting and spelling out all things, and saying: 'Hold fast to them firmly, and command your people to hold fast to their most goodly rules'*" [7:145]. The belief in the One God and the eternal life to come urges the human being to resist egotistic and materialistic evaluation and adhere to the behavior that should be carried out. God calls people to worship Him alone and to believe in the eternal life to come for their own benefit, since consciousness of God develops moral consciousness. In the Quran, faith is inseparable from doing good and being righteous [e.g. 2:25, 62, 82, 277; 3:57; 4:57, 122, 124, 173; 5:9, 64, 93; 7:42; 10:4,9; 11:23; 13:29; 14:23; 16:77; 17:9; 18:30, 88, 107; 19:60, 96; 20:45, 82, 112; 21:94; 22:14, 23, 50, 56; 24:55; 25:70-1; 28:67, 80; 29:7, 9, 58; 30:15, 45; 31:8; 32:19; 34:4; 35:7; 38:24; 40:40; 41:8; 42:22-23, 26; 45:30; 47:2,12; 48:29; 64:9; 65:11; 84:25; 85:11; 95:6; 98:7, 103:3].

And when they commit a shameful deed, they say: "We found our forefathers doing it;" and "God has commanded us thus." Say: "Behold, never does God command what is shameful; do you attribute to God what you know not?" Say: "My Lord has commanded justice; and that you set your whole selves [to Him] at every act [and in every place] of worship, and to call upon Him, sincere in your faith in Him alone. As it was He who brought you into being in the first place, so also [to Him] you will return." Some [who accept His message] He guides, while for some straying from the right path is unavoidable; for they take devils as their patrons and supporters in preference to God, thinking that they have found the right path!

O Children of Adam! Take your adornment at every place of worship; and eat and drink, yet do not go beyond natural and reasonable limits, for God loves not those who go beyond moderation. Say: "Who has forbidden the beauty that God has brought forth for His creatures, and the good things, among the means of sustenance?" Say: "They are [lawful] in the life of this world for all who have attained to faith, and they will be theirs alone on the Day of Resurrection." Thus, clearly do We spell out these messages to those who know.

Say: "Verily, my Lord has only forbidden shameful deeds, whether outward or inward, and evil-doing and trespassing against justice and reason, and associating with God others for which He never sent down any warrant, and attributing to God that of which you have no knowledge." [7:28-33]

وَإِذَا فَعَلُوا
فَٰحِشَةً قَالُوا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهَآ ءَابَآءَنَا
وَٱللَّهُ أَمَرَنَا بِهَا ۗ قُلْ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَأْمُرُ
بِٱلْفَحْشَآءِ ۖ أَتَقُولُونَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا
تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾ قُلْ أَمَرَ رَبِّى بِٱلْقِسْطِ ۖ
وَأَقِيمُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ عِندَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ
وَٱدْعُوهُ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ ٱلدِّينَ ۚ كَمَا بَدَأَكُمْ
تَعُودُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾ فَرِيقًا هَدَىٰ وَفَرِيقًا حَقَّ
عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلضَّلَٰلَةُ ۚ إِنَّهُمُ ٱتَّخَذُوا ٱلشَّيَٰطِينَ
أَوْلِيَآءَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُم
مُّهْتَدُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ ۞ يَٰبَنِىٓ ءَادَمَ خُذُوا
زِينَتَكُمْ عِندَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَكُلُوا وَٱشْرَبُوا
وَلَا تُسْرِفُوٓا ۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُسْرِفِينَ
﴿٣١﴾ قُلْ مَنْ حَرَّمَ زِينَةَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّتِىٓ
أَخْرَجَ لِعِبَادِهِۦ وَٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ مِنَ ٱلرِّزْقِ ۚ
قُلْ هِىَ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ
ٱلدُّنْيَا خَالِصَةً يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ
نُفَصِّلُ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾ قُلْ
إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّىَ ٱلْفَوَٰحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا
وَمَا بَطَنَ وَٱلْإِثْمَ وَٱلْبَغْىَ بِغَيْرِ ٱلْحَقِّ
وَأَن تُشْرِكُوا بِٱللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزِّلْ بِهِۦ
سُلْطَٰنًا وَأَن تَقُولُوا عَلَى ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا
تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

The human intellect is an essential human merit which has to be used in making decisions and consequently constitutes free choice. Following blindly what the forefathers thought and did, or claiming that God determines what the human being does, means, in fact, an abolition or negligence of the essential human merit of free choice that should be based on using the human intellect, as well as an advancing of false excuses and ground-

less reasons. Common sense should reject such claims and excuses, and one should realize that God does not determine evil deeds; He only enjoins justice and creates every human being privileged with intellectual capability, free choice and individual responsibility. Accepting God's guidance or losing it is an individual and initial free choice, that leads to inevitable spiritual and social consequences: "*Thus, as for one who gives [to others] and is conscious of God and believes in the truth of the ultimate good, We shall make easy the path towards [ultimate] ease. But as for one who is miserly and thinks that he[/she] is self-sufficient and calls the ultimate good a lie, we shall make easy the path towards hardship*" [92:5-10].

Another essential principle presented in the above verses is that God's guidance does not bar the human being from the legitimate pleasures of this life. The Children of Adam ought to seek the beauties of both the body and the spirit, in a moderate and balanced way. Physical pleasures are instinctively desired by human beings as human beings, and they are legitimate as long as they are enjoyed without excessiveness or self-indulgence. Prohibiting what is allowed by God is not less sinful than allowing what is prohibited by Him. What is definitely prohibited by God is not the moderate enjoyment of the pleasures of life without causing harm to oneself or to others, but the enjoyment of what is shameful, evil and unjust. People may be inclined to observe physical restrictions rather than observing the moral bounds, and the right direction should be maintained. The Quran is not in favor of overdone self-suppression, world rejection, and exaggerated austerity that may lead to self-annihilation.

And beware of that you may be tested with [through this life], as the consequences [of actions] do not befall in particular the evildoers from among you to the exclusion of others; and know that God is severe in retribution. [8:25]

وَٱتَّقُوا۟ فِتْنَةً لَّا تُصِيبَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ مِنكُمْ خَآصَّةً ۖ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ شَدِيدُ ٱلْعِقَابِ ﴿٢٥﴾

This verse underlines the mutual interaction between the individual and the society, and consequently the required balance between the interests of both. The individual does not live in a vacuum, and the society is not merely a collection of individuals. On the other hand, the society is not a block in which the individuals are compressed and the individuality of each can be ignored. Individual behavior has its effects on the society, and social circumstances have their effects on the individual. The misbehavior of certain individuals does not only hurt them in particular, but its negative effects befall the whole society. A tradition of the Prophet likens the society to partners in a ship; if any one of them tries to make a hole in his/her part of the ship the whole ship will sink and all partners will be drowned, and so the safety of all obligates preventing such a partner's attempt and restricting his/her rights of ownership and freedom of action in this respect [reported by al-Bukhari, Ibn Hanbal, al-Tirmidhi]. It is therefore essential to build an awareness of mutual rights and obligations in the individual-society relations, and realizing their structural coherence provides a sound basis for consequent moral and legal responsibilities [see also the following comment on 11:113].

And lean not on the evil doers, lest the fire [of evil] should touch you [in this world's life and in the life to come]; and you [then] have none to protect you apart from God, and then you fail to find any support. [11:113]

وَ لَا تَرْكَنُوٓاْ إِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ
ظَلَمُواْ فَتَمَسَّكُمُ ٱلنَّارُ وَ مَا لَكُم مِّن دُونِ
ٱللَّهِ مِنْ أَوْلِيَآءَ ثُمَّ لَا تُنصَرُونَ ﴿١١٣﴾

Here again, the Quran emphasizes the social responsibility of every individual, indicating that supporting injustice even through passivity and indifference would result in extending the harm of this injustice to the whole society including the positive and passive elements themselves, both in this present life and in the eternal life to come. Regardless of the power of those who commit injustice in this world's life, which may tempt some to side with them and others to remain passive, they will lose all their power before God in the life to come, and their present supporters will then find none to protect them apart from God, and will stand before Him abandoned and powerless [see previous comment on 8:25]. Those who struggle against injustice assure that there is still hope in the society, and so it is saved by such courageous struggles against deterioration in this present life, and from suffering God's punishment in the future afterlife. Those who struggle for justice will enjoy all the blessings of justice now, as well as God's bliss in the life to come [see also the following verses 11:116-117].

The believers, both men and women, are in charge of [and responsible for] one another: they [all] enjoin the doing of what is right, and forbid the doing of what is wrong; they keep up prayers, render the purifying welfare dues (zakat) and obey God and the Conveyor of His Message. It is they upon whom God will bestow His grace; surely, God is All-mighty, All-wise. [9:71]

وَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ
وَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَآءُ بَعْضٍ ۚ
يَأْمُرُونَ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَ يَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ
ٱلْمُنكَرِ وَ يُقِيمُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَ يُؤْتُونَ
ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَ يُطِيعُونَ ٱللَّهَ وَ رَسُولَهُۥٓ ۚ
أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ ٱللَّهُ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ
حَكِيمٌ ﴿٧١﴾

The verse states the equal responsibility of every male and female about each other and about the whole society, and the parallel responsibility of the whole society towards every male and female. It is an early declaration of the equal and mutual rights and responsibilities of men and women, and of the interacting relations of the individual and the society. Enjoining the doing of what is good and right and forbidding the doing of what is evil and wrong underlines the active role of each male and female individual in the society to guard that society's values as a result of their commitment to Islam. Worshipping the one God, fulfilling the individual obligations towards the society and following the divine guidance in the whole human behavior, all highlight the main features of the Islamic society that every man and woman have to observe and maintain through their active efforts in their individual behavior and social activities.

إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِٱلْعَدْلِ وَ ٱلْإِحْسَٰنِ وَ إِيتَآئِ
ذِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ وَ يَنْهَىٰ عَنِ ٱلْفَحْشَآءِ
وَ ٱلْمُنكَرِ وَ ٱلْبَغْىِ ۚ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾ وَ أَوْفُوا۟ بِعَهْدِ ٱللَّهِ إِذَا
عَٰهَدتُّمْ وَ لَا تَنقُضُوا۟ ٱلْأَيْمَٰنَ بَعْدَ
تَوْكِيدِهَا وَ قَدْ جَعَلْتُمُ ٱللَّهَ عَلَيْكُمْ كَفِيلًا ۚ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٩١﴾ وَ لَا
تَكُونُوا۟ كَٱلَّتِى نَقَضَتْ غَزْلَهَا مِنۢ بَعْدِ
قُوَّةٍ أَنكَٰثًا تَتَّخِذُونَ أَيْمَٰنَكُمْ دَخَلًۢا
بَيْنَكُمْ أَن تَكُونَ أُمَّةٌ هِىَ أَرْبَىٰ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ ۚ
إِنَّمَا يَبْلُوكُمُ ٱللَّهُ بِهِۦ ۚ وَ لَيُبَيِّنَنَّ لَكُمْ
يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ مَا كُنتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٩٢﴾
وَ لَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً
وَلَٰكِن يُضِلُّ مَن يَشَآءُ وَ يَهْدِى مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ
وَ لَتُسْـَٔلُنَّ عَمَّا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾ وَ لَا
تَتَّخِذُوٓا۟ أَيْمَٰنَكُمْ دَخَلًۢا بَيْنَكُمْ فَتَزِلَّ قَدَمٌۢ
بَعْدَ ثُبُوتِهَا وَ تَذُوقُوا۟ ٱلسُّوٓءَ بِمَا
صَدَدتُّمْ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَ لَكُمْ عَذَابٌ
عَظِيمٌ ﴿٩٤﴾ وَ لَا تَشْتَرُوا۟ بِعَهْدِ ٱللَّهِ
ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۚ إِنَّمَا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ هُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ
إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٩٥﴾ مَا عِندَكُمْ يَنفَدُ ۖ
وَ مَا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ بَاقٍ ۗ وَ لَنَجْزِيَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ
صَبَرُوٓا۟ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا۟
يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾ مَنْ عَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ
أَوْ أُنثَىٰ وَ هُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُۥ حَيَوٰةً

God commands justice, the doing of good, and giving to [one's] relatives; and He forbids all that is shameful, and that runs counter to reason, in addition to aggression; He exhorts you so that you may bear this in mind.

And fulfill your bond [that you have given] in the name of God whenever you bind yourselves by such a bond, and break not [your] oaths after having confirmed them, while you have set God as your guarantor; surely God knows all that you do. And be not like a woman who breaks completely into fibers the yarn which she [herself] has firmly spun, [by] using your oaths to deceive one another, simply because some of you may be more powerful than others. God only puts you to a test thereby, and certainly on the Day of Resurrection He shall make clear to you all that whereon you used to differ.

And had God so willed, He could surely make you all one single [homogenous] people; but He lets go astray one whom He wills [by his/her free choice allowed by God], and lets be guided aright one whom He wills; and you will surely be called to account for all that you ever did.

And do not use your oaths to deceive one another, lest [your] foot should slip after it has stood firm, and then you will have to taste the evil [consequences] of turning away [as a whole] from the way of God, and tremendous suffering will be awaiting you [in the life to come]. Hence, do not barter away your bond with God for a trifling gain. Verily, what is with God is far better for you, did you but know.

All that is with you comes to an end, but what is with God abides, and surely We grant to those who are patient and who persevere their reward according to the best that they ever did. And whosoever does a righteous deed, be it male or female, believing, We shall assuredly cause him [/her] to live a good life; and We

shall assuredly grant unto such as these their reward according to the best that they ever did. [16:90-97]

طَيِّبَةً ۖ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا
كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٧﴾

Justice is comprehensive. It should be observed in individual relations such as in the family, neighborhood, and business etc., as well as in public relations: between the rulers and the ruled in a country, and between the different countries of the world. However, the Quran urges the believers to go beyond justice to magnanimity; and thus forgiveness, kindness and generosity should prevail over dispute and strict justice [e.g. 2:109, 178, 237; 3:134, 159; 4:149; 5:13; 7:199; 24:22; 41:34; 42:40; 64;14]. The first field in which one can practice the virtues of justice and magnanimity is in the family and among one's own relatives, where many sensitivities and conflicts may develop, in spite of the family relations.

Since justice may be considered the basic virtue in human relations in general, injustice may be the basic vice, and it is equally comprehensive and has various forms and implications. Just as there are kinds and levels of virtue and magnanimity that are considered higher than mere justice, vice also has its kinds and levels, within which flagrant shamefulness and aggression may be the worst. Aggression may be at the top of injustice, as it represents a gross and open attack on others' rights. It can occur between family members, neighbors, partners and colleagues, between any two individuals or more, between the rulers and the ruled in a country, and between different countries of the world. The believers are taught to act positively in cases of dispute and conflict, and to do their best to reconcile different parties [e.g. 2:224, 228; 4:35, 114, 128; 8:1; 49:9-10]. When a confrontation occurs, they should support the party against whom aggression was committed until justice is restored, without committing another injustice [49:9]. The Quran calls wrong or evil in general "*what is rejected by human nature and common sense*"/ *munkar* in Arabic, while the good and virtue and righteousness are called "*the acceptable by human nature and common sense*"/ *ma'ruf* in Arabic [e.g. 3:104, 110, 114; 7:157; 9:71, 112; 22:41].

Keeping one's word and promise is another comprehensive virtue which should also be observed in private and public relations between individuals, between people and their authorities, and between governments. A party in an agreement may be tempted to break its obligations to get some advantages in the national or universal race for power. The believers are reminded that as soon as they bind themselves to any promise they set God Himself as a surety for themselves, and so they should honor their pledges and not untwist the yarn that they themselves have spun and made strong and thus undermine their credibility and morality. Any advantage in this life is short term, while what God offers to those who follow His guidance is everlasting. Islam does not allow a follower to try to prevail over others at any expense, as the means to a goal should be as righteousness and virtuous as that goal. All people, whatever their beliefs may be, are tested through their dealings with one another and will be accountable for whatever they do in their interactions in this world's life. God's will is not to impose His guidance on anybody, but He allows everyone to act according to his/her own free choice. Accordingly, one who uses his/her spiritual and intellectual faculties will be guided by God, while one who is egocentric,

shortsighted and stubborn will be forsaken by God and left astray [e.g. 90:10-20; 91:7-10]. God promises that anyone, male or female, who attains to faith and does righteous deeds will have a good life: in this world as a result of psychological and social balance and spiritual fulfillment, and in the eternal life to come in gardens of bliss. It is significant that the Quran repeatedly mentions men and women separately with regard to obligations and accountability, so as to underscore absolute equality in human responsibility and in the sight of God [e.g. 3:195; 4:124; 9:71-72; 16:97; 24:12, 31-32; 33:35-36; 40:40; 49:13; 71:28].

Invite [all humanity] to the way of your Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation, and argue with them in the fairest and most constructive manner; for your Lord knows best as to who strays from His path, and best knows He as to who are the right- guided.

And if you have to respond to an attack, let your response be only within the limits of the attack against you; but if you bear with patience, that is far better for those who bear with patience. Endure, then, with patience, remembering that it is none but God who gives you the strength to endure, and do not feel saddened about them nor anguished for what they may plot. Surely, God is with those who are conscious of Him, and those who withal do the best [of different possible options]. [16:125-128]

ٱدْعُ إِلَىٰ سَبِيلِ
رَبِّكَ بِٱلْحِكْمَةِ وَ ٱلْمَوْعِظَةِ ٱلْحَسَنَةِ ۖ
وَجَٰدِلْهُم بِٱلَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ
أَعْلَمُ بِمَن ضَلَّ عَن سَبِيلِهِۦ ۖ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ
بِٱلْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿١٢٥﴾ وَ إِنْ عَاقَبْتُمْ فَعَاقِبُوا۟
بِمِثْلِ مَا عُوقِبْتُم بِهِۦ ۖ وَلَئِن صَبَرْتُمْ
لَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لِّلصَّٰبِرِينَ ﴿١٢٦﴾ وَ ٱصْبِرْ وَمَا
صَبْرُكَ إِلَّا بِٱللَّهِ ۚ وَلَا تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا
تَكُ فِى ضَيْقٍ مِّمَّا يَمْكُرُونَ ﴿١٢٧﴾ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ مَعَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوا۟
وَّٱلَّذِينَ هُم مُّحْسِنُونَ ﴿١٢٨﴾

Attempts to call people to the message of God should use the means which comply with the goal and represent the virtues of the divine message. Such a presentation of Islam should be done wisely and impressively, combining logic with goodly exhortation. The person undertaking it should involve the addressees and develop a dialogue, not just impose a point of view and expect others to listen passively. The dialogue should be conducted in the most ethical and productive way, and should avoid gaining superficial believers through exerting different pressures, since belief should be based on free choice, and God knows well what is the intention of the one who invites others to Islam and the one who receives the message, and His judgement for every human being will be based on the intention of that human being.

Another important moral principle presented in the above verses is that a response to an offense should not exceed it, and that forgiveness and patience are better than reciprocity. Since "*Good and evil cannot be equal,*" one is thus urged to "*repel evil with something that is better, and so one who is hostile to you may become a close friend*" [41:34, also 23:96]. This is the high level that a believer in God should strive to reach, and "*it*

cannot be achieved except by those who exercise patience and self-restraint, and it cannot be achieved except by those who have a mighty fortune" [41:35]. The Prophet should be a model in this respect, and none but God would give him the strength for self-restraint and endurance over adversity. On the other hand, a person who practices such self-restraint should not be distressed by what his enemies may say or do against him/her, since "*God is with those who are conscious of Him [and restrain themselves] and those who do the best [of different options].*"

وَقَضَىٰ
رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ إِيَّاهُ وَبِٱلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ
إِحْسَٰنًا ۚ إِمَّا يَبْلُغَنَّ عِندَكَ ٱلْكِبَرَ
أَحَدُهُمَآ أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُل لَّهُمَآ أُفٍّ
وَلَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُل لَّهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا
﴿٢٣﴾ وَٱخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ ٱلذُّلِّ مِنَ
ٱلرَّحْمَةِ وَقُل رَّبِّ ٱرْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا
رَبَّيَانِى صَغِيرًا ﴿٢٤﴾ رَّبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا فِى
نُفُوسِكُمْ ۚ إِن تَكُونُوا۟ صَٰلِحِينَ فَإِنَّهُۥ
كَانَ لِلْأَوَّٰبِينَ غَفُورًا ﴿٢٥﴾ وَءَاتِ ذَا
ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ حَقَّهُۥ وَٱلْمِسْكِينَ وَٱبْنَ
ٱلسَّبِيلِ وَلَا تُبَذِّرْ تَبْذِيرًا ﴿٢٦﴾ إِنَّ
ٱلْمُبَذِّرِينَ كَانُوٓا۟ إِخْوَٰنَ ٱلشَّيَٰطِينِ ۖ
وَكَانَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ لِرَبِّهِۦ كَفُورًا ﴿٢٧﴾ وَإِمَّا
تُعْرِضَنَّ عَنْهُمُ ٱبْتِغَآءَ رَحْمَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكَ
تَرْجُوهَا فَقُل لَّهُمْ قَوْلًا مَّيْسُورًا ﴿٢٨﴾
وَلَا تَجْعَلْ يَدَكَ مَغْلُولَةً إِلَىٰ عُنُقِكَ وَلَا
تَبْسُطْهَا كُلَّ ٱلْبَسْطِ فَتَقْعُدَ مَلُومًا
مَّحْسُورًا ﴿٢٩﴾ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَبْسُطُ ٱلرِّزْقَ
لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَيَقْدِرُ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ بِعِبَادِهِۦ
خَبِيرًۢا بَصِيرًا ﴿٣٠﴾ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوٓا۟
أَوْلَٰدَكُمْ خَشْيَةَ إِمْلَٰقٍ ۖ نَّحْنُ نَرْزُقُهُمْ

And your Lord has ordained that you worship none but Him, and that you be good to [your] parents; should one or both attain to old age in your life, never say to them "fie" or any word that implies your weariness of them, nor chide them, but [always] speak to them respectfully. And extend to them a wing of humbleness out of compassion, and say: "My Lord, bestow Your grace upon them, as they raised me and cherished me when I was little." Your Lord knows best what is in your hearts; if you are righteous [He will forgive you your errors]; surely, He is All-forgiving to those who turn to Him again and again [in true repentance].

And render to the kindred their due rights, as well as the needy, and the wayfarer, but squander not [your possessions] senselessly.

Surely, the squanderers are in the party of the devils; and the devil has always been ungrateful to his Lord. But if you [have to] turn aside from those [who are in need], seeking God's grace [because of certain considerations] and hoping for it, then [at least] speak to them in a gentle way. And neither keep your hand chained to your neck [avoiding any spending], nor outspread forth altogether [beyond what you may afford], lest you should end in sitting [motionless] blamed and full of sorrow. Surely, your Lord grants sustenance in abundance or within certain limits unto whomever He wills; Surely, He is fully aware of His servants and sees them all. And kill not your children for fear of poverty: it is We who provide sustenance for them as

well as for you; verily, killing them is a great evil doing.

And approach not adultery or fornication; surely this is shameful and an evil way. And do not take any human being's life - which God has made sacred - except for [the pursuit of] justice. And do not take the human being's life, which is sacred according to God's law, except in [the pursuit of] justice. And if anyone has been wrongfully slain, We have empowered the one who is responsible for him [/her to pursue justice or to forgive]; but let him[/her] not go through excessive killing, if he[/she] is keen to be supported [by God and His law].

And do not touch the possession of an orphan save in the fairest manner, until he/she be of age. And fulfill the promise, for there is responsibility for whatever promise you have made.
And give full measure whenever you measure and weigh with the straight balance; this is far better [for you] and more trusted [for others who deal with you]. And never pursue that of which you have no knowledge; verily, the hearing, and the sight, and the heart - for all of these you will be accountable [on the Day of Judgement]. And walk not on the earth haughtily and exultantly; for, certainly, you cannot cut profoundly through the earth, nor reach the mountains in height. The evil of all these [previously mentioned], is hateful in the sight of your Lord. [17:23-38]

وَإِيَّاكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ قَتْلَهُمْ كَانَ خِطْـًٔا كَبِيرًا ﴿٣١﴾
وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا۟ ٱلزِّنَىٰٓ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ فَٰحِشَةً
وَسَآءَ سَبِيلًا ﴿٣٢﴾ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا۟ ٱلنَّفْسَ
ٱلَّتِى حَرَّمَ ٱللَّهُ إِلَّا بِٱلْحَقِّ ۗ وَمَن قُتِلَ
مَظْلُومًا فَقَدْ جَعَلْنَا لِوَلِيِّهِۦ سُلْطَٰنًا فَلَا
يُسْرِف فِّى ٱلْقَتْلِ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ مَنصُورًا
﴿٣٣﴾ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا۟ مَالَ ٱلْيَتِيمِ إِلَّا بِٱلَّتِى
هِىَ أَحْسَنُ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ أَشُدَّهُۥ ۚ وَأَوْفُوا۟
بِٱلْعَهْدِ ۖ إِنَّ ٱلْعَهْدَ كَانَ مَسْـُٔولًا ﴿٣٤﴾
وَأَوْفُوا۟ ٱلْكَيْلَ إِذَا كِلْتُمْ وَزِنُوا۟
بِٱلْقِسْطَاسِ ٱلْمُسْتَقِيمِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ
وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا ﴿٣٥﴾ وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ
لَكَ بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلسَّمْعَ وَٱلْبَصَرَ
وَٱلْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْـُٔولًا
﴿٣٦﴾ وَلَا تَمْشِ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا ۖ
إِنَّكَ لَن تَخْرِقَ ٱلْأَرْضَ وَلَن تَبْلُغَ
ٱلْجِبَالَ طُولًا ﴿٣٧﴾ كُلُّ ذَٰلِكَ كَانَ سَيِّئُهُۥ
عِندَ رَبِّكَ مَكْرُوهًا ﴿٣٨﴾

The above verses present essential moral values for the individual, the family, and the society. Kindness to parents is next in importance to worshipping the One God, as both express gratefulness for the previous favors of the donor. Gratefulness should be so comprehensive and sensitive that not a single small word or gesture might contradict its spirit. However, the Lord is fully aware of what is deeply set in one's heart and mind even if something wrong slips out rarely or without a true intention, and He is All-forgiving to those who are attentive and repentant.

Within the family, there is some guidance that should be observed. Relatives should be supported morally and materially. The existence and the maintenance of the family can be undermined by adultery and fornication both, as the first destroys an existing family

and the second obstructs the potentials for forming families. It is significant that mentioning extra marital sexual relations is preceded in the above verses by mentioning infanticide, and is followed in the subsequent verses by mentioning the killing of a human being, as such illegitimate sexual relations often lead to moral and physical damages for the individual, the family and the society.

In general, outside the family, and within the society as a whole, anyone who needs help should be helped by the individuals and the society. Orphans come at the top of the list of those who are in need of protection and support in the family and the society. Significantly, the verse following the one about extra-marital sexual relations talks about orphans, whose numbers can significantly increase as a result of such extra-marital relations, since in such circumstances the parent may disappear, and the child would actually be fatherless and thus close to orphanhood. The rights and wealth of orphans should be maintained and developed.

In addition there are those who are in temporary or permanent need as a result of sickness, disability, unemployment, bankruptcy, old age or other reasons, and they should be supported by their families as well as by the public treasury. The different rights of political and ideological refugees are also secured as "wayfarers" in the Quranic terminology. Since the Quran teaches the human being to be related to the whole world, and to move from one place to another seeking the security of his/her human rights, it offers political, economic and social protection on Muslim land for those who leave their homes wherever they may be settled, whatever their previous situation and wealth might have been, since they have become deprived of their original homeland and resources.

However, spending money, like earning it, has its bounds in God's guidance. Guarding the individual and social interests and balancing them, and observing that material gains not prevail over the human "essence" and the human spirituality and morality, represent the goals of the Islamic teachings in this respect. Extravagance and waste of money are not related only to the quantity of spending, but rather to its purpose, as some early explanations quoted by al-Tabari in his commentary indicated. Also, just a waste of God's gifts means ingratitude to Him, and one who wastes his/her intellectual, moral and material resources puts himself/herself in the camp of the earliest and most ungrateful creature to his Lord: Satan.

The Quran lays down specific rules regarding dealings with people. On the side of earning money, the Quran teaches that honesty in measuring and weighing should be observed, and this can apply to any judgement or evaluation, and to any form of human dealings and is not restricted merely to commercial transactions. As for human life, it is granted by God, and is secured by His law and considered sacred, except in the pursuit of justice according to Shari'a, such as in the case of a legitimate self-defense of individual or collective rights. The legitimate right of the victim in the punishment of the murderer is given to those who are closely related to him/her and this can mean the government itself, being an immensely concerned party when there are other relatives of the victim, and the only concerned party when the victim has no known relatives. The prominent commentator on the Quran, Zamakhshari (d. 1119) rightfully pointed out this matter. If killing in general is evil and condemned by God [since the earliest murder of one of Adam's children or descendants by his brother], killing innocent and defenseless children, which may be

committed mostly under the pressure of poverty or for other reasons, is the most evil attack against human life.

Concluding the essential moral values, the Quran warns against the abuses of human physical, psychological and intellectual capabilities, for all of which the human being is accountable in this life and in the eternal life to come. One should not use one's senses in violation of other's rights; on the other hand, they should not be so neglected and ignored that beliefs, feelings and decisions may occur without any basis of concrete facts or sound reasoning. Ignoring or contradicting common sense and reason may prove a lack of moral responsibility, or probably haughty hastiness and arrogance. Morality is the only guard of justice in human relations, and it urges going beyond justice to kindness and magnanimity. The belief in the One God and the eternal life to come nurtures and sharpens the moral conscience as it is guarded by God consciousness, and every immorality is felt by the believer as hateful to the beloved Lord and God.

And patiently keep yourself by the side of those who appeal to their Lord morning and evening, seeking His countenance; and let not your eyes turn away from them, seeking the attraction of this world's life; nor obey any whose heart We have let in negligence of remembering Us, as such a person follows [only] his[/her] own whims and his[/her] behavior exceeds [all] bounds [of reason and moderation]. [18:28]

وَٱصْبِرْ
نَفْسَكَ مَعَ ٱلَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُم بِٱلْغَدَوٰةِ
وَٱلْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُۥ ۖ وَلَا تَعْدُ
عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ
ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُۥ عَن
ذِكْرِنَا وَٱتَّبَعَ هَوَىٰهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُۥ فُرُطًا
﴿٢٨﴾

If it is important for anyone to carefully choose the friends to whom he/she is close and on whose friendly help he/she relies when help is needed, then this is especially essential for the Conveyor of God's message. His Companions should represent in their human behavior the values to which God's message and its Conveyor call the people. The above verse indicates that a main virtue of the companions of a messenger of God is the presence of God in their hearts and minds and in their behavior. They "*appeal to their Lord morning and evening*," not just in their prayers but in all their words and deeds, as they observe His guidance whenever they are awake and active. What is more important is that they do not appeal to God through mechanical acts of worship or social traditions, but with full consciousness of Him and seeking only His acceptance throughout their whole life: "*And they have in their minds no favor for anyone for recompense, but only seeking the countenance of his [/her] Lord the Most High*" [92:19-20].

Contrary to such people who hold God's presence in their hearts and minds, words and deeds, there are people who live in the darkness of negligence of God and His guidance, and follow only their own momentary and vacillating whims, and thus sway between extremes so that their behavior exceeds all bounds of reason, consistence, or moderation. However powerful such persons may be at a given time, they cannot bear the serious

responsibilities of changing the society and representing the values for which God's message and its Conveyor call and build on, since they are tied to the short-term attractions of this life and they only care about satisfying their momentary whims. God's message requires full consciousness and seriousness in order that a person receive it attentively and commit himself/herself to it. Therefore, Prophet Muhammad was advised to ignore frivolous people, whatever their material and social power might be. Although such ideal spirituality and morality are not needed at the same level for common people, and may rarely be found, it remains as the ideal enlightener and director.

And set forth to them the parable of two men: for one of them We provided two vineyards, and surrounded them with date-palms; and between the two We placed a field of grain. Each of those gardens yielded its produce, and never failed therein in any way, and through them, We caused a river to flow. [Abundantly] was the produce this man had. And [one day] he said to his friend in an argument: "More wealth have I than you, and more power with regard to people on my side."

And he entered his garden, having [feelings] that wronged his own self, and he said, "I do not think that this will ever perish, and I do not think that the Last Hour [that the believers mention] will [ever] come. And even if I am brought back to my Lord [as the believers say], I shall surely find [there] something better than this as a resort."

His fellow said to him, in the course of their conversation, "Do you deny Him who created you out of dust, then out of a sperm- drop, then fashioned you into a man? But as for my part, God is my Lord, and none shall I associate with my Lord. And why don't you say when you enter your garden: 'Whatever God wills [shall come to pass], and there is no power but from God [alone].' If you do see me less than you in wealth and children, it may be that my Lord will give me something better than your garden, and that He may send down on your garden a reckoned affliction from heaven that makes it [but] a slippery heap of barren dust. Or the water of the garden may

وَ ٱضۡرِبۡ لَهُم مَّثَلٗا رَّجُلَيۡنِ جَعَلۡنَا
لِأَحَدِهِمَا جَنَّتَيۡنِ مِنۡ أَعۡنَٰبٖ وَ حَفَفۡنَٰهُمَا
بِنَخۡلٖ وَ جَعَلۡنَا بَيۡنَهُمَا زَرۡعٗا ﴿٣٢﴾ كِلۡتَا
ٱلۡجَنَّتَيۡنِ ءَاتَتۡ أُكُلَهَا وَ لَمۡ تَظۡلِم مِّنۡهُ
شَيۡـٔٗاۚ وَ فَجَّرۡنَا خِلَٰلَهُمَا نَهَرٗا ﴿٣٣﴾
وَكَانَ لَهُۥ ثَمَرٞ فَقَالَ لِصَٰحِبِهِۦ وَ هُوَ
يُحَاوِرُهُۥٓ أَنَا۠ أَكۡثَرُ مِنكَ مَالٗا وَ أَعَزُّ
نَفَرٗا ﴿٣٤﴾ وَ دَخَلَ جَنَّتَهُۥ وَ هُوَ ظَالِمٞ
لِّنَفۡسِهِۦ قَالَ مَآ أَظُنُّ أَن تَبِيدَ هَٰذِهِۦٓ أَبَدٗا
﴿٣٥﴾ وَ مَآ أَظُنُّ ٱلسَّاعَةَ قَآئِمَةٗ وَ لَئِن
رُّدِدتُّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّي لَأَجِدَنَّ خَيۡرٗا مِّنۡهَا
مُنقَلَبٗا ﴿٣٦﴾ قَالَ لَهُۥ صَاحِبُهُۥ وَ هُوَ
يُحَاوِرُهُۥٓ أَكَفَرۡتَ بِٱلَّذِي خَلَقَكَ مِن
تُرَابٖ ثُمَّ مِن نُّطۡفَةٖ ثُمَّ سَوَّىٰكَ رَجُلٗا ﴿٣٧﴾
لَّٰكِنَّا۠ هُوَ ٱللَّهُ رَبِّي وَ لَآ أُشۡرِكُ بِرَبِّيٓ
أَحَدٗا ﴿٣٨﴾ وَ لَوۡلَآ إِذۡ دَخَلۡتَ جَنَّتَكَ
قُلۡتَ مَا شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ لَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِٱللَّهِۚ إِن
تَرَنِ أَنَا۠ أَقَلَّ مِنكَ مَالٗا وَ وَلَدٗا ﴿٣٩﴾
فَعَسَىٰ رَبِّيٓ أَن يُؤۡتِيَنِ خَيۡرٗا مِّن جَنَّتِكَ
وَ يُرۡسِلَ عَلَيۡهَا حُسۡبَانٗا مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ
فَتُصۡبِحَ صَعِيدٗا زَلَقًا ﴿٤٠﴾ أَوۡ يُصۡبِحَ

[by God's will] sink deep underground, so that you will never be able to find it."
And then, his fruits were encompassed [with ruin by God's will], and he remained wringing his hands over all that he had spent on his garden, which now lay empty, with only its trellises, and [now after what had happened] he said, "Would that I had never associated any with my Lord!" Thus, he had no party to support him apart from God, nor was he able to win by any means. [Through such an experience, one realizes that] protection and support come from God alone, the True One. He is the best to reward, and the best with regard to the consequences.
And set forth to them the parable of the life of this world: [it is] like water which We send down from the skies; and it goes through the earth's plants, but [in time] these [plants] would turn into dry straws, which the winds do blow away; it is [only] God who is omnipotent over everything.
Wealth and children are the adornment of this world's life, but good deeds are everlasting and far more rewarding in your Lord's sight, and are [thus] a far better source of hope. [18:32-46]

مَآوُهَا غَوْرًا فَلَن تَسْتَطِيعَ لَهُۥ طَلَبًا
﴿٤١﴾ وَ أُحِيطَ بِثَمَرِهِۦ فَأَصْبَحَ يُقَلِّبُ
كَفَّيْهِ عَلَىٰ مَآ أَنفَقَ فِيهَا وَ هِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ
عَلَىٰ عُرُوشِهَا وَ يَقُولُ يَٰلَيْتَنِي لَمْ أُشْرِكْ
بِرَبِّيٓ أَحَدًا ﴿٤٢﴾ وَ لَمْ تَكُن لَّهُۥ فِئَةٌ
يَنصُرُونَهُۥ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَ مَا كَانَ
مُنتَصِرًا ﴿٤٣﴾ هُنَالِكَ ٱلْوَلَٰيَةُ لِلَّهِ
ٱلْحَقِّ ۚ هُوَ خَيْرٌ ثَوَابًا وَ خَيْرٌ عُقْبًا ﴿٤٤﴾
وَ ٱضْرِبْ لَهُم مَّثَلَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا كَمَآءٍ
أَنزَلْنَٰهُ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ فَٱخْتَلَطَ بِهِۦ نَبَاتُ
ٱلْأَرْضِ فَأَصْبَحَ هَشِيمًا تَذْرُوهُ ٱلرِّيَٰحُ ۗ
وَ كَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ مُّقْتَدِرًا ﴿٤٥﴾
ٱلْمَالُ وَ ٱلْبَنُونَ زِينَةُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ
ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَ ٱلْبَٰقِيَٰتُ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتُ خَيْرٌ
عِندَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا وَ خَيْرٌ أَمَلًا ﴿٤٦﴾

The Quran presents parables which remind the reader of the parables of Jesus that are presented in the Gospels, as they are known. The above parables illustrate the fact that all natural resources and human work which provide individual and public wealth are means created by God, who is the prime cause and the real Creator and Giver and Donor. Human beings sometimes restrict their perception to the concrete seen causes, and do not use their higher intellectual capabilities in conceiving what is beyond the concrete sensory observation, although the latter is based on the former and comes as a natural and unescapable consequence of it. The human attitude of arrogance and irresponsibility and avoidance of commitment to actions further contribute to the human shortsightedness which make the pleasures of this life the only goal and purpose of the human being. The Quran repeatedly states, as in an early verse in the same sura (chapter): "*We have willed that all beauty on earth be a means to test human beings as to which of them is best in their deeds*" [18:7].

Many verses in the Quran repeatedly warn against being completely absorbed in the concrete attractions and pleasures of this world's life, on top of which are those of the family and wealth, and so one becomes unable to go beyond such narrow limits to think about

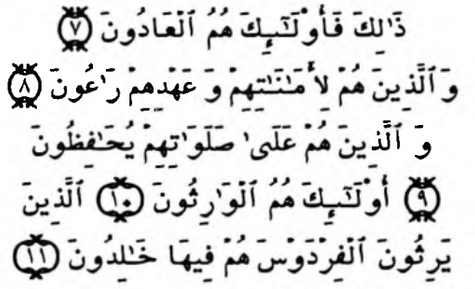
the long term and the future, and to satisfy the intellectual, psychological and moral needs and aspirations of the human being [in addition to the above verses see also as examples 3:10, 116; 8:28; 11:87; 19:77-80; 28:76-83; 34:35; 57:20; 58:17; 68:12-23; 69:28-29; 89:17-20; 92:11; 104:3-4]. In the above parable, a man who had fruitful gardens, fertile land, enormous wealth and numerous children and supporters, was tempted by his indulgence in such attractions and his consequent arrogance, to deny the prime cause of all these gifts, the real Creator and Donor. Suddenly all that he took for granted as permanent was destroyed, and he realized too late that his wager was wrong and that it led to a complete loss of everything. His friend was less wealthy and powerful, but he conceived of what the former failed to conceive, and tried in vain to call his friend's attention to something beyond the momentary attractions and calculations of this world's life. The parable obviously refers to the believers with their limited amount or lack of wealth, and the arrogant, stubborn, wealthy and powerful people who reject God's message, and the contrast in their goals and perspectives. The truth should in time prevail, and the winners and the losers in the long term would be recognized. The deceptive illusion of this short worldly life has been concisely presented and dealt with earlier in the same sura [18:46].

The presented argument between the two men in the above parable can emerge in any similar circumstances, and the Quran states about such indulgence in the temporal and temporary attractions of wealth and children: "*Know you [all] that the life of this world is but a play and a passing delight, and a [superficial] show of beauties, and [the cause of] your boastfulness with one another, and competing in greed for more and more wealth and children. Its parable is that of rain that brings forth growth which delights the tillers of the soil; but then it withers and you can see it turn yellow, and in the end it crumbles away ... and the life of this world is nothing but a joy of self-delusion*" [57:20]. This parable is very close to the previous one mentioned in the verse 18:45. The factual and moral aspects of these parables are presented in the last of the above verses [18:46]. "*Wealth and children adorn this world's life,*" and thus they are natural desires and legitimate inclinations that cannot be abandoned or condemned [7:31-32; 16:72; 25:74]. Yet, they should not be the ultimate goal in life and they have to be put into perspective through a serious use of the human intellect which considers the source, the goal, the purpose and the end of such a relatively short life in this world, and realizes that the fulfillment of human potentials and aspirations and divine justice can only be achieved in the eternal life to come.

Successful indeed are the believers; those who humble themselves in their prayers, and who turn away from idle talk, and who determinedly give the purifying [welfare] dues (zakat), and who guard their private parts [as they are mindful of their chastity, not giving way to their desires] with any but their spouses and whom they rightfully possess [in wedlock], as they are not then to be blamed. But whoever seeks to go beyond

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۝١ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ
فِى صَلَاتِهِمْ خَٰشِعُونَ ۝٢ وَٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ
عَنِ ٱللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ ۝٣ وَٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ
لِلزَّكَوٰةِ فَٰعِلُونَ ۝٤ وَٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ
لِفُرُوجِهِمْ حَٰفِظُونَ ۝٥ إِلَّا عَلَىٰٓ
أَزْوَٰجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَٰنُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ
غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ ۝٦ فَمَنِ ٱبْتَغَىٰ وَرَآءَ

that, those are truly the transgressors, and those who are observant of what they are entrusted with and what they promise, and who observe [the proper performance and the meaning of] their prayers; it is they who will be the inheritors, who will inherit the paradise, and therein they will abide. [23:1-11]



Consciousness of God is an all-time guard for observing moral values in one's daily life. Yet, the main moral values must be identified, so that people would not be faced with ambiguous mixed feelings about what is required from their religiosity and piety, and would avoid the extremes of stringency or permissiveness. The Quran, as well as the traditions (sayings and practices) of the Prophet "*Sunna*", underscore the main moral values in words and deeds. The above verses highlight some significant moral characters of the believers in the One God and in the eternal life to come. They keep up their prayers and humble themselves to God, and learn the behavioral lessons of these prayers such as God-consciousness, physical and moral cleanliness, maintenance of right direction, organization and discipline etc. [29:45]. Besides, a believer participates only in a conversation that has a purpose and meaning and turns away from idle talk. He/she is honest in using all his/her senses and faculties, and thus does not like to see, hear, taste or touch what may hurt him/her or others, physically or morally. Consequently, the believer preserves what others trust him/her with, and fulfills his/her promises.

The family is the primary field for observing the moral values to which the believer is committed. There should be no sexual relation, including with a slave-girl, except through a legitimate marriage. Slavery was only allowed by Islam temporarily and transitionally until its legal and moral principles of freedom and equality brought slavery, that had been established in Arabia and the whole world since ancient times, to an end. However, a relation with a slave girl should not be initiated merely to respond irresponsibly to instant whims and it would not be kept in the dark; it must be arranged legitimately and correctly as the Quran teaches with regard to such slave girls: *"Marry them, then, with their family's consent, and give them their dowries justly, establishing an honest wedlock, not fornication nor a secret love relationship"* [4:25].

Moreover, moral values cannot be complete unless they develop the feelings and practices of social justice and solidarity. Thus, the Quran repeatedly nurtures a human attitude for spending from one's energy or knowledge or wealth or anything that one possesses, on others who need help or for the social needs as a whole. The Quran gives the social welfare dues that every individual has to pay a certain term with a clear moral significance: "the purifying dues, zakat."

The believers with the above-mentioned merits and virtues "*will inherit the paradise, and therein they will abide.*" The belief in the eternal life to come, is therefore mentioned in the above verse to indicate an essential part of the believers' faith in the One God, which deepens and sustains the previously mentioned qualities. Such a comprehensive belief in the Lord and Guide Supreme and His just judgement and requital in the eternal

life to come is the one which rightfully guards moral values. The Prophet's traditions indicate that the true faith encompasses and inspires numerous kinds of good deeds, which include even moving something harmful from the road so that no one may be hurt [reported by Muslim, Abu Dawud, al-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah], smiling at a person to express affection and develop mutual trust [reported by al-Bukhari, Ibn Hanbal, and al-Tirmidhi], and putting a bite of food in one's wife's mouth [reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud and al-Tirmidhi].

وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ
ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُۥ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا
وَٱلْءَاخِرَةِ لَمَسَّكُمْ فِى مَآ أَفَضْتُمْ فِيهِ عَذَابٌ
عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٤﴾ إِذْ تَلَقَّوْنَهُۥ بِأَلْسِنَتِكُمْ
وَتَقُولُونَ بِأَفْوَٰهِكُم مَّا لَيْسَ لَكُم بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ
وَتَحْسَبُونَهُۥ هَيِّنًا وَهُوَ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ عَظِيمٌ
﴿١٥﴾ وَلَوْلَآ إِذْ سَمِعْتُمُوهُ قُلْتُم مَّا يَكُونُ
لَنَآ أَن نَّتَكَلَّمَ بِهَٰذَا سُبْحَٰنَكَ هَٰذَا بُهْتَٰنٌ
عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٦﴾ يَعِظُكُمُ ٱللَّهُ أَن تَعُودُوا۟
لِمِثْلِهِۦٓ أَبَدًا إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٧﴾
وَيُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمُ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ
حَكِيمٌ ﴿١٨﴾ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يُحِبُّونَ أَن تَشِيعَ
ٱلْفَٰحِشَةُ فِى ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ
أَلِيمٌ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا وَٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ
وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٩﴾ وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ
ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُۥ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ رَءُوفٌ
رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٢٠﴾ ۞ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا
تَتَّبِعُوا۟ خُطُوَٰتِ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ ۚ وَمَن يَتَّبِعْ
خُطُوَٰتِ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ فَإِنَّهُۥ يَأْمُرُ
بِٱلْفَحْشَآءِ وَٱلْمُنكَرِ ۚ وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ ٱللَّهِ
عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُۥ مَا زَكَىٰ مِنكُم مِّنْ أَحَدٍ
أَبَدًا وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُزَكِّى مَن يَشَآءُ ۗ
وَٱللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢١﴾ وَلَا يَأْتَلِ أُو۟لُوا۟
ٱلْفَضْلِ مِنكُمْ وَٱلسَّعَةِ أَن يُؤْتُوٓا۟ أُو۟لِى

Were it not for the grace of God and His mercy on you in this world's life and in the life to come, a grievous suffering would indeed have afflicted you as a result of what you indulged yourselves in. When you took it up with your tongues, and said with your own mouths something of which you had no knowledge, and you thought it to be a light matter, while it was awful in the sight of God. And why might you not say, when you heard it: "It is not right for us to speak about this; glory be to You [our Lord], this is an awesome falsehood. God does admonish you, that you should never repeat such [conduct], if you are [true] believers; and God makes [His] messages clear to you; for God is All-knowing, All-wise. Those who like scandals to circulate among the believers, will have a grievous suffering in this life and in the life to come; and God knows, while you know not. And were it not for the grace of God and His mercy on you, and that God is All-compassionate and Most Gracious, [you would be ruined indeed].

O you who have attained to faith! Follow not Satan's footsteps; for whoever follows Satan's footsteps realizes that he [but] commands what is shameful [and immoral] and counter to reason [and common sense]; and were it not for the grace of God and His mercy on you, not one of you would ever have attained purity [and righteousness]; but God does cause whomever He wills to grow in purity; and God is All-hearing, All-knowing. And let not those among you who have been graced with God's favor and ease of life, ever commit themselves

to withdraw from helping [the erring ones among] their near relatives, and the needy, and those who have left their homes in the way of God's cause; let them forgive and remit, do you not like that God should forgive you [your wrongdoing]? And God is All- forgiving, Most Gracious.

Surely those who slander chaste believing women who may not be [sometimes] sufficiently prudent are rejected [from God's grace] in this world's life and in the life to come, and awesome suffering awaits them. On the Day when their tongues, their hands, and their feet will bear witness against them, with regard to all that they were doing. On that Day, God will give them in full their just due, and they will realize that God alone is the Ultimate and most evident Truth. [24:14- 25]

The Quran teaches: *"And pursue not what you have no knowledge of; surely the hearing, the sight and the heart - all of them - you will be accountable for [on the Day of Reckoning]"* [17:36]. Accordingly, the Quran educates the Muslims that they must examine the news that they may hear, lest they should hurt some people with their ignorance [49:6], and it warns against groundless conjecturing, spying and backbiting [49:12]. These evils may culminate to slander if the accusation is about a grave, shameful deed as fornication or adultery, with which the above verses and those preceding them deal morally and legally. Circulating rumors against the integrity and reputation of someone does not only hurt the concerned individuals but also the whole society which may become in time captivated by, used to, and insensitive about, scandals. Consequently the trust in individuals and the whole society would be undermined [24:12, 19], and all will suffer from such a moral deterioration in this life and the life to come. The evil which is initiated must be stopped from the beginning, so both the one who may slander and the other who listens to a slanderer are urged to refrain from speaking evil or hearing evil [24:12, 15-16] as tongues and all human organs will bear witness on the Day of Judgement about what they have done in this present life [24:24].

However, bearing the consequences of slander in this life does not mean that a poor or needy one who may be involved in slander should be left to starve. He/she has to get his/her material needs and moral education, although such a person should be held morally and legally accountable for his evil-doing. In this moral and legal offence, as in others, the message of Islam and its law focus on a reform of the human being from within. Repentance and innate change on the side of the offender, and forgiveness and magnanimity on the side of the offended, are always encouraged and given priority over reprisal and blame [e.g., 2:109, 160, 178, 237; 3:89, 134, 159; 4:146; 5:13; 34, 39; 7:153; 23:96; 24:5, 22; 25:70; 42:40; 64:14].

وَعِبَادُ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ
ٱلَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى ٱلْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا وَإِذَا
خَاطَبَهُمُ ٱلْجَٰهِلُونَ قَالُوا۟ سَلَٰمًا ﴿٦٣﴾
وَٱلَّذِينَ يَبِيتُونَ لِرَبِّهِمْ سُجَّدًا وَقِيَٰمًا
﴿٦٤﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا ٱصْرِفْ عَنَّا
عَذَابَ جَهَنَّمَ ۖ إِنَّ عَذَابَهَا كَانَ غَرَامًا
﴿٦٥﴾ إِنَّهَا سَآءَتْ مُسْتَقَرًّا وَمُقَامًا
﴿٦٦﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ إِذَآ أَنفَقُوا۟ لَمْ يُسْرِفُوا۟
وَلَمْ يَقْتُرُوا۟ وَكَانَ بَيْنَ ذَٰلِكَ قَوَامًا ﴿٦٧﴾
وَٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا ءَاخَرَ
وَلَا يَقْتُلُونَ ٱلنَّفْسَ ٱلَّتِى حَرَّمَ ٱللَّهُ إِلَّا
بِٱلْحَقِّ وَلَا يَزْنُونَ ۚ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ
يَلْقَ أَثَامًا ﴿٦٨﴾ يُضَٰعَفْ لَهُ ٱلْعَذَابُ يَوْمَ
ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ وَيَخْلُدْ فِيهِۦ مُهَانًا ﴿٦٩﴾ إِلَّا
مَن تَابَ وَءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَٰلِحًا
فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ ٱللَّهُ سَيِّـَٔاتِهِمْ
حَسَنَٰتٍ ۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا
﴿٧٠﴾ وَمَن تَابَ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا فَإِنَّهُۥ
يَتُوبُ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ مَتَابًا ﴿٧١﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ لَا
يَشْهَدُونَ ٱلزُّورَ وَإِذَا مَرُّوا۟ بِٱللَّغْوِ
مَرُّوا۟ كِرَامًا ﴿٧٢﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِّرُوا۟
بِـَٔايَٰتِ رَبِّهِمْ لَمْ يَخِرُّوا۟ عَلَيْهَا صُمًّا
وَعُمْيَانًا ﴿٧٣﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا هَبْ
لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَٰجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّٰتِنَا قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ
وَٱجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا ﴿٧٤﴾ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ

And the [true] worshippers of the All-merciful are those who walk modestly on earth, and when the senseless address them, they reply: "Peace [be on you];" and who spend the night prostrating themselves and standing before their Lord [in worship]; and who pray "Our Lord! Avert from us a suffering of hell, for its suffering is indeed a grievous affliction; verily, how evil is it as an abode, and as a place to rest in;" and those who, when they spend, are neither prodigal nor parsimonious, but hold a just [balance] between these [two extremes];

and who never associate with the One God any other god, nor take any human being's life that God has willed to be sacred, except for [the pursuit of] justice, and do not commit adultery or fornication; and whoever does this commits evil and faces [severe] punishment, as his[/her] suffering shall be aggrandized on the Day of Resurrection [for such grave evil-doing], and he/[she] will abide therein in ignominy, someone who repents, and attains to faith, and does righteous deeds, and for such persons God will change [as a consequence of] their evil deeds into good deeds, and God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious;

and whoever repents and does righteousness, has truly turned to God in repentance; and [the true worshippers of God are] those who never bear false witness; and [who] whenever they pass by [people engaged in] idleness and frivolity, pass on with dignity; and who whenever they are reminded with the messages of their Lord, they do not fall down [deceptively or unreceptively as if they are] deaf or blind; and who pray, "O our Lord! Grant that our spouses and our offspring be of joy to our eyes, and cause us to be foremost among those who are conscious of You."

Those [who enjoy those qualities] shall be rewarded with the highest place [in paradise],

for what they patiently endured [in life]; and therein shall they be met with a greeting of welcome and peace, therein to abide; [and] how beautiful an abode and place of rest.
Say [to those who stubbornly deny the truth]: "No weight would my Lord attach to you but for [those among you] calling on Him; for those who have stubbornly rejected [God's message], determined [by their own behavior] what they will inevitably [and deservingly] meet in time." [25:63-77]

يُجْزَوْنَ ٱلْغُرْفَةَ بِمَا صَبَرُوا۟ وَيُلَقَّوْنَ
فِيهَا تَحِيَّةً وَسَلَٰمًا ﴿٧٥﴾ خَٰلِدِينَ
فِيهَا ۚ حَسُنَتْ مُسْتَقَرًّا وَمُقَامًا ﴿٧٦﴾
قُلْ مَا يَعْبَؤُا۟ بِكُمْ رَبِّى لَوْلَا دُعَآؤُكُمْ ۖ
فَقَدْ كَذَّبْتُمْ فَسَوْفَ يَكُونُ لِزَامًا ﴿٧٧﴾

Here, morality is strongly connected with, and based on, worshipping the One God. He is described in the above verse as the All-merciful and Most Gracious, as His guidance represents His grace and care for human beings, not His almightiness or command. Worshipping Him alone and the morality developed by God-consciousness is for the benefit of the human individuals and societies, as the Lord Supreme is self-sufficient. Those who never invoke but the One God and worship Him alone are receptive to God's messages as soon as they are reminded with them. Their constant consciousness of God and direction to Him provide a strong basis for their morality, since His presence in their hearts and minds guards them against a moral failing in case of enormous worldly temptation and absence of human deterrence. Accordingly, the worshippers of the Most Gracious are provided with self-restraint against foolish provocation and with self-respect that keeps them away from being engaged in frivolity. They never give false testimony, as they feel their accountability for all their words. As for their actions, they refrain from any involvement in killing and sexual offenses. In addition, the worshippers of God feel their responsibility towards what He has granted them as sustenance and thus they maintain a balanced spending, avoiding both extremes of extravagance and miserliness. The nucleus for good words and deeds and for a moral development is the family, and so the worshippers of God pray to their Lord that their spouses and offspring would be a joy to their eyes, and that their families would be models for others in the society. However, slipping once morally is human, and one can repent and continue to do good work, and true repentance changes one's account of good and bad for his/her own benefit. Those who enjoy such a high moral standard as a result of their consciousness of God have their abundant rewards in this life and in the eternal life to come.

Those to whom We gave the Book before this, they do believe in this one [as well]; and when it is recited to them, they say: "We believe therein; surely it is the truth from our Lord, and verily we have already submitted ourselves to Him." Those will be given a double reward for what they

ٱلَّذِينَ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ
مِن قَبْلِهِۦ هُم بِهِۦ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾ وَإِذَا
يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ قَالُوٓا۟ ءَامَنَّا بِهِۦٓ إِنَّهُ ٱلْحَقُّ
مِن رَّبِّنَآ إِنَّا كُنَّا مِن قَبْلِهِۦ مُسْلِمِينَ
﴿٥٣﴾ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ يُؤْتَوْنَ أَجْرَهُم مَّرَّتَيْنِ بِمَا

have patiently endured [in always following the truth], and they ward off evil with good, and spend [on others according to our guidance] out of what We have provided for them as sustenance. And when they hear idle talk, they turn away thereupon and say: "To us shall be accounted our deeds, and to you yours; peace be upon you; we seek not those who are ignorant."

صَبَرُوا۟ وَيَدْرَءُونَ بِٱلْحَسَنَةِ ٱلسَّيِّئَةَ
وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾ وَإِذَا
سَمِعُوا۟ ٱللَّغْوَ أَعْرَضُوا۟ عَنْهُ وَقَالُوا۟ لَنَآ
أَعْمَٰلُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَٰلُكُمْ سَلَٰمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ لَا
نَبْتَغِى ٱلْجَٰهِلِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾ إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِى مَنْ
أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَهْدِى مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ
وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِٱلْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾

Verily, you will not be able to guide aright everyone whom you love; but it is God who allows anyone [to decide freely whether] to accept His guidance [or not]; and He is fully aware of all who are receptive to His guidance. [28:52-56]

The above verses emphasizes the common grounds and the essence of all successive messages of God: "*And before your time We never sent any conveyor of [Our] message except with our revelation [which he had to convey to people] that there is no deity save Me, [and that] therefore you worship Me [alone]*" [21:25]. "*And within every community [that received God's message] have We sent a conveyor of [Our] message conveying [to them]: 'Worship God, and shun the powers of evil'*" [16:36]. Those who had received God's message before Muhammad, would find themselves familiar with its essence: "and we have been before submitting ourselves unto Him." Since they have been honest and sincere in considering the latest message of God and have not shown arrogance or stubbornness they will be rewarded for their belief in both earlier and later revelations. They will also be rewarded for their moral and good deeds by which they have proved their true faith, such as their consistency and steadfastness, meeting evil with good, and spending on others who are in need out of what God has provided for them as sustenance.

In addition, it is essential for those who have attained to faith that whenever they hear false accusations or any frivolous talk they turn away from it, stressing the central fact for a believer in God (and the eternal life to come) that each individual will be accounted for his/her own deeds. Such a fact has its invaluable intellectual and moral consequences: it gives the believers the feeling that they are standing on solid ground both in the present and the future and so enables them to meet their offenders with an offer of peace, as those who know cannot be equal to those who ignore the facts and the truth, "*and only those who have brain power can think deeply*" [39:9]. One cannot bring anyone whom he/she loves to what one believes to be right; everyone has his/her own mind and free will. Thus, what one is responsible for doing is to deal with others fairly and morally, and leave the decision up to each individual and the judgement of every individual to God: "*Unto God you all must return; and then He will make you truly understand all that you differed about*" [5:48].

But seek, through what God has granted you, [the good of] the life to come, without forgetting, withal, your own [rightful] share in this world, and do good as God has done to you, and seek not to commit mischief on earth, for God loves not those who commit mischief. [28:77]

وَ ٱبْتَغِ
فِيمَآ ءَاتَىٰكَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلدَّارَ ٱلْأَخِرَةَ ۖ وَ لَا
تَنسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَ أَحْسِن كَمَآ
أَحْسَنَ ٱللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ ۖ وَ لَا تَبْغِ ٱلْفَسَادَ
فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ
ٱلْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾

Islam guides those who have attained to faith to follow the middle way in their behavior. In spending money they are warned against both extremes of either wasting their resources by indulging themselves in the attractions of this world life and neglecting their moral and social responsibilities on the one hand, or withdrawing from this world and other people completely and suppressing the human self and adopting severe asceticism on the other. The middle way is to strive hard in this world and interact with people while constantly remembering that the goal in all one's striving and dealings is to observe God's guidance and achieve His goodly acceptance and rewards in the eternal life to come. In this way, one controls one's dealing with money and one's style of life, without being lost in this world's short-term attractions or deprived from enjoying them reasonably and legitimately, meanwhile fulfilling one's moral and social obligations.

That abode in the life to come, We shall grant only to those who do not seek neither haughtiness nor any mischief on earth; and the future belongs to the God-conscious. [28:83]

تِلْكَ ٱلدَّارُ ٱلْأَخِرَةُ نَجْعَلُهَا لِلَّذِينَ لَا
يُرِيدُونَ عُلُوًّا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَ لَا فَسَادًا ۚ
وَ ٱلْعَٰقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾

The belief in the eternal world to come and its fulfillment of one's potentials and aspirations and of justice for all, serves to control any corruption on earth that may be initiated or augmented by attitudes of haughtiness or greed. The incentive that morality will be rewarded generously in the eternal life to come secures its presence in this world.

And do not argue with the people of the Book, except in the most kindly and constructive way, unless it be with those who are bent on evil doing [with whom you have to avoid any argument], and say: "We believe in what has been sent down to us, and in that which has been sent down to you; Our God and your God is one; and it is to Him we [all] submit ourselves." [29:46]

وَ لَا تُجَٰدِلُوٓا۟
أَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ إِلَّا بِٱلَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ إِلَّا
ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ مِنْهُمْ ۖ وَ قُولُوٓا۟ ءَامَنَّا
بِٱلَّذِىٓ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ
وَ إِلَٰهُنَا وَ إِلَٰهُكُمْ وَٰحِدٌ وَ نَحْنُ لَهُۥ
مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾

Moral behavior is not only limited to physical deeds, but should also embody intellectual practices, and all morality, whatever its awareness may be, would be inspired, nurtured and guarded by God-consciousness. Bearing in mind the right of every human being to believe and to express his/her beliefs whatever they may be, is not only moral, but also has its strong and deeply-rooted basis in the faith itself, as all human beings will return in the end to God in the life to come, and He only will judge their differences, about the truth, which exist in this life. Besides, those who believe in the One God should realize their common grounds, and avoid provocative arguments about their differences, as all worship the One God and submit themselves to Him and His guidance. A dialogue should be conducted fairly and impressively, or it should be abandoned completely if it is realized to be futile or even damaging and harmful. It is human to find bad individuals in every community, and since an argument with such individuals would be meaningless and fruitless, it should not be accepted from the beginning, or stopped in its process, as soon as one becomes sure that the party that one is debating with is not sincere or serious about true understanding. In any case, an offending or provoking argument is never justified, even with those who ascribe divinity to others than God [6:108]. Intellectual morality has to be observed in thinking, expressing one's view, and discussing the matter with others. One has to always be honest with one's self and with others. Good listening and serious weighing of others' views according to reason, resisting the temptation of both self-conceit and the rejection of others, and accepting what is sensible and rightful from any side requires a high level of morality. Those who enjoy God-consciousness have to prove their merits in this field.

For all men and women who have submitted themselves unto God, and all believing men and believing women, and all devout men and devout women, and all truthful men and truthful women, and all men and women who patiently endure [through all the vicissitudes of life], and all men and women who humble themselves [before God], and all men and women who give in charity, and all men and women who fast [and have self-restraint], and all men and women who guard their private parts [and chastity], and for all men and women who remember and invoke God unceasingly: for them [all] has God readied forgiveness and a mighty reward. [33:35]

إِنَّ
ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ وَ ٱلْمُسْلِمَٰتِ وَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ
وَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ وَ ٱلْقَٰنِتِينَ وَ ٱلْقَٰنِتَٰتِ
وَ ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ وَ ٱلصَّٰدِقَٰتِ وَ ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ
وَ ٱلصَّٰبِرَٰتِ وَ ٱلْخَٰشِعِينَ وَ ٱلْخَٰشِعَٰتِ
وَ ٱلْمُتَصَدِّقِينَ وَ ٱلْمُتَصَدِّقَٰتِ وَ ٱلصَّٰٓئِمِينَ
وَ ٱلصَّٰٓئِمَٰتِ وَ ٱلْحَٰفِظِينَ فُرُوجَهُمْ
وَ ٱلْحَٰفِظَٰتِ وَ ٱلذَّٰكِرِينَ ٱللَّهَ كَثِيرًا
وَ ٱلذَّٰكِرَٰتِ ۙ أَعَدَّ ٱللَّهُ لَهُم مَّغْفِرَةً وَ أَجْرًا
عَظِيمًا ﴿٣٥﴾

It is significant that the above verse explicitly mentions both women and men with regard to acquiring moral virtues. The Quran stresses on several occasions the independent and equal personality and responsibility of the woman [e.g. 3:195, 33:36, 49:11]. Submission to God, a strong belief and trust in Him, devotion to Him, humbleness before

Him and constant remembrance of His guidance, watchfulness and judgement represent conceptual virtues, while truthfulness, patience and firmness in facing life's pressures, giving in charity, self-restraint and guarding one's chastity represent behavioral ones. Both types of virtue interact, as faith inspires good deeds which in turn nurture and strengthen that faith. The two are in fact frequently mentioned together throughout the Quran.

But good and evil cannot be equal. Ward off [evil then] with what is better, and behold: one between whom and you there has been enmity, may become as if he[/she] is an intimate friend. Yet [to achieve] this is not given to any but those who exercise patience and self- restraint, none but those who are endowed with a mighty fortune. [41:34-35]

وَلَا
تَسْتَوِى ٱلْحَسَنَةُ وَلَا ٱلسَّيِّئَةُ ۚ ٱدْفَعْ
بِٱلَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا ٱلَّذِى بَيْنَكَ
وَبَيْنَهُۥ عَدَٰوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُۥ وَلِىٌّ حَمِيمٌ ﴿٣٤﴾
وَمَا يُلَقَّىٰهَآ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا۟ وَمَا يُلَقَّىٰهَآ
إِلَّا ذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٣٥﴾

The Quran commands justice, but urges repeatedly a higher level of magnanimity and forgiveness and meeting the evil with what is better [e.g. 2:109, 178, 237; 3:134; 5:13; 7:199; 13:22; 15:85; 23:96; 24:22; 42:40; 43:89; 64:14]. Such a higher moral standard may turn enemies into close friends, but it requires a considerable power of self-control and a true attitude for excellence and doing the best, not only the good. Those who enjoy such merits are really endowed with a great fortune: in this life by the constant increase of friends and decrease of enemies, and in the eternal life to come by the enjoyment of the enormous rewards of God.

And whatever you are given [now] is but for the [passing] enjoyment of this world's life; while that which is with God is far better and more lasting for those who attain to faith and place their trust in their Lord, and those who avoid the grave wrong and shameful deeds, and who whenever they are moved to anger, they readily forgive; and who respond to [the call] of their Lord, and keep up prayer, and whose rule [in all matters of common concern] is based [always] on consultation among themselves, and who spend [on those who are in need and on what the society as a whole needs] out of what We provide for them as sustenance; and who, whenever an aggression is committed against them, they defend themselves; and [one has always to keep in mind that] requital for a wrong should be equal to it; but if a person

فَمَآ أُوتِيتُم مِّن
شَىْءٍ فَمَتَٰعُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَمَا عِندَ
ٱللَّهِ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَلَىٰ
رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ يَجْتَنِبُونَ
كَبَٰٓئِرَ ٱلْإِثْمِ وَٱلْفَوَٰحِشَ وَإِذَا مَا
غَضِبُوا۟ هُمْ يَغْفِرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ
ٱسْتَجَابُوا۟ لِرَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ
وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَىٰ بَيْنَهُمْ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ
يُنفِقُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ إِذَآ أَصَابَهُمُ
ٱلْبَغْىُ هُمْ يَنتَصِرُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾ وَجَزَٰٓؤُا۟
سَيِّئَةٍ سَيِّئَةٌ مِّثْلُهَا ۖ فَمَنْ عَفَا وَأَصْلَحَ

forgives and sets the matter right, his[/her] reward rests with God; surely [God] loves not the evil doers. Yet indeed if anyone does defend himself[/herself] after having been wronged, no blame attaches to such; blame only attaches to those who initially wrong [other] people and behave outrageously on earth, violating all right and justice; for such there will be a grievous suffering. But surely one who bears patiently and forgives, that is truly how matters ought to be determined. [42:36-43]

فَأَجْرُهُۥ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُحِبُّ
ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾ وَلَمَنِ ٱنتَصَرَ بَعْدَ
ظُلْمِهِۦ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ مَا عَلَيْهِم مِّن سَبِيلٍ
﴿٤١﴾ إِنَّمَا ٱلسَّبِيلُ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ يَظْلِمُونَ
ٱلنَّاسَ وَيَبْغُونَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ
ٱلْحَقِّ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٤٢﴾
وَلَمَن صَبَرَ وَغَفَرَ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ لَمِنْ عَزْمِ
ٱلْأُمُورِ ﴿٤٣﴾

Faith in God should necessarily lead each believer to place his/her trust in Him and to follow the moral values that He sets for the believers, whatever the temptations or pressures may be. God does not require us to always be perfect or infallible, but we must do our best to avoid the greatest evil deeds and abominations, and to repent when we commit a wrong deed [see also 3:135].

It is significant that when the Quran indicates the most fundamental features of the community that has attained to faith, it starts with mentioning that they should follow God's guidance and keep up prayer. Directly after this, it discusses how they conduct matters with consultation among themselves and to spend out of what they are given as sustenance on helping the individuals who need help, and on the social needs. Making decisions by collective discussion and consultation among the people was considered to be the most important issue in the sura and thus the *sural*chapter was given the name "Consultation". Collective decision-making should be a way of life, and therefore it should start from the social nucleus in the family, as the spouses have to make their decisions after mutual discussion [2:233].

The above verses differentiate between the case of an individual "anger" [42:13], and the case of facing an "aggression" or oppression [42:39-43]; while one is urged to meet the first with forgiveness, it is legitimate to meet the other with self-defense, and those who have initiated the aggression or oppression hold the responsibility for all the consequences of what they have initiated, including what may develop as a result of the practice of self-defense by the attacked party. However, forgiveness is still preferable and is stressed three times in the above verses [37, 40, 42], even as an option with self-defense, since such a reaction may urge the aggressor to cease from aggression, and does not encourage him/her to commit more aggression against the same person or against others. A choice between the two options depends on the given circumstances, especially in relation to the committed aggression, the committer of the aggression, and the would-be effect of meeting force by force or by a peaceful approach in the present and the future. In any case, the choice of meeting aggression with forgiveness requires possession of considerable physical power, since powerlessness is by no means forgiveness.

Muhammad, the Conveyor of God's message, and those who are with him are firm and unyielding towards all stubborn deniers of the truth, [yet] compassionate and merciful towards one another. You see them bow down and prostrate themselves [in prayer], seeking God's grace and [His] goodly acceptance. On their faces are their marks [of spiritual illumination], that are reflected by their prostration [before God and their spirituality]. This is their parable in the Torah, and their parable in the Gospel: [they are] like a plant which brings forth its shoot, and, then strengthens it, and it then grows out and [in the end] stands firm upon its own stem, in the way farmers admire. [Thus will God cause the believers to grow in strength], and [so] the stubborn deniers of the truth are exasperated by them [and the growth they have achieved]. God has promised those among them who attain to faith and do righteousness forgiveness, and a mighty reward [from Him]. [48:29]

مُحَمَّدٌ رَّسُولُ
ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَٱلَّذِينَ مَعَهُۥٓ أَشِدَّآءُ عَلَى
ٱلْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَآءُ بَيْنَهُمْ ۖ تَرَىٰهُمْ رُكَّعًا
سُجَّدًا يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ
وَرِضْوَٰنًا ۖ سِيمَاهُمْ فِى وُجُوهِهِم مِّنْ أَثَرِ
ٱلسُّجُودِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ مَثَلُهُمْ فِى ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ
وَمَثَلُهُمْ فِى ٱلْإِنجِيلِ كَزَرْعٍ أَخْرَجَ شَطْـَٔهُۥ
فَـَٔازَرَهُۥ فَٱسْتَغْلَظَ فَٱسْتَوَىٰ عَلَىٰ
سُوقِهِۦ يُعْجِبُ ٱلزُّرَّاعَ لِيَغِيظَ بِهِمُ
ٱلْكُفَّارَ ۗ وَعَدَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟
وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ مِنْهُم مَّغْفِرَةً
وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًۢا ﴿٢٩﴾

Dealing with compassion and magnanimity towards one another inwards, and with firmness and steadfastness towards any attack outwards, is a twofold moral value for a strong society. The Quran requires from those who prostrate themselves to God, to follow His guidance and feel humble and lenient towards one another. At the same time they should stand firmly and act strongly, not stubbornly, against the aggression of others who may interpret any softness on the part of the believers as a weakness and thus may persist in their aggression or even escalate it [see also the verse 5:54 in which the believers are described as *"humble towards the believers, self-assertive towards those who stubbornly deny the truth"*]. Those mentioned in the verse as stubborn deniers of the truth, are those who initiate aggression against the believers, while those who deal with the believers peacefully have to be met with kindness and fairness whatever their beliefs may be [see the verses 60:8-9 where the clear distinction between the two groups is made].

The verse underlines that the believers' prostration to God and its reflection on their faces and behavior is referred to in the earlier revelations, since all messages of God stress worshipping Him alone and the effects of God-consciousness on moral behavior. The parable of healthy growth of plants and their consequent good yield is very similar to those parables of the Gospels [see Mark IV 27-28]. The verse emphasizes that true faith causes a genuine moral and social growth which secures life and continuation and defends the believer against internal decay as well as against external attacks. The bearers of God's message are sent to raise such a living moral model, that allows the message to extend and

continue and makes it more effective and productive than mere words, however logical these may be. The life of the early Muslim community as represented by the Prophet and his Companions was impressive for many Arabs who might have been basically moved with the concrete practicalities of life, while others who could think deeper might be influenced by the Quran in both content and form.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟
إِن جَآءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌۢ بِنَبَإٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوٓا۟ أَن
تُصِيبُوا۟ قَوْمًۢا بِجَهَٰلَةٍ فَتُصْبِحُوا۟ عَلَىٰ مَا
فَعَلْتُمْ نَٰدِمِينَ ﴿٦﴾ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ فِيكُمْ
رَسُولَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ لَوْ يُطِيعُكُمْ فِى كَثِيرٍ مِّنَ
ٱلْأَمْرِ لَعَنِتُّمْ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ حَبَّبَ إِلَيْكُمُ
ٱلْإِيمَٰنَ وَزَيَّنَهُۥ فِى قُلُوبِكُمْ وَكَرَّهَ
إِلَيْكُمُ ٱلْكُفْرَ وَٱلْفُسُوقَ وَٱلْعِصْيَانَ ۚ
أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلرَّٰشِدُونَ ﴿٧﴾ فَضْلًا مِّنَ
ٱللَّهِ وَنِعْمَةً ۚ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٨﴾
وَإِن طَآئِفَتَانِ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ٱقْتَتَلُوا۟
فَأَصْلِحُوا۟ بَيْنَهُمَا ۚ فَإِنۢ بَغَتْ إِحْدَىٰهُمَا
عَلَى ٱلْأُخْرَىٰ فَقَٰتِلُوا۟ ٱلَّتِى تَبْغِى
حَتَّىٰ تَفِىٓءَ إِلَىٰٓ أَمْرِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ فَإِن
فَآءَتْ فَأَصْلِحُوا۟ بَيْنَهُمَا بِٱلْعَدْلِ
وَأَقْسِطُوٓا۟ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُقْسِطِينَ
﴿٩﴾ إِنَّمَا ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا۟
بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ ۚ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿١٠﴾ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا
يَسْخَرْ قَوْمٌ مِّن قَوْمٍ عَسَىٰٓ أَن يَكُونُوا۟
خَيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ وَلَا نِسَآءٌ مِّن نِّسَآءٍ عَسَىٰٓ
أَن يَكُنَّ خَيْرًا مِّنْهُنَّ ۖ وَلَا تَلْمِزُوٓا۟
أَنفُسَكُمْ وَلَا تَنَابَزُوا۟ بِٱلْأَلْقَٰبِ ۖ بِئْسَ
ٱلِٱسْمُ ٱلْفُسُوقُ بَعْدَ ٱلْإِيمَٰنِ ۚ وَمَن لَّمْ
يَتُبْ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ ﴿١١﴾

O you who have attained to faith! If any iniquitous person comes to you with any piece of information, ascertain the truth, lest you hurt people unwittingly, and afterwards become filled with remorse for what you have done. And know that among you is the Conveyor of God's Message; were he to comply with your inclinations in many cases, you would certainly suffer; but God has endeared the faith to you, and has made it beautiful in your hearts, and He has made hateful to you all denial of the truth, and all inequity, and all rebelliousness [against what is good]; such indeed are those who follow the right course, a grace and favor from God, and God is All-knowing, Truly Wise.

And if two groups of believers fall to fighting, make peace between them; but then, if one of them commits aggression against the other, then fight the one that commits aggression until it reverts to God's commandment, and if it reverts, make peace between the two [groups] with justice, and deal equitably [with both]: God loves those who act equitably. All believers are but brethren; so set things right between your two brothers [who may have a conflict], and remain conscious of God, so that you may be blessed with His Grace.

O you who have attained to faith. Let not any people scoff at another people; it may be that the latter are better than the former; nor let some women scoff at others; it may be that the latter are better than the former. And trace not faults of one another, nor abuse epithets in offending one another; evil is [intentionally hurting a person through] any name after [all have been honored by] attaining to faith; and those who do not desist are [indeed] evil-doers.

O you who have attained to faith! Refrain from much conjecturing [about one another], for what may come out through [such] conjecturing is evil; and do not spy on one another, nor speak ill of one another behind each other's back. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his[/her] bother[/sister] dead ? You, then, would loathe it! And be conscious of God, for God is the Acceptor or Repentance, the Most Gracious.

O human beings! We have created you all out of a male and a female, and made you into [various] peoples and tribes so that you may come to know one another. Surely, the most honored of you in the sight of God is the one who is most conscious of Him. Behold, God is All-knowing, All-aware.

The bedouins say, "We have attained to faith." Say [unto them O Muhammad], "You have not [yet] attained to faith; you should [rather] say, "We have pronounced our declaration of Islam [that we bear witness that there is no God but the One God and that Muhammad is the Conveyor of His message]; and [true] faith has not yet entered your hearts. And if you [truly] obey God and the Conveyor of His message, he would not let the least of your deeds go to waste; God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious. [True] believers are only those who have attained to faith in God and the Conveyor of His message, and have left behind all doubt, and have strived hard in God's cause with their possessions and their lives; it is they who are true to their word. [49:6-15]

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱجْتَنِبُواْ كَثِيرًا
مِّنَ ٱلظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ ٱلظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ ۚ وَلَا
تَجَسَّسُواْ وَلَا يَغْتَب بَّعْضُكُم بَعْضًا ۚ
أَيُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَن يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا
فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ ۚ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
تَوَّابٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٢﴾ يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ إِنَّا
خَلَقْنَـٰكُم مِّن ذَكَرٍ وَأُنثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَـٰكُمْ
شُعُوبًا وَقَبَآئِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوٓاْ ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ
عِندَ ٱللَّهِ أَتْقَىٰكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ
﴿١٣﴾ ۞ قَالَتِ ٱلْأَعْرَابُ ءَامَنَّا ۖ قُل لَّمْ
تُؤْمِنُواْ وَلَـٰكِن قُولُوٓاْ أَسْلَمْنَا وَلَمَّا
يَدْخُلِ ٱلْإِيمَـٰنُ فِى قُلُوبِكُمْ ۖ وَإِن
تُطِيعُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ لَا يَلِتْكُم مِّنْ
أَعْمَـٰلِكُمْ شَيْـًٔا ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ
﴿١٤﴾ إِنَّمَا ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ
بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَرْتَابُواْ
وَجَـٰهَدُواْ بِأَمْوَٰلِهِمْ وَأَنفُسِهِمْ فِى سَبِيلِ
ٱللَّهِ ۚ أُوْلَـٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلصَّـٰدِقُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

The above verses warn against some serious moral and social ills, beginning with spreading unsubstantiated rumors. The Quran requires both the spreader and the listener to use their sense in scrutinizing such circulated tales, lest they may hurt people unwittingly, and to follow what their faith and its moral values teach them with regard to their brothers and sisters.

As such spreading of false rumors may increase conflicts, the following verses urge the believers to do their best to reconcile the conflicting parties, but when a party turns to aggression, all the believers have to firmly support the party that has faced aggression against the aggressors. In fact, such a challenge against peace and justice should never be

faced with passivity or indifference. However, as soon as the aggressors, after isolating and alienating themselves from others due to their initiation of aggression, express a willingness to revert back to God's commandment, peace should be restored with justice if another round of fighting is to be prevented. The divine justice aims to stop injustice, not to humiliate or eliminate those who once have committed the injustice but have then admitted their wrong. Many treaties that ignore principles of justice have been imposed on defeated parties and these have just ended in the re-initiation of another war for revenge after some time. Peace, which must be based on justice, cannot be maintained unless people realize that war is harmful to all parties including the victors, and that reconciliation is better for the concerned parties, and for the whole world in general, than any bloodshed. This advice, that has been taught by the Quran as a general principle for fourteen centuries is now particularly needed after the technological development of weapons of mass destruction, whether nuclear, chemical or biological.

Quranic values go further to defend the human dignity and moral integrity in general, and not only any individual in a given case. Deriding, defaming or offending another person are all forbidden practices for all believing men and women who all equally have moral and legal responsibilities. Most groundless speculation is forbidden, and what may be allowed is what is necessary and would be justified in a fair enquiry [7:48]. In the same way spying to know what may hurt someone and speaking badly about someone behind his/her back are forbidden, unless this behavior is necessary as a part of police or military investigations. These moral and social ills are dissuasively presented in the above verses, Spreading rumors against others and mocking them in different ways are characterized as a contradiction to the faith and a deviation from God's guidance and morality [49:6-7]. Speaking badly about an absent person is likened to eating the flesh of the dead [49:12]. However, God's doors are always open for repentance and change of behavior.
The above mentioned moral values are not to be observed by Muslims only when dealing with one another, for the Quran stresses the universality of human beings, and teaches that differences among people are meant to encourage communication and cooperation, as a result of different resources, needs and capabilities. In spite of individual or group differences, all human beings should cooperate as equals, since they have generated all from one male and one female [49:13]. The noblest in the sight of God is the most deeply conscious of Him, and this would be the most observant of human oneness and equality. However, every individual should be judged in this life according to his/her merits which are apparent to human perception, while God only can know what is hidden in human hearts and minds and judge their intentions and faith.

The last two of the above verses emphasize that the commitment to the moral values that Islam teaches, and observing them in one's behavior, even at some cost, is the real proof of the true faith which makes the distinction between a genuine believer and one who just formally pronounces the words of the declaration of faith. A serious conviction should affect one's deeds and actions, and this is the genuine faith that counts in this world's life and in the eternal life to come.

وَ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ مَا فِي
ٱلْأَرْضِ لِيَجْزِيَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَسَٰٓـُٔوا۟ بِمَا
عَمِلُوا۟ وَ يَجْزِيَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا۟
بِٱلْحُسْنَى ﴿٣١﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يَجْتَنِبُونَ كَبَٰٓئِرَ
ٱلْإِثْمِ وَ ٱلْفَوَٰحِشَ إِلَّا ٱللَّمَمَ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ
وَٰسِعُ ٱلْمَغْفِرَةِ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِكُمْ إِذْ أَنشَأَكُم
مِّنَ ٱلْأَرْضِ وَ إِذْ أَنتُمْ أَجِنَّةٌ فِي بُطُونِ
أُمَّهَٰتِكُمْ ۖ فَلَا تُزَكُّوٓا۟ أَنفُسَكُمْ ۖ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ
بِمَنِ ٱتَّقَىٰٓ ﴿٣٢﴾

To God belongs all that is in the heavens and whatever is on earth, [and His creation of the whole universe is purposed] to requite those who did evil for what they did, and He requites those who did good with ultimate good.

Those who avoid grave wrong doing and abominations, although they may sometimes stumble; verily, your Lord is abounding in forgiveness. He is fully aware of you when He brings you into being out of the earth, and when you are hidden in your mother's wombs. Therefore, do not praise yourselves; He knows best who is conscious of Him. [53:31-32]

God knows all and requites all. As He is the Creator, He knows the human being and all what he/she goes through since he/she begins to exist. Thus, He is fully aware of who is conscious of Him, and however much a person may claim his/her God-consciousness and praise himself/herself about it, this cannot change the facts and may just develop arrogance in this person. One may deceive others by false claims about his/her merits, and in this way can add to his/her wrong doing, while he/she can never deceive God. One can state one's merits and capabilities that can be judged by others, as Prophet Joseph did when he nominated himself to be in charge of Egypt's resources [12:55], but God-consciousness is only known by God and cannot be merely claimed by a person "*Have you not seen those who praise themselves? Nay, but it is God who judges as praiseworthy whom He wills, and none shall be harmed the slightest bit*" [4:49].

However, God is so Gracious and Compassionate that He does not require from one who attains to faith to be perfect and never do wrong. He creates the human being and knows well his/her weaknesses and limitations. So those whom God sees as persons who do good are those who refrain from grave vices and shameful deeds although they may sometimes stumble in minor ones. Muslim jurists and traditionists, *muhaddithin*, developed a valuable study of the major grave wrongs as well as the minor ones, and they indicated what should establish the acceptability and credibility, *'adala*, of a witness in a court, and at a higher level, of a reporter of the Prophet's tradition. Committing a major wrong, or doing minor ones openly and persistently, would undermine the acceptability and credibility of a witness. In court, especially the Supreme Court that dealt with grave injustices, *mazalim*, there were persons who were knowledgeable about certain realms, *udul*, to give the court any information they know about the realm or its residents. As for the spiritual and moral development itself, whatever the legal rules and judgements may be, God's forgiveness is boundless. Islamic morality is not beyond human ability, and its idealism is within reality. Those who are described as God-conscious in the Quran may commit wrong but they "*remember God and pray that their wrong-doing be forgiven, for who but God forgives wrong doing, and they do not knowingly persist in doing whatever*

[wrong] they may have done" [3:135].

سَابِقُوٓاْ إِلَىٰ مَغۡفِرَةٖ مِّن رَّبِّكُمۡ وَ جَنَّةٍ
عَرۡضُهَا كَعَرۡضِ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَ ٱلۡأَرۡضِ
أُعِدَّتۡ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ بِٱللَّهِ وَ رُسُلِهِۦ
ذَٰلِكَ فَضۡلُ ٱللَّهِ يُؤۡتِيهِ مَن يَشَآءُ وَ ٱللَّهُ
ذُو ٱلۡفَضۡلِ ٱلۡعَظِيمِ ﴿٢١﴾

Vie with one another, hastening to forgiveness from your Lord, and a garden as vast as the heavens and earth, which has been readied for those who have attained to faith in God and the conveyors of His message. That is the bounty of God, which He grants on whomever He wills; and God is of bounty abounding. [57:21]

Individual competitiveness is human, and the Quran legitimizes it but directs it towards good deeds that are for the benefit of the individual and the society. Islam strikes the balance between social solidarity and cooperation on one side and legitimate individual competitiveness on the other. As the goal of human competition becomes the eternal paradise in the life to come, the pleasures of this world which persuade human greed and selfishness and accordingly human conflict and rivalry are replaced by common goals and benefits that strengthen solidarity and morality. Those who have attained to faith become competitive in serving the common cause and the society, and individual accomplishments and would benefit the whole society. It is significant that what is categorized in the Islamic jurisprudence as the "right of God" distinctively from the "right of the person" represents often a collective right that reverts to the whole society.

لَّا يَنۡهَىٰكُمُ ٱللَّهُ عَنِ ٱلَّذِينَ لَمۡ
يُقَٰتِلُوكُمۡ فِي ٱلدِّينِ وَ لَمۡ يُخۡرِجُوكُم مِّن
دِيَٰرِكُمۡ أَن تَبَرُّوهُمۡ وَ تُقۡسِطُوٓاْ إِلَيۡهِمۡ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلۡمُقۡسِطِينَ ﴿٨﴾

As for those [of the unbelievers] who do not fight against you because of [your] faith, nor drive you out of your homes, God does not forbid you to deal kindly and justly with them, for surely God loves those who act with justice. [60:8]

The only legitimate struggle for which Islam allows common peace to be disturbed is securing and defending human rights and for fighting against aggression and oppression. The Muslims' relations with non-Muslims should be developed and maintained on the legal principle of justice and the moral values of kindness and generosity which have to be considered superior to and applied prior to mere justice. Islam is not against difference in beliefs, as differences are human and natural [e.g. 5:48, 11:118-119], and there should be no coercion in matters of faith [2:256], but it is against using human differences as reasons for aggression or oppression.

إِنَّا بَلَوۡنَٰهُمۡ كَمَا بَلَوۡنَآ
أَصۡحَٰبَ ٱلۡجَنَّةِ إِذۡ أَقۡسَمُواْ لَيَصۡرِمُنَّهَا
مُصۡبِحِينَ ﴿١٧﴾ وَ لَا يَسۡتَثۡنُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

[As for such evil-doers], behold, We [but] try them as We tried the owners of a certain garden, who vowed that they would surely harvest its fruits in the morning, and they allowed no place for any

exception [about unanticipated circumstances according to God's will]. Then there came on the [garden] a visitation from your Lord, [which swept away] all around, while they were asleep. So it became in the morning, barren and bleak. As the morning broke, they called to one another, "Go early to your tillage as you intend to harvest the fruits."
So they departed, whispering to one another: "Let not a single needy person break in upon you into the garden this day." And early they went, strongly determined upon their purpose. But as soon as they saw the garden [as it had become], they said: "Surely we have gone astray, and we have been rendered destitute." Said one of them, the most right-minded among them: "Did I not tell you, 'will you not extol God in His glory?'" They said: "Glory be to our Lord! Surely, we were evil-doers." Then they turned to themselves, blaming one another. They said: "Woe to us! We have indeed been transgressors. It may be that our Lord will grant us something better instead [as we repent]; surely, we do turn to Him with hope."
Such is the suffering [with which We try some people in this life], but greater by far will be the suffering [which the evil-doers have to bear] in the life to come, did they but know. [68:17-33]

فَطَافَ عَلَيْهَا طَآئِفٌ مِّن رَّبِّكَ وَهُمْ
نَآئِمُونَ ﴿١٩﴾ فَأَصْبَحَتْ كَٱلصَّرِيمِ ﴿٢٠﴾
فَتَنَادَوْا۟ مُصْبِحِينَ ﴿٢١﴾ أَنِ ٱغْدُوا۟
عَلَىٰ حَرْثِكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰرِمِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾
فَٱنطَلَقُوا۟ وَهُمْ يَتَخَٰفَتُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ أَن لَّا
يَدْخُلَنَّهَا ٱلْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكُم مِّسْكِينٌ ﴿٢٤﴾
وَغَدَوْا۟ عَلَىٰ حَرْدٍ قَٰدِرِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾ فَلَمَّا
رَأَوْهَا قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّا لَضَآلُّونَ ﴿٢٦﴾ بَلْ نَحْنُ
مَحْرُومُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾ قَالَ أَوْسَطُهُمْ أَلَمْ أَقُل
لَّكُمْ لَوْلَا تُسَبِّحُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾ قَالُوا۟ سُبْحَٰنَ
رَبِّنَآ إِنَّا كُنَّا ظَٰلِمِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾ فَأَقْبَلَ
بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ يَتَلَٰوَمُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾
قَالُوا۟ يَٰوَيْلَنَآ إِنَّا كُنَّا طَٰغِينَ ﴿٣١﴾
عَسَىٰ رَبُّنَآ أَن يُبْدِلَنَا خَيْرًا مِّنْهَآ إِنَّآ
إِلَىٰ رَبِّنَا رَٰغِبُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾ كَذَٰلِكَ
ٱلْعَذَابُ ۖ وَلَعَذَابُ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ أَكْبَرُ ۚ لَوْ
كَانُوا۟ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

The divine guidance that those who earn much give some of what they earn to the needy and the poor, especially those who are unable temporarily or permanently to work, is basic in successive messages of God [e.g. Shu'ayb 11:84-88, children of Israel 2:83]. The Quran presents here a story about the arrogance and greed of those who enjoy economic abundance in dealing with those who suffer need and deprivation from the essentials. Another example of economic boasting and transgression is presented in 18:32-44. In both examples, human greed is interwoven with lack of God-consciousness: "*And he entered his garden doing wrong to his own self and saying, 'I do neither think that this [garden] will ever perish, nor think the Last Hour will ever come. Even if it may come and I would be brought before my Lord, I will surely come to something better as [my] resort.'*" [18:35-36] In the above verses, the owners of the fruit garden "*vowed that they would surely harvest its fruits in the next morning, and allowed no place for a possible change [determined by God's will]*" [68:17-18]. The Quran guides the believers, "*And*

never say about anything: 'I shall do this tomorrow,' [since nothing can be done] unless God so wills, and remember your Lord whenever you may forget, and say, 'May my Lord guide me to what is closer than this to rightfulness" [18:23-24]. This is not meant to allow excuses for a possible lack of determination or failure to do what one states that he/she will do, but rather to stress one's consciousness of God and strong will to do the intended or promised action by looking for the All-mighty's support for the human determination. God wants the believers in Him and the worshippers of Him alone to intend, promise and do only what complies with His guidance; and thus one is reminding himself/herself of God's power over everything, and thus no decision or commitment should be made that violates the moral and legal responsibility of the believer.

In the above story, and in the other one mentioned in 18:32-44, there is a voice of someone who is conscious of God to remind the other [or others] who might have no faith in Him or were so indulged in this world's pleasures that they forgot God and His guidance. The Quran repeatedly stresses that indulgence in worldly pleasures leads to selfishness, greed, stubbornness and shortsightedness: "*And the leading persons among his [the conveyor of God's message] people who stubbornly rejected the truth and denied that they would face another life to come, as they exulted [by their own choice] in the ease and plenty that We granted them in this worldly life, said, 'This is but a [mortal] human being like yourselves ... And, indeed, if you obey a [mortal] human being like yourselves, you will surely be the losers!'*" [23:33-34; also 11:116; 17:16; 21:13; 23:64; 34:34; 43:23; 56:45-46]. The Quran teaches the human being to be balanced and moderate in enjoying the pleasures of this life, while never forgetting the life to come [e.g. 7:31-32; 17:26-30; 18:7, 46; 28:77-78]. Those who forget their place and power in relation to God and His guidance will suffer in this present life from a lack of balance and proportionality, and from the consequences of egotism and greed, both in his/her own self and in relation with others; "*such is the suffering; but greater by far will be the suffering in the life to come*" [68:33].

GOOD MANNERS

And whenever you are met with a greeting, respond to it with a better one, or [at least] return it. Surely, God keeps count of everything. [4:86]

وَإِذَا حُيِّيتُم بِتَحِيَّةٍ فَحَيُّوا
بِأَحْسَنَ مِنْهَا أَوْ رُدُّوهَا ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ
عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَسِيبًا ﴿٨٦﴾

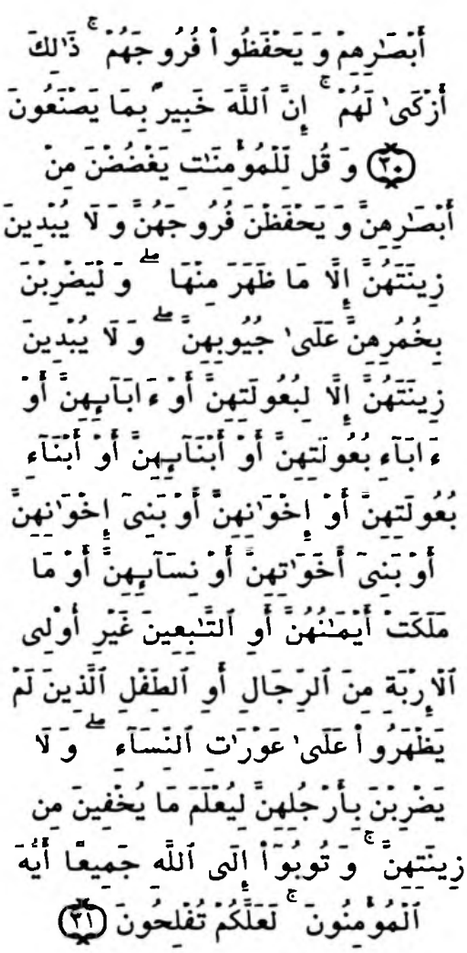
The Quran stresses simple ways to spread and maintain good relations among people. For example, it urges the believers to initiate greeting others, and commands them to respond to a greeting with a similar or better one. Although this may seem to be merely a trivial matter of courtesy, it has its importance in shaping the individual and social attitudes that God's guidance and reckoning cannot miss, as "*God is a Reckoner for everything.*"

The Prophet teaches further details about extending greetings in several traditions.A greeting is to be initiated from the younger to the older, and from the passer-by or the rider to the one who is sitting, and from the fewer in number to the larger in number [reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Malik, Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi]. As the Muslim's greeting is "Peace be on you," he/she is extending peace to all whom he/she meets. The response to the greeting from the one to whom it is addressed should be an equal extension of peace, to which one is urged to add a prayer to God to bestow His mercy and blessings on the person who may have initiated the greeting.

O You who have attained to faith! Do not enter houses other than your own, until you have obtained permission and have felt welcome and have greeted the people thereof; this is better for you and it [aims] to remind you [of the proper behavior]. And if you do not find anyone therein, do not enter until permission is given to you; and if you are told to go back, then go back; this is more righteous on your side, and God has full knowledge of all that you do. It will not be held against you, if you [freely] enter houses not used as residence, which are of some use for you; and God knows all that you do reveal, and all that you may conceal.
Tell the believing men to lower their gaze [avoiding its concentration on a person's body, or a certain part of it] and to be mindful of

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَدْخُلُوا
بُيُوتًا غَيْرَ بُيُوتِكُمْ حَتَّىٰ تَسْتَأْنِسُوا
وَتُسَلِّمُوا عَلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا ۖ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾ فَإِن لَّمْ تَجِدُوا
فِيهَا أَحَدًا فَلَا تَدْخُلُوهَا حَتَّىٰ يُؤْذَنَ
لَكُمْ ۖ وَإِن قِيلَ لَكُمُ ارْجِعُوا
فَارْجِعُوا ۖ هُوَ أَزْكَىٰ لَكُمْ ۚ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا
تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٨﴾ لَّيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ
أَن تَدْخُلُوا بُيُوتًا غَيْرَ مَسْكُونَةٍ فِيهَا
مَتَاعٌ لَّكُمْ ۚ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا
تَكْتُمُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾ قُل لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ

their chastity; in this they will be more considerate for their own well-being and purity, and surely God is fully aware of all that they do. And tell the believing women to [also] lower their gaze, avoiding its concentration [on a person's body or a certain part of it] and to be mindful of their chastity, and not to display the charms of their bodies [in public] beyond what may [decently] be apparent thereof; and, let them draw their head-coverings over their bosoms, and let them not display [more of] their charms to any but their husbands, or their fathers, or their husbands' fathers, or their sons, or their husband's sons, or their brothers, or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or their womenfolk, or those whom they rightfully possess, or such male attendants as are beyond all sexual desire, or children who are as yet unaware of [the physical attractions of] women's nakedness; and let them avoid stamping their feet [or other actions in their walking] that may aim to draw attention to their hidden charms. And [in all times] O you who have attained to faith, turn you all together towards God in repentance that you may attain success. [24:27-31]


أَبْصَٰرِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا۟ فُرُوجَهُمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ
أَزْكَىٰ لَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ خَبِيرٌۢ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ
﴿٣٠﴾ وَقُل لِّلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ
أَبْصَٰرِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ
زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا ۖ وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ
بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَىٰ جُيُوبِهِنَّ ۖ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ
زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا لِبُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ ءَابَآئِهِنَّ أَوْ
ءَابَآءِ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَآئِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَآءِ
بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ إِخْوَٰنِهِنَّ أَوْ بَنِىٓ إِخْوَٰنِهِنَّ
أَوْ بَنِىٓ أَخَوَٰتِهِنَّ أَوْ نِسَآئِهِنَّ أَوْ مَا
مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَٰنُهُنَّ أَوِ ٱلتَّٰبِعِينَ غَيْرِ أُو۟لِى
ٱلْإِرْبَةِ مِنَ ٱلرِّجَالِ أَوِ ٱلطِّفْلِ ٱلَّذِينَ لَمْ
يَظْهَرُوا۟ عَلَىٰ عَوْرَٰتِ ٱلنِّسَآءِ ۖ وَلَا
يَضْرِبْنَ بِأَرْجُلِهِنَّ لِيُعْلَمَ مَا يُخْفِينَ مِن
زِينَتِهِنَّ ۚ وَتُوبُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَ
ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

The above verses teach good morals and good manners and etiquette. Homes have their inviolability and cannot be entered without obtaining the permission of their residents, and, furthermore, without feeling welcomed by them. When they are not there to give such permission and show such welcome the homes should not be entered at all. As soon as the visitor is allowed to enter, he/she should greet the residents to pave the way for interaction and to have a feeling of how accepted and welcomed he/she is. One can feel how refined this required behavior was in the Arabian tribal society when one bears in mind how some Arab people acted in visiting the Prophet: "*Those who call unto you shouting from outside your private apartments, most of them do not use their minds. And if only they had patience [to wait] until you could come out [during the time that you are used to go out], it would be for their own good*" [49:4-5]. If it happens that the residents are not ready to receive a visitor, it is better for the visitor to go back to his abode in order to assure the inviolability of home and the right of its residents to privacy and exclusiveness.This would prove that the visitor has good faith and has no intention to know or do what the residents do not wish him/her to know or do. However, buildings such as public offices and stores that are not intended to be private homes, or that have no residents

who are permanently living in them and are serving a community purpose are allowed for public entrance without need for permission in every individual case.

Afterwards, the verses advise both men and women about the good manners required in a mixed society. Both have to lower their gaze and guard their chastity; and this guidance addresses not only women, but also men.. Before Islam, Arabian women like Arabian men, used to cover their heads to protect themselves from the burning heat, - as both continue to do now - while they sometimes allowed their bosom to be seen through a wide opening in the front of the tunic. They were advised by the Quran to draw their head coverings over their bosoms, since they are not allowed to display their charms in public beyond what may normally and decently be apparent thereof, except to men who are very close to them such as their husbands or those who are not inclined to view them as a sexual attraction due to family or physical considerations. As sexual attraction represents an enormous temptation to those who attract - men and women - and to those who may be attracted to them - men or women, both genders are advised to adhere to the moral and behavioral guidance of God, and to turn to Him for protection from any failure in this respect and for forgiveness in case of such a failure. Through such consciousness of God and closeness to Him, those who have attained to faith would achieve success in this life and the eternal life to come.

O you who have attained to faith! At three times [of day and night], let [even] those whom you rightfully possess, and those from among you who have not yet reached puberty, ask permission from you [before coming to see you in your privacy], before the daybreak prayer, and when you take off your garments during mid-day, and after the late evening prayer, three times of relaxation [in observing dress obligations for being with others] and privacy. Beyond these [times] there is no blame neither for you nor for them if they move [freely] about you, going around one another; thus God makes clear unto you the messages, and God is All-knowing, All-wise. And whenever children of yours reach puberty, let them ask permission [at all times], just as those [who have reached it] before them have had to ask it; thus God makes clear unto you His messages, and God is All-knowing, All-wise. And those women advanced in age who are no longer moved by a sexual desire, there is no blame on them if they take off their [outer] garments, without any display of [their] charms. Yet, it is best for

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟
لِيَسْتَـْٔذِنكُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَـٰنُكُمْ
وَٱلَّذِينَ لَمْ يَبْلُغُوا۟ ٱلْحُلُمَ مِنكُمْ ثَلَـٰثَ
مَرَّٰتٍ ۚ مِّن قَبْلِ صَلَوٰةِ ٱلْفَجْرِ وَحِينَ
تَضَعُونَ ثِيَابَكُم مِّنَ ٱلظَّهِيرَةِ وَمِنۢ بَعْدِ
صَلَوٰةِ ٱلْعِشَآءِ ۚ ثَلَـٰثُ عَوْرَٰتٍ لَّكُمْ ۚ
لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَا عَلَيْهِمْ جُنَاحٌۢ بَعْدَهُنَّ ۚ
طَوَّٰفُونَ عَلَيْكُم بَعْضُكُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ ۚ
كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمُ ٱلْـَٔايَـٰتِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ
عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٥٨﴾ وَإِذَا بَلَغَ ٱلْأَطْفَـٰلُ
مِنكُمُ ٱلْحُلُمَ فَلْيَسْتَـْٔذِنُوا۟ كَمَا ٱسْتَـْٔذَنَ
ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ
ءَايَـٰتِهِۦ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٥٩﴾
وَٱلْقَوَٰعِدُ مِنَ ٱلنِّسَآءِ ٱلَّٰتِى لَا يَرْجُونَ
نِكَاحًا فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْهِنَّ جُنَاحٌ أَن يَضَعْنَ
ثِيَابَهُنَّ غَيْرَ مُتَبَرِّجَٰتٍۭ بِزِينَةٍ ۖ وَأَن

them to always guard their chastity, and God is All-hearing, All-knowing.
No blame attaches to the blind, or does blame attach to the lame, or does blame attach to the sick, and neither to yourselves for eating from your houses, or your fathers' houses, or your mothers' houses, or your brothers' houses, or your sisters' houses, or your paternal uncles' houses, or your paternal aunts' houses, or your maternal uncles' houses, or your maternal aunts' houses, or [houses] the keys whereof are in your charge, or [the house] of any of your friends; nor is any fault on your side in eating together or separately. And if you enter any houses, greet one another with a greeting from God, blessed and good. Thus God makes clear unto you the messages so that you might use your reason.
True believers are only they who have attained to faith in God and the Conveyor of His message, and who, whenever they are [engaged] with him [the Conveyor of God's message] upon a matter of common concern, they do not leave unless they have asked him for permission to do so; surely those who do ask you for such permission - it is they who [truly] believe in God and the Conveyor of His message. Hence, whereby they ask leave of you [to go] for some of their own affairs, then give you this leave to any one of them you may wish, and ask God to forgive them; surely God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious.
Do not regard bidding you [to do something] from the Conveyor of God's message, just as bidding one another among yourselves; God is indeed aware of those of you who try to slip away surreptitiously; then let those who go against His bidding beware that a [bitter] trial would befall them [in this world's life], or a grievous suffering would befall them [in the life to come]. [24:58-63]

يَسْتَعْفِفْنَ خَيْرٌ لَّهُنَّ ۗ وَ ٱللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ
﴿٦٠﴾ لَّيْسَ عَلَى ٱلْأَعْمَىٰ حَرَجٌ وَ لَا
عَلَى ٱلْأَعْرَجِ حَرَجٌ وَ لَا عَلَى ٱلْمَرِيضِ
حَرَجٌ وَ لَا عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَن تَأْكُلُوا۟ مِنۢ
بُيُوتِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ ءَابَآئِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ
أُمَّهَٰتِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ إِخْوَٰنِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ
أَخَوَٰتِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ أَعْمَٰمِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ
عَمَّٰتِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ أَخْوَٰلِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ
خَٰلَٰتِكُمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكْتُم مَّفَاتِحَهُۥٓ أَوْ
صَدِيقِكُمْ ۚ لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَن تَأْكُلُوا۟
جَمِيعًا أَوْ أَشْتَاتًا ۚ فَإِذَا دَخَلْتُم بُيُوتًا
فَسَلِّمُوا۟ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ تَحِيَّةً مِّنْ عِندِ
ٱللَّهِ مُبَٰرَكَةً طَيِّبَةً ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمُ
ٱلْءَايَٰتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٦١﴾ إِنَّمَا
ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ
وَرَسُولِهِۦ وَ إِذَا كَانُوا۟ مَعَهُۥ عَلَىٰٓ أَمْرٍ
جَامِعٍ لَّمْ يَذْهَبُوا۟ حَتَّىٰ يَسْتَـْٔذِنُوهُ ۚ إِنَّ
ٱلَّذِينَ يَسْتَـْٔذِنُونَكَ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ
يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَ رَسُولِهِۦ ۚ فَإِذَا
ٱسْتَـْٔذَنُوكَ لِبَعْضِ شَأْنِهِمْ فَأْذَن لِّمَن
شِئْتَ مِنْهُمْ وَ ٱسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمُ ٱللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٦٢﴾ لَّا تَجْعَلُوا۟ دُعَآءَ
ٱلرَّسُولِ بَيْنَكُمْ كَدُعَآءِ بَعْضِكُم بَعْضًا ۚ قَدْ
يَعْلَمُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ يَتَسَلَّلُونَ مِنكُمْ لِوَاذًا ۚ
فَلْيَحْذَرِ ٱلَّذِينَ يُخَالِفُونَ عَنْ أَمْرِهِۦٓ أَن
تُصِيبَهُمْ فِتْنَةٌ أَوْ يُصِيبَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ
﴿٦٣﴾

The above verses 24:58-60 provides behavioral rules for those who live together within the same household. The extended family, joined by serving free persons and slaves,

dominated at that time, and the privacy of the adult members of the family had, and still has, to be secured during certain times for their convenience, good behavior of those who co-habitate with them, and for social decency and refinement. A period after the late evening prayer and before the daybreak prayer, and another around mid-day, are appointed for restricting slaves and pre-pubescent children from intruding on the privacy of adult members of the family, unless they obtain permission to enter. Obviously there are times of relaxation and release from the required dress codes when one is with others. Beyond these times, slaves and pre-pubescent children are allowed to mix with the adult members of the family without restriction, considering the mutual needs and conveniences within the household. This implies, however, the observation of dress requirements by the adults within the household during these times. As for the adults who may be marriageable to one another in the extended family, they have to always ask permission of one another when any enters a private place of the other at any time, a rule which applies to any child who reaches puberty and enters the private place of someone marriageable to him/her within the household. Women who are advanced in age, and no longer moved by any sexual desire, are allowed to take off their outer garments within the household all day, without any aim at a showy display of their charms; yet they are urged to observe the general rule for adult women. This would be a better conduct for them that would secure them physically and morally from any harassment.

The next verse 24:61 addresses the mutual entering of close relatives and friends' houses for eating when no residents are there, if prior authorization or consent has been assumed or was actually given. A house, the keys of which one has, is treated in the same way, since handing over the keys in this case implies a full trust and authorization of the owner for the key-holder. The disabled and sick may benefit from such access because of their pressuring circumstances and needs. One should bear in mind that in that time and place, there were no restaurants, hotels, or guest-houses, and no charity or social organizations, and thus such access to another's house when empty was a means of togetherness and mutual help. Such beneficiaries from others' houses may come individually or in groups, but those who meet in a house in such circumstances have to get acquainted with one another and exchange greetings.

The last group of the above verses 24:62-63 teaches the Muslims how to behave in public meetings held for public concerns. Nobody in such a case is allowed to act on his/her own and do whatever he/she wants whenever he/she wants. A public meeting has to be organized, and it should be directed by the leader, who at that time was the Prophet. His decisions have to be fully observed by the attendants, and no attendant is allowed to leave for any excuse unless he/she obtains the permission of the head of the meeting, who can give permission to anyone who has to leave for a personal matter, when he/she is convinced of this. This leader would also pray to God for forgiveness for not fulfilling his/her responsibility as he/she should. The people's dealings with the leader has to be different from their dealings with one another; due respect, loyalty, and compliance with the leader's directions and guidance should be maintained, and any transgression of God's commands in this respect would lead to grievous suffering for the transgressors in this present life and in the life to come. Furthermore, the whole society may suffer, since the consequences of such a failure in a common matter would not only be limited to the individuals who are

directly guilty of it, but would affect the whole society [8:25].

Such clear and sharp regulations for the human inter-relations within the family, private and public rapports, are really remarkable in a tribal society. They point out what enormous progress Islam ensued to the Arabian society and the whole world at that time: "*to make everything clear, and to provide guidance and grace and good tiding unto all who have submitted themselves to God*" [16:89].

And indeed, We granted Luqman wisdom [represented in these values:] "Be grateful to God, and [know well that] one who is grateful [to Him] is but grateful for the good of his [/her] own self, whereas one who may be ungrateful [ought to know that] surely God is All-sufficient, Ever to Be Praised."

And Luqman said to his son, admonishing him, "O my dear son! Do not associate others with God; to associate others with God is indeed an awesome wrong."

And We have enjoined upon the human being [goodness] towards his [/her] parents: his [/her] mother bore him [/her] through strain over strain, and [devoted her time to the baby until] his weaning [going beyond full dependence on the mother that] may take two years; [hence, O human being] be grateful towards Me and towards your parents, [and remember that] with Me is all journeys' end. Yet should they pressure you to make you associate with Me what you do not know [or what your mind can not accept as divine], obey them not; but [even then] keep their company in this world's life with kindness, and follow the path of those who turn towards Me. In the end, unto Me you shall return, and thereupon I shall make you [truly] understand all that you were doing [in your previous life].

"O my dear son! If it should be but the weight of one grain of mustard-seed, and if it might be [hidden] in a rock, or in the skies, or in the earth, God can bring it forth; surely God is All-subtle, [and Unfathomable in His Being, Wisdom, and Grace], All-aware.

"O my dear son! Keep up the prayer, and

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا
لُقْمَٰنَ ٱلْحِكْمَةَ أَنِ ٱشْكُرْ لِلَّهِ ۚ وَمَن
يَشْكُرْ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِۦ ۖ وَمَن كَفَرَ
فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَنِىٌّ حَمِيدٌ ﴿١٢﴾ وَإِذْ قَالَ
لُقْمَٰنُ لِٱبْنِهِۦ وَهُوَ يَعِظُهُۥ يَٰبُنَىَّ لَا
تُشْرِكْ بِٱللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّ ٱلشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ
﴿١٣﴾ وَوَصَّيْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ بِوَٰلِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ
أُمُّهُۥ وَهْنًا عَلَىٰ وَهْنٍ وَفِصَٰلُهُۥ فِى
عَامَيْنِ أَنِ ٱشْكُرْ لِى وَلِوَٰلِدَيْكَ إِلَىَّ
ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٤﴾ وَإِن جَٰهَدَاكَ عَلَىٰٓ أَن
تُشْرِكَ بِى مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ فَلَا
تُطِعْهُمَا ۖ وَصَاحِبْهُمَا فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا
مَعْرُوفًا ۖ وَٱتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ إِلَىَّ ۚ
ثُمَّ إِلَىَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ
تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ يَٰبُنَىَّ إِنَّهَآ إِن تَكُ مِثْقَالَ
حَبَّةٍ مِّنْ خَرْدَلٍ فَتَكُن فِى صَخْرَةٍ أَوْ فِى
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ أَوْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ يَأْتِ بِهَا
ٱللَّهُ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَطِيفٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٦﴾ يَٰبُنَىَّ
أَقِمِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَأْمُرْ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَٱنْهَ

enjoin the doing of what is right and forbid the doing of what is wrong, and bear patiently whatever may befall you; this is a matter of determination and [proves a] strong will.
"And turn not your cheek away from people in arrogance, and walk not haughtily on earth; God loves not one who is arrogant and boastful.
"And be modest in your walk, and lower your voice; the most hideous of all voices is that of donkeys." [31:12-19]

عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ وَٱصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَآ أَصَابَكَ ۖ
إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ ٱلْأُمُورِ ﴿١٧﴾ وَلَا
تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَمْشِ فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ
مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ ﴿١٨﴾ وَٱقْصِدْ فِى مَشْيِكَ
وَٱغْضُضْ مِن صَوْتِكَ ۚ إِنَّ أَنكَرَ
ٱلْأَصْوَٰتِ لَصَوْتُ ٱلْحَمِيرِ ﴿١٩﴾

Luqman was looked upon in ancient Arabian tradition as a sage person who was always concerned about morality and inner development, and he became celebrated in a poem of the pre-Islamic poet al-Nabigha al-Dhubyani. In the above verses, he is offering his son concise advice of high educational value. He told his son that worshipping the One God alone is the peak and essence of all moral values. Next to expressing gratefulness to God is the expressing of gratefulness to parents [see also 2:83; 4:36; 6:151; 17:23]. Even if one's parents urge one to associate others with God in worship, one should be a good companion to them in life, although he/she must not deviate from what he/she believes to be the truth, and must prefer to follow in this respect those who follow God's path rather than the parents. God knows exactly what is in one's heart and mind, and what is one's intention in any of his/her deeds. Gratefulness to God and consciousness of Him are expressed in prayers and are proved in standing firmly for the moral values to which He has guided us. Thus, enjoining what is right and good, and forbidding what is wrong and evil, follow immediately the prayers as a social expression of consciousness of God and commitment to His guidance. However, one who offers good deeds can fall into the evil trap of arrogance about his/her good doing. Luqman in his wisdom does not overlook such a probability, and warn his son against self-conceit and boastfulness which can be expressed on one's face, in one's voice or by one's walk, as arrogance and boasting would spoil and damage the good deeds and keep them from reaching the roots of the human self, or even poison these roots themselves [see also 2:263-265].

Those who call unto you shouting from outside your private apartments - most of them do not use their minds. And if only they had patience [to wait] until you came out to them [during the time in which you are used to going out], it would be for their own good; but God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious. [49:4-5]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ
يُنَادُونَكَ مِن وَرَآءِ ٱلْحُجُرَٰتِ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا
يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٤﴾ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ صَبَرُوا۟ حَتَّىٰ
تَخْرُجَ إِلَيْهِمْ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ
غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٥﴾

The above verses present a collection of moral values and good manners. The sura in which the verses are a part, took its name, "The Private Apartments" from a certain

event. Some Arabs who wanted to see the Prophet came to his private residence which was annexed to the mosque, and instead of waiting for him to come out for the five daily prayers, as he always did, and waiting with those who wanted to stay with him, they shouted outside his residence, calling him. The sura therefore starts by teaching that Muslims should deal respectfully with the Prophet, and that they should not raise their voices in an annoying way as they do with one another. It seems that the Arabs, in their simple tribal life, badly needed such guidance, as the Prophet faced several incidences of this nature reflected in the Quran [e.g. 24:62-63, 33:53]. Such a significant teaching in such historical and social circumstances clarifies how good manners are essential in Islamic reform, and how refined Islam wants the society to be. This refinement continues to be relevant in essence in any society, although the forms of its implementation may change. Leaders and prominent persons have to be dealt with in a certain respectful way according to their own merits, without, by any means, violation of the moral value of human equality.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا تَدۡخُلُواْ بُيُوتَ
ٱلنَّبِيِّ إِلَّآ أَن يُؤۡذَنَ لَكُمۡ إِلَىٰ طَعَامٍ غَيۡرَ
نَٰظِرِينَ إِنَىٰهُ وَلَٰكِنۡ إِذَا دُعِيتُمۡ
فَٱدۡخُلُواْ فَإِذَا طَعِمۡتُمۡ فَٱنتَشِرُواْ وَلَا
مُسۡتَـٔۡنِسِينَ لِحَدِيثٍۚ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكُمۡ كَانَ
يُؤۡذِي ٱلنَّبِيَّ فَيَسۡتَحۡيِۦ مِنكُمۡۖ وَٱللَّهُ
لَا يَسۡتَحۡيِۦ مِنَ ٱلۡحَقِّۚ وَإِذَا
سَأَلۡتُمُوهُنَّ مَتَٰعٗا فَسۡـَٔلُوهُنَّ مِن وَرَآءِ
حِجَابٖۚ ذَٰلِكُمۡ أَطۡهَرُ لِقُلُوبِكُمۡ
وَقُلُوبِهِنَّۚ وَمَا كَانَ لَكُمۡ أَن تُؤۡذُواْ رَسُولَ
ٱللَّهِ وَلَآ أَن تَنكِحُوٓاْ أَزۡوَٰجَهُۥ مِنۢ
بَعۡدِهِۦٓ أَبَدًاۚ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكُمۡ كَانَ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ
عَظِيمًا ﴿٥٣﴾ إِن تُبۡدُواْ شَيۡـًٔا أَوۡ تُخۡفُوهُ
فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُلِّ شَيۡءٍ عَلِيمًا ﴿٥٤﴾ لَّا
جُنَاحَ عَلَيۡهِنَّ فِيٓ ءَابَآئِهِنَّ وَلَآ
أَبۡنَآئِهِنَّ وَلَآ إِخۡوَٰنِهِنَّ وَلَآ أَبۡنَآءِ
إِخۡوَٰنِهِنَّ وَلَآ أَبۡنَآءِ أَخَوَٰتِهِنَّ وَلَا
نِسَآئِهِنَّ وَلَا مَا مَلَكَتۡ أَيۡمَٰنُهُنَّۖ

O you who have attained to faith! Do not enter the Prophet's houses, unless you are given permission; [and as for an invitation] to a meal, do not watch for its hour [to press the Prophet implicitly for an invitation]; but whenever you may be invited, enter, and when you have had the meal, dispense and do not linger for mere talk; that hurt the Prophet yet he felt shy of [asking] you [to leave], but God is not shy of [teaching you] what is right.

And [as for the Prophet's wives], whenever you ask them for anything that you may need, ask them from behind something that separates and conceals them from you; this is more protective for the purity of your hearts and theirs. And it can never be proper for you to hurt the Conveyor of God's message, nor to marry his wives after him; that would surely be a heinousness in the sight of God. {And} whether you reveal anything or conceal it, God surely has knowledge of everything.

[However,] nothing may be held against them [the Prophet's wives to appear without any concealment] before their fathers, or their sons, or their brothers, or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or their womenfolk, or such [male] slaves whom their right hands possess. And remain [always, O wives of the

Prophet] conscious of God, for surely God is witness on everything. [33:53-55]

وَٱتَّقِينَ ٱللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدًا ﴿٥٥﴾

Although the above verse 33:54 addresses the respect due from the believers in dealing with the Prophet, the indicated behavioral etiquette with regard to visits of others at their homes, and invitations to meals, represent a model for the fine behavior that should inspire all good people, especially in dealing with leading personalities, the elderly, and all those who ought to be revered. The home has its sanctity, and its residents should enjoy its privacy, whatever the home and whoever the residents may be. No entrance is allowed without taking permission, and no excuse about this essential principle may arise on the grounds of the special place of the Prophet [33:6, 40] or any eminent person, nor by exploiting the kindness and generosity of the host [3:159; 9:128; 68:4]. An invitation to a meal ought to be presented by the host with his free will and full discretion and not under pressure from any guest who arrives at the meal time, thereby making it necessary for the host to invite him/her, or extending the visit until meal time comes. When there is an invitation, the guests should stay for a reasonable amount of time, not linger insensitively and chatter aimlessly and endlessly with one another or with the host, ignoring the inconvenience that they are causing to the residents, and taking advantage of the host's shyness. All such undesirable and insensitive behavior can be expected from any unrefined guest until now, and how refined is the society that Islam aims and strives to develop!

With regard to talking to the Prophet's wives behind something that separates and conceals them from males who are not close unmarriageable relatives, " *hijab*", this is something particular in this case for the special place of the Prophet and his wives, and cannot be understood as a general rule or something looked for in the whole society. It is clearly and sharply stated in the Quran that the Prophet's wives had their special legal rules due to their particular situations: "*O wives of the Prophet! You are not like any of the [other] women*" [33:32], "*God only wants to keep you, O members of the Prophet's family, away from whatever may [morally] be an uncleanliness, and to let you always be purified to the utmost purity. And bear in mind all that is recited in your homes of God's messages and wisdom...*" [33:33-34], "*O Prophet! Say unto your wives: 'If you desire [but] the life of this present world and its charms, well - then - I shall provide for you [your due material needs] and release you in a decent and kindly manner; and if you desire God and the Conveyor of His message and [the good of] the life in the hereafter, then [know that] surely for the doers of good among you, God has readied a mighty reward. O wives of the Prophet! If any of you were to become guilty of flagrant immoral conduct, double [of the punishment for she who commits the same]would be her suffering... and any of you who devoutly obeys God and the Conveyor of His message and does righteousness, to her We shall give her reward twice over, and We shall have readied a most excellent sustenance [in the life to come]*" [33:28-31], " *And his wives are their [the believers'] mothers...*" [33:6], "*... and [it is never proper for you] to marry his wives after him...*" [33:53].

Accordingly, the verse about separating and concealing the Prophet's wives from males who were not close marriageable relatives and who might need to talk to them, "*hijab*" must not be taken out of context and made a general rule for Muslim women.

There is no segregation in the Muslim society, and what is required from Muslim adults, both male and female, when they mix together, is to be modestly dressed and avoid exposing the charms of their body to attract one another, and to lower their gaze so that it might not be concentrated on the physical attractions of the one to whom they are talking [24:30-31], in addition to avoiding any seclusion of a single male and a single female in privacy. How may all this be required if the Muslim males and females have to live segregated in the society? Even the word *hijab* has been mistakenly used to mean "Islamic dress," while it is used in the Quran only for the particular case of the Prophet's wives for their special situation, and the social considerations of the time that were relevant to them. Yet, they were allowed to meet and talk to close male relatives, those who were first degree relatives, and their brothers, and the sons of their brothers and sisters [33:35].

CHAPTER SEVEN

LAW "SHARI'A" (I)

WHY ARE LAWS NEEDED IN GOD'S MESSAGE?

GUARDING MORAL VALUES, AND RISING ABOVE HUMAN DIFFERENCES AND THE EXTREMES OF RESTRICTIVENESS AND PERMISSIVENESS

And God does want to turn unto you in His mercy, whereas those who follow [only] their own lusts want you to deviate tremendously from the right path. God wants to lighten your burdens, for the human being has been created with certain weaknesses. [4:27-28]

وَ ٱللَّهُ يُرِيدُ أَن
يَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَ يُرِيدُ ٱلَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ
ٱلشَّهَوَٰتِ أَن تَمِيلُوا۟ مَيْلًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٢٧﴾
يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ أَن يُخَفِّفَ عَنكُمْ ۚ وَ خُلِقَ
ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ ضَعِيفًا ﴿٢٨﴾

God's teachings and laws are realistic in directing the human behavior to the ideal. The divine message calls for the realistic idealism or the idealistic realism. It keeps the human being from going to the one extreme of following lusts and whims without control on the grounds that God is the Most Forgiving and Gracious, or to the other extreme of suppressing all natural motives and instincts, for fear of God the All-mighty and the Witness who takes count of everything. God's teachings and laws keep the human being on the appropriate middle path, which avoids the dangers of both the animal and the angelic kinds of extremes, since the human nature is different from each. The laws of God in His messages comply with His laws in nature, and they secure a fulfillment for the human self and a realistic development of its potentials to the possible maximum, so that none of the human physical, intellectual or spiritual-psychological-moral powers would be wasted on ways of life that contradict human nature itself.

Are you not [O Prophet] aware of those who claim that they believe in the revelations that have come to you and to those before you, [and yet] are willing to seek judgement [in their disputes] to the powers of evil though they were ordered to reject it? Indeed, Satan wants to lead them far astray. And whenever they are told, "Come to what God has revealed and to the Conveyor of God's message," you see these hypocrites turn away persistently from you. How [it will be] when they are seized by some disaster, as a result of what their own hands have already done, and then they come to you, swearing by God: "We only meant to do good and to bring out favorable relations!" Those people God knows what is in their hearts; so keep [O Prophet] clear of them but admonish them, and speak to them deeply about themselves. And We have never sent a conveyor of [Our] message, but to be heeded by God's leave; if, when they wronged their own selves, they came to you and prayed for God's forgiveness, and the Conveyor of [God's] message prayed for their forgiveness, they would assuredly find God an Acceptor of Repentance, Most Gracious. But nay, by your Lord, they do not [really] believe unless they make you [O Prophet] judge all that about which they may disagree among themselves, and then find in their own selves no uneasiness about your decision, but submit themselves utterly [to the commands of God and the Conveyor of His message]. [4:60-65]

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ يَزْعُمُونَ أَنَّهُمْ
ءَامَنُوا۟ بِمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ مِن
قَبْلِكَ يُرِيدُونَ أَن يَتَحَاكَمُوٓا۟ إِلَى
ٱلطَّٰغُوتِ وَقَدْ أُمِرُوٓا۟ أَن يَكْفُرُوا۟ بِهِۦ ۚ
وَيُرِيدُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ أَن يُضِلَّهُمْ ضَلَٰلًۢا بَعِيدًا
﴿٦٠﴾ وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا۟ إِلَىٰ مَآ
أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ وَإِلَى ٱلرَّسُولِ رَأَيْتَ
ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ يَصُدُّونَ عَنكَ صُدُودًا ﴿٦١﴾
فَكَيْفَ إِذَآ أَصَٰبَتْهُم مُّصِيبَةٌۢ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ
أَيْدِيهِمْ ثُمَّ جَآءُوكَ يَحْلِفُونَ بِٱللَّهِ إِنْ
أَرَدْنَآ إِلَّآ إِحْسَٰنًا وَتَوْفِيقًا ﴿٦٢﴾
أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُ ٱللَّهُ مَا فِى قُلُوبِهِمْ
فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَعِظْهُمْ وَقُل لَّهُمْ فِىٓ
أَنفُسِهِمْ قَوْلًۢا بَلِيغًا ﴿٦٣﴾ وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَا
مِن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَلَوْ
أَنَّهُمْ إِذ ظَّلَمُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ جَآءُوكَ
فَٱسْتَغْفَرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱسْتَغْفَرَ لَهُمُ ٱلرَّسُولُ
لَوَجَدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ تَوَّابًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿٦٤﴾ فَلَا
وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا
شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا۟ فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ
حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا۟ تَسْلِيمًا ﴿٦٥﴾

A believer in God, who therefore is aware of all His attributes of full knowledge and wisdom, His care and grace, His watchfulness, and His messages with all their teachings, should consistently follow His laws and wholeheartedly trust His justice, since true faith in God should mean observing what He and the Conveyor of His message order or forbid. Submission to evil powers within one's own self or in the society represents a real contradiction to the essence of faith in God and results in hypocrisy in one's relations with God and with the believers in Him, and with regard to His guidance. Such dishonest and deceitful opportunists are present in any time or place, and they try to secure personal benefits for themselves from everyone without being sincere to anyone except their own selves,

yet at the same time they argue that they only stand for good relations and that they are trying to bring about harmony in the society. The reality of their own selves has to be exposed as it may be hidden from even themselves by self-deception and from others by false pretension. However, these individuals who thought that they were deceiving God and the believers always have the chance to change their innate selves, and if they seek God's forgiveness and assure their adherence to the Conveyor of His message, they will find that God is always the Most Gracious and Forgiving.

ONE FAITH, DIFFERENT LAWS AND PRACTICES

And to you We have sent the Book, setting forth the truth, confirming the truth of whatever remains of earlier revealed books, and watching over it; so judge between them [the People of the Book] according to what God has revealed, and follow not their whims, diverging from the truth that has come to you. To each of you We have appointed a law and a way to follow. And had God so willed, He would have made you all one single people, but [He willed it otherwise] so as to test you through what He has given you. Vie, then, with one another, in good deeds; unto God you shall return, and He will make you understand all on which you differed. [5:48]

وَ أَنزَلْنَآ إِلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ
بِٱلْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ
وَ مُهَيْمِنًا عَلَيْهِ ۖ فَٱحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَآ
أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ ۖ وَ لَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَآءَهُمْ عَمَّا
جَآءَكَ مِنَ ٱلْحَقِّ ۚ لِكُلٍّ جَعَلْنَا مِنكُمْ
شِرْعَةً وَ مِنْهَاجًا ۚ وَ لَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ
لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً وَ لَٰكِن لِّيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِى
مَآ ءَاتَىٰكُمْ ۖ فَٱسْتَبِقُوا۟ ٱلْخَيْرَٰتِ ۚ إِلَى
ٱللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ
فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

This verse clearly spells out the place of the Quran with regard to the earlier divine books that had been revealed before and were still remaining when the message of Islam came. Although the Muslims believe that the Quran is the final word of God to humanity and thus represents the culmination of the divine revelation that has addressed, in a condensed way, essential human needs in different times and places, they also believe that *"there is no coercion in matters of faith"* [2:256], and that God has created humanity to be diverse. Thus, pluralism is a fundamental law of nature, with which the messages of God and their laws comply *"To each among you have We appointed a law and a way to follow. If God had so willed, He could surely have made you all one single people, but [His plan is] to test you through what He has given you."* All adherents of earlier divine revelations who believe truly in the One God and in the human accountability in the life to come and conduct their life according to God's moral guidance and righteousness will be fairly judged and rewarded and need not fear their present or future [e.g. 2:62; 3:113-115; 5:69]. Followers of different messages and ways of life should *"vie with one another in doing good deeds,"* and thus pluralism should stimulate constructive competitiveness as well as essential co-operation [2:177; 5:2; 49:13]. God's laws in the Quran then secure

pluralism which complies with human diversity, and although Muslims believe that the divine revelation which they follow is the final word of God, and that it has remained intact since that time of revelation, the Quran does not impose one system or expression of beliefs at the expense of others, nor does it claim to monopolize righteousness and God's grace in this life and the life to come.

Hence, judge between them in accordance with what God has revealed, and follow not their whims, and be wary of them lest they tempt you away from any of that which God has sent down to you. And if they turn away [from His commandments], then know that it is but God's will to afflict them for some of their evil-doing, and behold, a great many people are indeed iniquitous. Do they seek the judgement of pagan [spiritual and moral] ignorance? But who could be fairer in judgement than God, for people who feel certain about the truth? [5:49-50]

وَ أَنِ ٱحۡكُم بَيۡنَهُم
بِمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ وَ لَا تَتَّبِعۡ أَهۡوَآءَهُمۡ
وَ ٱحۡذَرۡهُمۡ أَن يَفۡتِنُوكَ عَنۢ بَعۡضِ مَآ أَنزَلَ
ٱللَّهُ إِلَيۡكَ ۚ فَإِن تَوَلَّوۡاْ فَٱعۡلَمۡ أَنَّمَا
يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ أَن يُصِيبَهُم بِبَعۡضِ ذُنُوبِهِمۡ ۗ
وَ إِنَّ كَثِيرٗا مِّنَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَفَٰسِقُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾
أَفَحُكۡمَ ٱلۡجَٰهِلِيَّةِ يَبۡغُونَ ۚ وَ مَنۡ أَحۡسَنُ
مِنَ ٱللَّهِ حُكۡمٗا لِّقَوۡمٖ يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

God's laws come from above and thus encompass human needs and surpass all individuals and social differences, whereas human laws simply reflect the interests and views of only the dominant group of people, who seizes power and enjoys majority. The divine laws care for all ethnicities, social and economical and political groups, genders, ages and beliefs. Following these principles of justice guard the society against individual and collective limitations, biases and whims, while ignoring or deviating from these divine principles of justice, on the other hand, would open the doors to selfishness, greed, shortsightedness and opportunism. Such an absence of moral and social commitment leads to a gradual deterioration which afflicts the society as a result of ignoring the divine justice and following human egotism, since none can make a law or judgement better than God, Who is beyond any limitation or bias for those who truly believe in Him and His message.

NECESSARY AUTHORITY AND PUBLIC ORDER

We have indeed sent down messages clearly showing the truth and God guides whom He wills to a straight way. They say, "We believe in God and in the Conveyor of His message, and we obey;" but then, some of them turn away after this [assertion]; and these are by no means [true] believers. When they are summoned to God

لَقَدۡ أَنزَلۡنَآ ءَايَٰتٖ مُّبَيِّنَٰتٖ ۚ وَ ٱللَّهُ
يَهۡدِي مَن يَشَآءُ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٖ مُّسۡتَقِيمٖ
﴿٤٦﴾ وَ يَقُولُونَ ءَامَنَّا بِٱللَّهِ وَ بِٱلرَّسُولِ
وَ أَطَعۡنَا ثُمَّ يَتَوَلَّىٰ فَرِيقٞ مِّنۡهُم مِّنۢ بَعۡدِ
ذَٰلِكَ ۚ وَ مَآ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ بِٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾

and the Conveyor of His message, in order that He may judge between them, behold, some of them turn away; but if the right is on their side, they come to him with all submission. Is it that there is a disease in their hearts? Or do they have doubt, [about the truth of the Book]? Or do they fear, that God and the Conveyor of His message may deal unjustly with them? Nay, it is [but] they themselves who are doing wrong [to their own selves]. The only response of those who have attained to faith, whenever they are called to God and the Conveyor of His message, that He may judge between them, can be no other than, "We have heard and we obey" - it is such as these who will attain to success. It is these who obey God and the Conveyor of His message and stand in awe of God and are conscious of Him, they who will triumph [in the end]. [24:46-52]

وَإِذَا دُعُوٓاْ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ لِيَحۡكُمَ
بَيۡنَهُمۡ إِذَا فَرِيقٞ مِّنۡهُم مُّعۡرِضُونَ ٤٨
وَإِن يَكُن لَّهُمُ ٱلۡحَقُّ يَأۡتُوٓاْ إِلَيۡهِ مُذۡعِنِينَ
٤٩ أَفِي قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ أَمِ ٱرۡتَابُوٓاْ أَمۡ
يَخَافُونَ أَن يَحِيفَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيۡهِمۡ
وَرَسُولُهُۥۚ بَلۡ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ
٥٠ إِنَّمَا كَانَ قَوۡلَ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ إِذَا
دُعُوٓاْ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ لِيَحۡكُمَ بَيۡنَهُمۡ
أَن يَقُولُواْ سَمِعۡنَا وَأَطَعۡنَاۚ وَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ
هُمُ ٱلۡمُفۡلِحُونَ ٥١ وَمَن يُطِعِ ٱللَّهَ
وَرَسُولَهُۥ وَيَخۡشَ ٱللَّهَ وَيَتَّقۡهِ فَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ
هُمُ ٱلۡفَآئِزُونَ ٥٢

One who believes in God and in the Conveyor of His message according to the clear messages which have been sent with that Conveyor should be consistent with him/herself and prove his/her true faith by accepting the authority of the Prophet to settle any dispute according to God's laws and principles of justice, whether he/she may feel that the ruling given would be in support or against him/her. A hesitation in accepting God's laws and the authority which enforces these laws is a contradiction to the true submission to Him, and it therefore leaves the faith in God suspended in a vacuum and isolated from the realities of life. True faith should result in a united and organized society with legitimate authorities who secure human rights and guard moral values; if not, then the society of believers would fall apart because of selfishness, shortsightedness, and moral and social ills. Law and order are inseparable from faith and morality, and thus a harmonious society develops, where all interact with one another and support one another to maintain the strength and flourish in this life and the eternal happiness in the life to come: it is such as these who will triumph in the end and attain to success.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

ALL IS ALLOWED, WITH LIMITED AND SPECIFIC PROHIBITIONS

It is He who has created for you all that is on earth, and has dealt with the heavens formed appropriately into seven, and He alone has full knowledge of everything. [2:29]

هُوَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ لَكُم
مَّا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ ٱسْتَوَىٰٓ إِلَى
ٱلسَّمَآءِ فَسَوَّىٰهُنَّ سَبْعَ سَمَٰوَٰتٍ وَهُوَ
بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٩﴾

Although the above verse is dealing with the creation of the whole universe and the multiple cosmic systems indicated as "heavens" be they within or beyond the human perception, it states significantly an essential general law: that God *"has created for you all that is on earth"* [see also 45:3]. Consequently, as our jurists since early times rightfully inferred, everything on earth is pure and allowed to be used, unless it comes to be clearly forbidden by God.

Accordingly, everything is assumed allowed until the opposite may be proved specifically with regard to a certain thing, and the burden of evidence is on the one who claims prohibition, while the one who assumes the allowability is merely following the general principle and is in no need of any further support. It is against this Quranic and juristic logic for any person to ask for evidence from the Sunna or the precedents of early Muslims to prove that something was used or considered allowable in order to accept its lawfulness.

The same principle - as the Quran emphasizes - was applied in general in previous messages of God [3:93]. This comprehensive and fundamental rule secures the dynamism and continuation of the Islamic laws (Shari'a), as it allows spacious room for considering the variables in different times and places. The general guidance in what may be allowed or forbidden in any given time and place is the natural properties of the matter and its effect on human merits and their development, whether physical or moral, individual or social; "*and makes lawful to them the good and wholesome things of life, and forbids them the bad and harmful things, and lifts from them their burdens and the shackles that were upon them*" [7:157].

And He has made subservient to you, what is in the heavens and what is on the earth, all together from Him; in that are signs indeed for people who reflect. [45:13]

وَسَخَّرَ لَكُم مَّا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مِّنْهُ ۚ إِنَّ فِى
ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

This is another emphasis of the principle of the general allowance of all that is created by God for the use of human beings, unless something is specifically proven forbidden by an authentic and clear evidence. See the previously mentioned verse 2:29 and the

commentary on it.

O you human beings! Eat of what is on earth, lawful and good, and follow not the footsteps of Satan; verily he is a clear enemy to you. He bids you only to do evil and to commit what is shameful and to attribute to God something of which you have no knowledge. [2:168-169]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا
ٱلنَّاسُ كُلُواْ مِمَّا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ حَلَٰلًا
طَيِّبًا وَ لَا تَتَّبِعُواْ خُطُوَٰتِ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ ۚ
إِنَّهُۥ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٦٨﴾ إِنَّمَا يَأْمُرُكُم
بِٱلسُّوٓءِ وَ ٱلْفَحْشَآءِ وَ أَن تَقُولُواْ عَلَى
ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٦٩﴾

These verses stress what the previous verse states: what is on earth is - as a general principle - usable and good and accordingly it is lawful, and when anything is bad and harmful God clearly forbids it. What causes more of the "harm" is not the "thing" in its essence, but the "human action" in using it for oneself or in dealing in it with others. Exploitation and fraud may deal with an allowed "thing" in a forbidden "way", by having "evil" intentions and practices that hurt one's own self and others, and thus following Satan's evil temptation to human beings to disregard God's guidance which maintains and develops their merits. The devil's abasement of a human being to evil-doing can reach the human self through its selfishness, greed, shortsightedness and other negatives, and through neutralizing or paralyzing the positive human merits temporarily or permanently [7:179; 25:44; 28:50]. One should not be tempted to restrict God's laws and His prohibition to simply the physical "things" [see also 5:93; 22:37]; it is the human "action" that can really hurt the individual and the society, and thus the human being should be fully aware of it and alerted to challenge the devil's seduction through self-whims and others' allurement.

He has only forbidden to you carrion, and blood, and the flesh of swine, and that over which any other name has been invoked than that of God. Yet whoever is driven by necessity, without wilful disobedience, nor exceeding the immediate need, no offence will be held against him[/her]; God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious. [2:173]

إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْمَيْتَةَ
وَ ٱلدَّمَ وَ لَحْمَ ٱلْخِنزِيرِ وَ مَآ أُهِلَّ بِهِۦ
لِغَيْرِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ فَمَنِ ٱضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَ لَا
عَادٍ فَلَآ إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ
﴿١٧٣﴾

The "things" which are forbidden as food, drink, or actions are limited and indicated [see also 5:3, 90-91], while all other things that are not prohibited in the Quran or Sunna are allowed and thus lawful. What is prohibited is in general unsuitable for the human health or a refined taste. Any participation in a practice of worship to anyone other than the One God, even the eating of something over which any other name than that of God is invoked, contradicts the necessary consistence, coherence and harmony in matters of faith. However, an essential legal principle has been underlined in this respect

and is repeatedly stressed in many other verses [see also 2:233, 286; 5:3; 6:119, 145, 152; 7:42; 16:115; 23:62], that if any human being is driven by necessity [in this case the fear of death by starvation or thirst], the prohibited thing or action is allowed temporarily in a way that only enables the person to secure his/her life *"without wilful disobedience, nor exceeding the immediate need"*. Necessity, or even "burdening public need/ *`umum al-balwa"* has been considered by jurists as a legitimate reason for the individual or the society to deal temporarily with what is prohibited as if it is allowed, providing that the general rule of prohibition would resume its applicability and effectiveness as soon as the case of individual or social necessity, is terminated. This is another essential comprehensive and fundamental principle that secures justice, relieves people of hardships, and allows the Islamic law to face changing circumstances in different times and places.

NO COERCION: RESPONSIBILITY WITHIN ABILITY

O You who have attained to faith! Forbid not such good things of life as God has made lawful to you, but do not transgress the bounds of what is right; verily, God loves not transgressors. Thus, partake of the lawful good things with which God has provided you, and be conscious of God, in whom you believe. [5:87-88]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُواْ لَا تُحَرِّمُواْ طَيِّبَٰتِ مَآ أَحَلَّ ٱللَّهُ
لَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوٓاْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ
ٱلْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾ وَكُلُواْ مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ ٱللَّهُ
حَلَٰلًا طَيِّبًا ۚ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنتُم
بِهِۦ مُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾

The above verse spells out the general legal principle of allowance: everything created is good and lawful for the human use unless the opposite can be proved by clear and decisive evidence [see the previously mentioned verse 2:29 and the commentary on it, and also the verse 45:13]. A human being who makes unlawful what God has allowed, or deprives himself/herself or others from it, is committing a violation of God's laws that is not less serious and damaging spiritually, conceptually and socially than that of one who allows what God has prohibited [also 10:59; 16:116]. Both transgress the bounds of what is right in opposite directions. Self-restraint and moderation ought to be encouraged, but not to be made a general rule of prohibition for all people, and one should never be confused or confusing in this regard. Muslims do not subscribe to a supposed contrast and conflict between the body and the spirit; instead, they believe they are both gifts of God, and they can both be developed together in a balanced and harmonious way that secures a healthy interaction and integration of human abilities.

And why should you not eat of that on which God's name has been pronounced, while He has clearly [and precisely] indicated to you what He has forbidden to you - except under compulsion of

وَمَا لَكُمْ أَلَّا تَأْكُلُواْ مِمَّا ذُكِرَ ٱسْمُ
ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَقَدْ فَصَّلَ لَكُم مَّا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ
إِلَّا مَا ٱضْطُرِرْتُمْ إِلَيْهِ ۗ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا

necessity? But behold, many people do lead others astray by their own whims while they lack [real] knowledge. Verily, your Lord is fully aware of those who transgress the bounds of what is right. But avoid all evil, be it outward or inward, as those who commit evil, surely, will get due requital for all that they have earned. [6:119-120]

لَيُضِلُّونَ بِأَهْوَآئِهِم بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ۗ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ
هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِٱلْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿١١٩﴾ وَذَرُوا۟ ظَٰهِرَ
ٱلْإِثْمِ وَبَاطِنَهُۥٓ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَكْسِبُونَ
ٱلْإِثْمَ سَيُجْزَوْنَ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَقْتَرِفُونَ
﴿١٢٠﴾

The first of the above verses is related to the dietary laws, and specifically to what is required for lawful slaughtering of an animal, but it emphasizes the important legal principle that what is prohibited in Islamic law is done clearly and precisely by God, while all other things are allowed in principle without any need for naming them one by one, as occurs in the case of prohibition [see the previously mentioned verses 2:29 and the commentary on it, the verse 45:13; the verse 5:7 and the commentary on it, and the verses 7:3, 16:116]. Besides this, there is the principle of temporary exemption from observing a prohibition in case of necessity [also 2:173; 6:145; 16:115]. These essential principles are central in the Islamic justice and their importance and priority ought to be recognized, if Shari'a is to be presented and conceived of properly, and if any contemporary Muslim society is serious in implementing it and reviving the practice of ijtihad.

So eat of all the lawful good things with which God has provided you, and be grateful for the blessings of God, if it is [truly] Him whom you worship. He has forbidden to you only carrion, and blood, and the flesh of swine, and any [food] over which the name of other than God has been invoked. But if one is forced [to eat these things] by necessity without wilful disobedience, nor exceeding one's immediate need, then God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious.
But do not utter falsehoods by letting your tongues determine [at your own discretion] "This is lawful and that is forbidden", thus attributing your own lies to God; surely, those who attribute falsehood to God will never attain success. A little enjoyment [may be their share in this life], but grievous suffering awaits them [in the eternal life to come]. [16:114-117]

فَكُلُوا۟ مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ ٱللَّهُ
حَلَٰلًا طَيِّبًا وَٱشْكُرُوا۟ نِعْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ إِن
كُنتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿١١٤﴾ إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ
عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْمَيْتَةَ وَٱلدَّمَ وَلَحْمَ ٱلْخِنزِيرِ
وَمَآ أُهِلَّ لِغَيْرِ ٱللَّهِ بِهِۦ ۖ فَمَنِ ٱضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ
بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ
﴿١١٥﴾ وَلَا تَقُولُوا۟ لِمَا تَصِفُ أَلْسِنَتُكُمُ
ٱلْكَذِبَ ۚ هَٰذَا حَلَٰلٌ وَهَٰذَا حَرَامٌ
لِّتَفْتَرُوا۟ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ٱلْكَذِبَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ
يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ٱلْكَذِبَ لَا يُفْلِحُونَ
﴿١١٦﴾ مَتَٰعٌ قَلِيلٌ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ
﴿١١٧﴾

The above verses not only present certain dietary rules, but also stress the principle of removing responsibility in cases of necessity [see the previously mentioned verse

2:173 and the commentary on it], and the principle that everything is allowed unless it is proven definitely to be forbidden [see the previously mentioned verse 5:87 and the commentary on it].

Let there be no coercion in matters of faith; the right way has become distinct from the [way of] error; hence, whoever rejects the powers of injustice and evil and believes in God has indeed taken hold of the most unfailing support that shall never give way, and God is All-hearing, All-knowing. [2:256]

لَآ إِكۡرَاهَ فِي ٱلدِّينِۖ قَد تَّبَيَّنَ
ٱلرُّشۡدُ مِنَ ٱلۡغَيِّۚ فَمَن يَكۡفُرۡ بِٱلطَّٰغُوتِ
وَيُؤۡمِنۢ بِٱللَّهِ فَقَدِ ٱسۡتَمۡسَكَ بِٱلۡعُرۡوَةِ
ٱلۡوُثۡقَىٰ لَا ٱنفِصَامَ لَهَاۗ وَٱللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ
عَلِيمٌ ٢٥٦

Human compulsion can be viewed as similar to a physical necessity since the human being has no free will in his/her actions, in either case. Such a person who is under physical or human compulsion cannot be held responsible for his/her actions in such circumstances, and there should thus be neither punishment nor a reward in such cases. If the Quran forbids compulsion in matters of faith [also 10:99; 11:28; 16:106], it merely presents the principle in its most serious case so that it may be implemented in all cases of compulsion, even those with less serious consequences. Compulsion in matters of faith is meaningless, since God judges a person according to his/her intention and free choice, and He is All-knowing of the real feelings and thoughts of every human being. The human mind is able to make a distinction between what is right and what is wrong, and God's message presents to this human mind sufficient evidence that proves its truthfulness.

According to the Quran, the human mind is capable of judging all matters including the faith, and without its conviction nothing can stand, regardless of the force used. It is the human being who has to liberate his/her mind and will from any compulsion or temptation practiced by any evil force to deprive him/her from making his/her own decision and fulfilling his/her whole responsibility. When one secures his/her human freedom and dignity, he/she enjoys full control over the sources of human power and energy be they physical, intellectual, and/or spiritual-psychological-moral, and thus can face the different changes in life's circumstances with balance and harmony, and this -for the human being - is *"the most unfailing support that shall never give way"*.

God does not burden any human being with more than he [/she] is well able to bear; [a person] is credited with whatever he[/she] has earned while he[/she] is debited with whatever he[/she] has brought upon him[/her]self.
"Our Lord! Take us not to task if we forget or make a mistake. Our Lord! Lay not upon us a burden such as you did lay upon those before us! Our lord! Do not require us to

لَا يُكَلِّفُ ٱللَّهُ نَفۡسًا إِلَّا وُسۡعَهَاۚ لَهَا مَا
كَسَبَتۡ وَعَلَيۡهَا مَا ٱكۡتَسَبَتۡۗ رَبَّنَا لَا
تُؤَاخِذۡنَآ إِن نَّسِينَآ أَوۡ أَخۡطَأۡنَاۚ رَبَّنَا
وَلَا تَحۡمِلۡ عَلَيۡنَآ إِصۡرٗا كَمَا حَمَلۡتَهُۥ
عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبۡلِنَاۚ رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلۡنَا

bear more than we have strength to bear. Pardon us, and forgive us, and have mercy on us; You are our Lord Supreme, so grant us Your support against those who stubbornly reject the truth". [2:286]

مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِۦ ۖ وَٱعْفُ عَنَّا
وَٱغْفِرْ لَنَا وَٱرْحَمْنَآ ۚ أَنتَ مَوْلَىٰنَا
فَٱنصُرْنَا عَلَى ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٢٨٦﴾

After stating that physical and human pressures on the human being and his/her free will undermine the legal responsibility of such a person and nullify any consequences of these pressures, the Quran goes further to put a more general principle that individual responsibility is merely within one's abilities, be they: physical or moral, individual or social. Accordingly, just as one is not held responsible for what he/she is forced to do, he/she is also not accountable for what he/she may forget or for a wrong that he/she may unintentionally do. A tradition of the Prophet combines these three defects of free will: pressure, forgetfulness and unintentional error, as factors that negate the individual responsibility. [reported by al-Tabrani in his extensive collection *al-Kabir*, Ibn Hibban , and Ibn Majah]. Another tradition states that any person's deed is only judged according to his/her intention [reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim]. In this way, every human being is credited with whatever he/she has earned, while he/she is debited with whatever he/she has brought upon him/herself. No individual or group can be made to bear, or to add to, another's burden [6:164; 17:15; 35:18; 39:7; 53:38].

Basically, the divine justice is compatible with human nature and individual abilities, and mere punishment is not its primary goal. Previously, God might have punished certain disobedient people by adding to their obligations [4:160-161; 6:146; 16:118], and that is what the believers pray to their Lord not to let them face. In the message of Muhammad, what is allowed is good in itself and what is forbidden is bad in itself, and thus this message *"lifts the burdens and shackles"* that were upon believers in previous revelations [7:157]. In this way God answers the believers' prayers, "*O Our Lord! Lay not upon us a burden such as you did place upon those who were before us*" [2:286]. It is fundamental in the Islamic law that human beings never bear burdens which they cannot bear, since "God does not burden any human being with more than one is well able to bear", and *"God does not want to impose any hardship on you, but wants to make you pure, and to complete His blessing upon you, so that you [all] may be grateful"* [5:6].

As for anyone who denies God after having attained to faith [he/she will be responsible for what he/she freely decides], except one who is forced to do this while his [/her] heart remains at rest in his[/her] faith; while one who willingly opens up a heart to a denial of the truth - upon all such [falls] God's condemnation, and tremendous suffering awaits them. [16:106]

مَن كَفَرَ
بِٱللَّهِ مِنۢ بَعْدِ إِيمَٰنِهِۦٓ إِلَّا مَنْ أُكْرِهَ
وَقَلْبُهُۥ مُطْمَئِنٌّۢ بِٱلْإِيمَٰنِ وَلَٰكِن مَّن شَرَحَ
بِٱلْكُفْرِ صَدْرًا فَعَلَيْهِمْ غَضَبٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ
وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٠٦﴾

The removal of individual responsibility about any action that a person is forced to do is previously mentioned in the verses 2:256, 286, and the commentary on them. The above verse adds a condemnation of anyone who willingly and with full choice opens his/her own heart or that of others to deny the truth after realizing that it is indeed the truth. Those who face pressures to do something wrong that they cannot resist may be partially or fully excused according to their circumstances, but the real evil-doers are those who use compulsion or temptation to turn away others from the truth, although they and their victims know that it is the right path which ought to be followed by sensible people.

PREREQUISITE PUBLIC AWARENESS

And as for one who, after guidance has become obvious to him [/her], cuts himself [/herself] off from the Conveyor of God's guidance and follows a path other than that of the believers, We shall leave him [/her] to that which such a person himself [/herself] has chosen, and shall cause him [/her] to endure hell; and how evil is such an end! [4:115]

وَمَن يُشَاقِقِ
ٱلرَّسُولَ مِنۢ بَعۡدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ ٱلۡهُدَىٰ
وَيَتَّبِعۡ غَيۡرَ سَبِيلِ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ نُوَلِّهِۦ مَا
تَوَلَّىٰ وَنُصۡلِهِۦ جَهَنَّمَۖ وَسَآءَتۡ مَصِيرًا
(١١٥)

This verse spells out an important principle of justice: one's moral or legal responsibility begins only "after guidance has become clear to him [/her]." The divine guidance and laws must be made clear to the public first, before any individual can be held responsible for violating any of them. Public information and education ought to have priority over legal procedures, although such procedures are essential to support and deter any transgression that becomes known to the people. In this way a split from the message of God as conveyed by His Prophet would be clearly demonstrated by an action or a behavior that is different from or opposite to that of the community of believers. Divine guidance that is made publicly clear without ambiguity, and then followed by the masses would make a deviation from it a concrete contradiction to the society, and thus one who is involved in such open defiance to the divine guidance and social order deserves to be held morally and legally responsible for his/her action. Such basic requirements can be applied in different degrees according to the difference in kind and seriousness of the offence. Some offences may not require detailed or repeated public information and education because they are not serious and should be given a light punishment, such as keeping the streets clean. However, again public information and education should provide the public with the basics about the offences and their penalties. The necessary details should be given and explained, in cases of serious crimes and penalties, when a new law is decided, and a certain time that allows such information should be secured before its enforcement.

BEYOND HUMAN BIASES

"O you who have attained to faith! Stand out firmly for justice, bearing witness to the truth for the sake of God, even if it be against your own selves, or your parents and kinsfolk. Whether the person concerned be rich or poor, God[' s justice] can best protect either of them. Do not, then, follow your own whims and thus swerve from justice, and whenever you try to distort [the truth] or refrain [from acting justly], behold, God is indeed fully aware of all that you do. [4:135]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا
ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ كُونُواْ قَوَّٰمِينَ بِٱلْقِسْطِ
شُهَدَآءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَوِ
ٱلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ وَٱلْأَقْرَبِينَ ۚ إِن يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ
فَقِيرًا فَٱللَّهُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا ۖ فَلَا تَتَّبِعُواْ
ٱلْهَوَىٰٓ أَن تَعْدِلُواْ ۚ وَإِن تَلْوُۥٓاْ أَوْ
تُعْرِضُواْ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ
خَبِيرًا ﴿١٣٥﴾

Justice needs to become a social moral value, it cannot be secured only by laws and the authorities who enforce them. Feelings of justice should be developed through the families, schools, neighborhoods, communities, mass media etc., in order that everyone become an active part in maintaining justice and resisting injustice. For example, if a person is unjust towards his/her spouse, child, student, partner, neighbor... etc., how can he/she be expected to observe and defend justice in the country as a citizen or public official? Justice and fairness should prevail over personal desires and interests in the innate self of everyone, thus helping it to prevail in the society. The believer who is observing justice in his/her own behavior and in the whole society proves to be conscious of God, and is bearing witness to the truth for His sake, since the believer feels God's full watchfulness and realizes that the total human accountability is before Him. No bias should be felt towards or against a wealthy person because of his/her power, nor towards or against a poor person because of his/her weakness. God's justice, as presented in His moral and legal guidance, comes for all people in all their circumstances. When individuals are raised and taught in this way, the whole society with its public officials, police officers, lawyers and judges would represent the value of justice and fairness in their public responsibilities, and they would find this easier as justice and fairness would have become a dominant moral value in the whole society. Any deviation or indifference from below would certainly be reflected among those who are entrusted with the enforcement of law and justice themselves.

O You who have attained to faith! Violate not the sanctity of the practices set up by God for worshipping Him, nor the sacred month [of pilgrimage], nor the offerings to God including those which may be made distinctive [as sacrifice] with garlands, nor the people resorting to the Inviolable Sacred House [of God], seeking

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا تُحِلُّواْ شَعَٰٓئِرَ
ٱللَّهِ وَلَا ٱلشَّهْرَ ٱلْحَرَامَ وَلَا ٱلْهَدْىَ
وَلَا ٱلْقَلَٰٓئِدَ وَلَآ ءَآمِّينَ ٱلْبَيْتَ ٱلْحَرَامَ
يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرِضْوَٰنًا ۚ وَإِذَا

favor and the goodly acceptance of their Lord; and [only] after your pilgrimage is over, you may hunt. And never let your hatred of some people who have [once] barred you from the Inviolable House of Worship lead you to aggression; but rather help one another in furthering virtue and God-consciousness, and help not one another in furthering evil and hostility; and remain conscious of God; behold, God is severe in retribution. [5:2]

حَلَلْتُمْ فَٱصْطَادُوا۟ ۚ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ
شَنَـَٔانُ قَوْمٍ أَن صَدُّوكُمْ عَنِ ٱلْمَسْجِدِ
ٱلْحَرَامِ أَن تَعْتَدُوا۟ ۘ وَتَعَاوَنُوا۟ عَلَى
ٱلْبِرِّ وَٱلتَّقْوَىٰ ۖ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا۟ عَلَى
ٱلْإِثْمِ وَٱلْعُدْوَٰنِ ۚ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ۖ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ شَدِيدُ ٱلْعِقَابِ ﴿٢﴾

Pilgrimage to the Inviolable House of God which was built by Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) and his son Isma'il (Ishmael) is a training for peacefulness and self-restraint during a required period of time and through required practices of worship: "*And whosoever undertakes pilgrimage in those [months appointed for it] should not while in pilgrimage, indulge in sexual activities, or immoral behavior, or wrangling; and whatever good you may do, God is fully aware of it. And make provision for yourselves; but, verily, the best of all provisions is God-consciousness; remain then, conscious of Me, O you who are endowed with deep thinking*" [2:197]. Hunting even for food during pilgrimage is forbidden, as the human being is required during this period of time to maintain peace within himsef/herself, with other people, and with all living creatures. All the practices of this "peace training" should be respected by all pilgrims, and no provocation for dispute or quarreling should emerge.

However, a violation of such a climate of peace ought not to, at anytime, justify aggression or permanent enmity since two wrongs do not make a right, and as soon as this violation is stopped, human relations should be harmonized and Islamic universal fraternity should be maintained. Justice cannot be secured unless the human being is trained to exercise such self restraint, and temporary situations and momentary emotions are not allowed to be permanent. The teaching to Muslims to strictly observe justice in all circumstances and with all people, even with those who may bar them from visiting and praying in the House of God and thus from fulfilling a main religious obligation, should significantly inspire them in all their relations throughout their whole lives, and cause them always to observe and defend peace and justice. Muslim solidarity cannot be used to extend the range of hostilities and further conflicts; instead it should develop co-operation for furthering virtue and righteousness nurtured and guarded by God-consciousness. As previously mentioned, peace and justice should be deepened in the bottom of individuals' hearts and minds, so that they may be reflected in the behavior of those who are entrusted with securing justice within the country and in world relations.

We have sent down upon you the Book, setting forth the truth, in order to judge between people according to what God has let you see; and so you should never be a defender of those who are

إِنَّآ أَنزَلْنَآ إِلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ بِٱلْحَقِّ لِتَحْكُمَ
بَيْنَ ٱلنَّاسِ بِمَآ أَرَىٰكَ ٱللَّهُ ۚ وَلَا تَكُن

لِّلْخَآئِنِينَ خَصِيمًا ﴿١٠٥﴾ وَ ٱسْتَغْفِرِ
ٱللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا
﴿١٠٦﴾ وَ لَا تُجَٰدِلْ عَنِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَخْتَانُونَ
أَنفُسَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَن كَانَ
خَوَّانًا أَثِيمًا ﴿١٠٧﴾ يَسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ
ٱلنَّاسِ وَ لَا يَسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ وَ هُوَ
مَعَهُمْ إِذْ يُبَيِّتُونَ مَا لَا يَرْضَىٰ مِنَ
ٱلْقَوْلِ ۚ وَ كَانَ ٱللَّهُ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطًا
﴿١٠٨﴾ هَٰٓأَنتُمْ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ جَٰدَلْتُمْ عَنْهُمْ فِى
ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا فَمَن يُجَٰدِلُ ٱللَّهَ عَنْهُمْ
يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ أَمْ مَّن يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَكِيلًا
﴿١٠٩﴾ وَ مَن يَعْمَلْ سُوٓءًا أَوْ يَظْلِمْ نَفْسَهُۥ
ثُمَّ يَسْتَغْفِرِ ٱللَّهَ يَجِدِ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورًا
رَّحِيمًا ﴿١١٠﴾ وَ مَن يَكْسِبْ إِثْمًا فَإِنَّمَا
يَكْسِبُهُۥ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِۦ ۚ وَ كَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلِيمًا
حَكِيمًا ﴿١١١﴾ وَ مَن يَكْسِبْ خَطِيٓـَٔةً أَوْ
إِثْمًا ثُمَّ يَرْمِ بِهِۦ بَرِيٓـًٔا فَقَدِ ٱحْتَمَلَ
بُهْتَٰنًا وَ إِثْمًا مُّبِينًا ﴿١١٢﴾ وَ لَوْلَا فَضْلُ
ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ وَ رَحْمَتُهُۥ لَهَمَّت طَّآئِفَةٌ
مِّنْهُمْ أَن يُضِلُّوكَ وَ مَا يُضِلُّونَ إِلَّآ
أَنفُسَهُمْ ۖ وَ مَا يَضُرُّونَكَ مِن شَىْءٍ ۚ
وَ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَ ٱلْحِكْمَةَ
وَعَلَّمَكَ مَا لَمْ تَكُن تَعْلَمُ ۚ وَ كَانَ فَضْلُ ٱللَّهِ
عَلَيْكَ عَظِيمًا ﴿١١٣﴾ ۞ لَّا خَيْرَ فِى كَثِيرٍ
مِّن نَّجْوَىٰهُمْ إِلَّا مَنْ أَمَرَ بِصَدَقَةٍ أَوْ
مَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ إِصْلَٰحٍۭ بَيْنَ ٱلنَّاسِ ۚ وَ مَن
يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ ٱبْتِغَآءَ مَرْضَاتِ ٱللَّهِ فَسَوْفَ
نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١١٤﴾

dishonest; and pray God for forgiveness, verily God is All-forgiving, All-merciful.
And do not argue on behalf of such as betray their own selves; surely God loves not one who betrays and is vicious. They try to hide themselves from the people while they would never hide themselves from God, since He is with them when they devise in the darkness of night what they say that He does not approve of; and God does encompass [with His knowledge] all that they do. You may well argue on their behalf in this world; but who will argue with God on their behalf on the Day of Resurrection, or who will act for them?
And if anyone does evil or wrongs his own self but thereafter seeks God's forgiveness, he[/she] will find God All-forgiving, Most Gracious.
And if any one commits a wrong, he[/she] commits it only to his[/her] own hurt, and God is indeed All-knowing, All-wise. But if anyone commits a wrong or an evil-doing and then casts the blame thereof on one who is innocent, he[/she] burdens himself[/herself] with the guilt of calumny and evident wickedness.
And but for God's favor upon you and His grace, some of those [who betray their own selves] would certainly have endeavored to lead you astray; yet [in fact] they will only lead their own selves astray; and to you they can do no harm in any way, as God has sent down to you the Book and wisdom and taught you the knowledge that you knew not [before]; and tremendous is the grace of God unto you.
No good is there in much of their private conversations, except such as are meant to enjoin charity, or an act of righteousness, or setting things right between people. Whoso does that, seeking God's acceptance, We shall surely grant him [/her] a mighty reward. [4:105-114]

These are impressive verses in teaching justice addressed to the Prophet personally, reminding him that he should never defend or argue for those who are dishonest and try to accuse the innocent with the wrong doing which they themselves have committed. The Prophet was merely a human being who might be deceived and cheated as a judge, since he had to rely on his discretion and practice ijtihad. A tradition of the Prophet sharply stated that fact, and urged the litigants to be conscious of God in presenting their case to him, since any of them might be more eloquent in presenting his/her case and so a mistaken ruling for his/her benefit would hurt him/her in the eternal life to come, while the judge would not be hurt as long as he did his best to understand the case and apply justice [reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, al-Termidhi, al-Nisa'i, and Ibn Majah].

According to Ibn-Ishaq and Ibn Kathir, the above verses were revealed after a thief, realizing that he had been witnessed by someone, threw the shield that he had stolen in the house of an innocent man. He then conspired with some of his clan to tell the Prophet that the accusation against him was false and that the shield would be found at the house of the innocent person and request that the Prophet state his innocence in public, although a witness had seen him steeling. The Prophet did so, following the concrete visible evidence which could not be refuted. The above ten verses were revealed to set the record straight, disclose the conspiracy which had been made to hide the truth and accuse an innocent man while the real wrong-doer would be mistakenly acquitted. Reports differ about the accused innocent man, and one indicated that he was a Jew, while the guilty one and those who conspired with him claimed to be Muslims [see Ibn Kathir in his commentary of the verses 4:105-114, vol I].

Justice has to be established for the sake of anyone and against anyone, whatever the clan, race, sex, social class, or faith may be, and whoever loved or hated the person may be. In a well known tradition, the Prophet acutely declared that discrimination in establishing justice destroys the society, and if his beloved young daughter might steal, he would definitely inflict on her the punishment of theft indicated in the Quran [reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, al-Termidhi, al-Nisa'i, and Ibn Majah]. The judge has to do his/her best in examining the case and making his/her ruling, and any conspiracy to hide the truth and destroy the evidence would not actually hurt the judge in any way. It it the deceivers who actually hurt their own selves [4:112-3], psychologically and morally in this world's life, and totally and permanently in the eternal life to come "*But if anyone commits a wrong or an evil-doing and then casts the blame thereof on one who is innocent, he[/she] burdens himself[/herself] with the guilt of calumny and evident wickedness*" [4:112].

O You who have attained to faith! Be ever steadfast in being conscious of God, and bearing witness to the truth in all fairness, and never let the hatred of anyone lead you to deviate from justice. Be just: this is the closest to God-consciousness. And remain conscious of God [at all times], for God is fully aware of all that you do. [5:8]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ
كُونُواْ قَوَّٰمِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَآءَ بِٱلْقِسْطِ ۖ
وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَـَٔانُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰٓ أَلَّا
تَعْدِلُواْ ۚ ٱعْدِلُواْ هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ ۖ
وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ خَبِيرٌۢ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨﴾

As previously stressed in the verse 4:135, the observance of justice should prevail over all personal emotions and desires. The previous verse mentioned the necessary resistance of natural love for oneself or one's family if such emotions are in conflict with justice, and this verse refers to the cases of hatred which should not let one who is conscious of God deviate from justice, as he/she ought to be always conscious of Him and to bear witness to the truth in all fairness for His sake. Observing justice is connected with God-consciousness which is the essence of faith. A previous verse in the same sura 5:2 emphasized that the hatred of the people who barred the Muslims from the Inviolable House of Worship should never justify aggression towards them on the side of Muslims. If this is the command with regard to such a serious emotional provocation, then what about less serious reasons? Consciousness of God, who commands justice, should prevail over any human favoritism or animosity, as *"God is fully aware of all that you do."* In this way the faith, morality and loyalty go together, and support one another.

DIFFICULTIES AVOIDED AND REMOVED

God commands justice, the doing of good, and giving to [one's] relatives; and He forbids all that is shameful, and that runs counter to reason, in addition to aggression; He exhorts you so that you may bear this in mind. [16:90]

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِٱلْعَدْلِ وَ ٱلْإِحْسَٰنِ وَ إِيتَآئِ ذِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ وَ يَنْهَىٰ عَنِ ٱلْفَحْشَآءِ وَ ٱلْمُنكَرِ وَ ٱلْبَغْىِ ۚ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾

Here is another verse that condenses the goals and fundamentals of the Islamic law. What God commands can be crystallized in these three concepts: the establishment of justice, going beyond justice and fairness to the best and most excellent, and the observation of these virtues in one's extended family so that they may be developed through the families to the society as a whole. Justice is comprehensive, and starts in the limited ranges of relations: among the family members, fellow workers, business partners, neighbors or local community; then it extends to various areas such as the social-economic, political, legal, judicial and international ones. One who is authoritative or dictatorial with his/her spouse or children cannot sincerely defend justice in the relations between the state and the people or between different countries in the whole world. Since the family is the nucleus of the society, justice, love and kindness should dominate the relations between its members, so that the family relations becomes a model for the whole society [25:74] that should be followed and extended. On the opposite side, what runs counter to moral decency or reason is forbidden, as well as any aggression or injustice committed by any party against another.

These goals and fundamentals of Islamic law may be indicated and elaborated on in legal documents or juristic works for the benefit of practicing lawyers, but are stressed

in the Quran to be read, recited and reflected on by all the believers. In this way the Muslim masses, or a considerable part of them, will develop a legal taste about human rights and principles of justice that will evolve into a mass culture and a mature public opinion which is aware of the general direction that the legal system ought to maintain. It must also be pointed out that however central a position justice occupies in legality and morality, one is urged to go beyond it and do the best and most excellent by being kind, generous, forgiving, magnanimous, and working hard to reach perfection [e.g. 2:109, 178, 195, 237; 3:159; 4:86; 5:13; 7:199; 16:125; 17:23, 53; 23:96; 24:22; 29:46; 35:32; 39:18; 42:40; 44:34; 64:14]. In this way faith, morality and legality work together and support one another in developing the human individual and society. Rules of Shari`a are meant to guard morality, but they only provide the basics which protect the security and interests of the whole society in a fair and balanced way, while individual morality has no limits in excellence, generosity, and altruism.

O You who have attained to faith! When you rise to pray, wash your faces and your hands [and arms] up to the elbows, and lightly wipe your heads [with water], and [wash] your feet up to the ankles. And after a complete sexual act, wash your whole body. But if you are sick, or on a journey, or if one of you comes out of the restroom, or if you have been in contact with women, and you find no water, then resort to wholesome soil and rub therewith lightly your faces and hands. God does not want to place you in a difficulty, but wants to make you pure, and to complete His blessings upon you, so that you all may be grateful. [5:6]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ
إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ فَٱغْسِلُواْ
وُجُوهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى ٱلْمَرَافِقِ
وَٱمْسَحُواْ بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى
ٱلْكَعْبَيْنِ ۚ وَإِن كُنتُمْ جُنُبًا فَٱطَّهَّرُواْ ۚ
وَإِن كُنتُم مَّرْضَىٰٓ أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ أَوْ
جَآءَ أَحَدٌ مِّنكُم مِّنَ ٱلْغَآئِطِ أَوْ لَٰمَسْتُمُ
ٱلنِّسَآءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُواْ مَآءً فَتَيَمَّمُواْ صَعِيدًا
طَيِّبًا فَٱمْسَحُواْ بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُم
مِّنْهُ ۚ مَا يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُم مِّنْ
حَرَجٍ وَلَٰكِن يُرِيدُ لِيُطَهِّرَكُمْ وَلِيُتِمَّ
نِعْمَتَهُۥ عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٦﴾

God's laws, even those for worship, are not meant to *"place you in a difficulty, but to make you pure, and to complete God's blessings upon you, so that you all may be grateful."* Islam does not subscribe to the philosophy of conflict between the body and the spirit, and thus to the belief that spiritual development has to come through the experience of physical hardships. Both physical and spiritual powers are created by the One Creator to function together, complementing and interacting with one another in unity and harmony within the human being. Accordingly, God's laws are meant to remove difficulties and inconveniences not to create them [see also 22:78]. Our jurists have considered this to be one of the main goals of the Islamic law [Shari'a], which is observed in all its details and should be maintained in their implementation.

Just as the pressures and inconveniences of sickness and travel are considered in the rules of prayers and fasting which are forms of worshipping God, laws for dealing among people are meant to secure an easy life with its essentials, needs and refinements. Whenever certain circumstances make the implementation of a rule of Shari'a result in mass difficulties or inconvenient pressures, the general principle of *"God does not want to place you in a difficulty"* [5:6, also 22:78], and *"God does not burden any human being with more than he[/she] is well able to bear"* 2:286, also :233; 6:152; 7:42; 23:62, would be applied to stop the public difficulty or to respond to the public necessity or need, and in such a case any legal detail can be suspended for the sake of maintaining the general goals and principles of Shari'a, until the pressuring circumstances change and the suspended legal detail can be implemented more easily. Besides, Islamic laws are merely meant to guard and protect the physical and moral purity and wholeness of the individual and the society, not just to impose taboos and punishment. The rules of Shari`a in all areas only aim to support the moral values that are nurtured by education through the family, the mosque, the school and the society as a whole: *"but to make you pure, and to complete His blessing upon you, so that you all may be grateful."*

And strive in His cause as you ought to strive; it is He who has chosen you [to carry His message], and has laid no hardship on you in [matters of] religion, through which you follow the creed of your forefather Ibrahim (Abraham). It is He who has called you "those who have submitted themselves to God, Muslims," both before and in this [revelation] so that the Conveyor of God's message may bear witness [for the truth] about you, and that you may bear witness [for it] about the whole humanity! So keep up the prayer, and render the purifying welfare dues [zakat], and hold fast to God! He is your Lord Supreme, and how excellent is this Lord Supreme and excellent is this Giver of Support. [22:78]

وَ جَٰهِدُوا۟ فِى ٱللَّهِ حَقَّ
جِهَادِهِۦ ۚ هُوَ ٱجْتَبَىٰكُمْ وَ مَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ
فِى ٱلدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ ۚ مِّلَّةَ أَبِيكُمْ
إِبْرَٰهِيمَ ۚ هُوَ سَمَّىٰكُمُ ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ مِن
قَبْلُ ۙ وَ فِى هَٰذَا ۛ لِيَكُونَ ٱلرَّسُولُ
شَهِيدًا عَلَيْكُمْ وَ تَكُونُوا۟ شُهَدَآءَ عَلَى
ٱلنَّاسِ ۚ فَأَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَ ءَاتُوا۟
ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَ ٱعْتَصِمُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ هُوَ مَوْلَىٰكُمْ ۖ
فَنِعْمَ ٱلْمَوْلَىٰ وَ نِعْمَ ٱلنَّصِيرُ ﴿٧٨﴾

These verses are another emphasis of the general legal principle that no hardship is laid on people in matters of religion [see the previous verse 5:6 and the commentary on it], and so legal efforts should always aim to remove hardships and pressures from people's lives. The verses also point out that Islam is not a new word coined by Muhammad for his message specifically, but merely means, linguistically and in its wider sense, "submission to God," as has been preached by the successive conveyors of God's message including the forefather Ibrahim (Abraham) and his successive descendants: Isma'il (Ishmael), Is-haq (Isaac) and Ya`qub (Jacob) and his descendants [e.g. 2:128, 131, 133, 136; 3:52; 5:44; 6:71; 40:66, and see " Submission to God is the Message of all Prophets" in Chapter Four,

The Faith III: Messages of God]. Muslims have to be grateful to God for the responsibility entrusted to them by Him to carry His message and bear witness for the truth about all of humanity. This is a responsibility, not a mere privilege to boast about, for their successive generations. Muslims merely represent a continuation of a long history, and they can only feel content with themselves when they fulfill their responsibility and exemplify, in their words and deeds, the merits of God's message and its essential principles of comprehensive justice and magnanimity, and removal of hardship from human life.

Those who follow the Conveyor of God's message, the unlettered Prophet, whom they find mentioned in the Torah and the Gospel that they had: [the Prophet] who enjoins upon them the doing of what is right and forbids them the doing of what is wrong, and makes lawful to them the good things of life and forbids the bad and impure things, and lifts from them their burdens and the shackles that have been [before] upon them. It is those who believe in him, and honor him, and support him and follow the light which is sent down with him, it is they who will attain to success. [7:157]

ٱلَّذِينَ
يَتَّبِعُونَ ٱلرَّسُولَ ٱلنَّبِيَّ ٱلْأُمِّيَّ ٱلَّذِى
يَجِدُونَهُۥ مَكْتُوبًا عِندَهُمْ فِى ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ
وَٱلْإِنجِيلِ يَأْمُرُهُم بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَىٰهُمْ
عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ وَيُحِلُّ لَهُمُ ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ
عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْخَبَٰٓئِثَ وَيَضَعُ عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ
وَٱلْأَغْلَٰلَ ٱلَّتِى كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ فَٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا۟ بِهِۦ وَعَزَّرُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ
وَٱتَّبَعُوا۟ ٱلنُّورَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أُنزِلَ مَعَهُۥٓ ۙ
أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾

In addition to inviting the believers in earlier revelations to the message conveyed by the Prophet Muhammad to whom they find references in their Torah and Gospel [especially Deuteronomy 18:15, 18; Gospel of St. John 14:16], the above verse points out the basic goals of Muhammad's message, which represent also the goals and fundamentals of the Islamic law. Shari'a aims to enjoin the doing of what is right and good and forbids the doing of what is wrong and evil, and it makes lawful the good things of life while it prohibits the bad and impure things. Its rules address the human mind and common sense, and thus they have no ambiguity or mystery. What is lawful or prohibited is decided according to the nature of the related matter, being good or bad in itself, and nothing is decided merely to restrict or discipline [as happened in earlier revelations e.g. 4:160; 6:146]. Shari'a is meant to remove the burdens and shackles from individual and social life [see previously the verse 5:6 and the commentary on it; also 22:78].

These goals and fundamentals represent the criteria for the acceptance in principle of any legal detail developed by human minds in our heritage, and for the development of any needed rule at present or in the future. Whatever fulfills these goals and complies with these fundamentals can be added temporarily to the body of the Shari'a with full awareness that such additions are human, temporary and changeable. Shari'a is not a closed set of legal rules but open and dynamic principles of justice and a continuously developing legal system. Through this openness, flexibility, continuous development, dynamism and interaction with the human creativity and social change, Islam declares the new and final

era in the religious law, as *"it lifts the burdens and shackles that were upon people [before]"*, lets the divine guidance interact with human thinking and change, and thus allows the divine principles and legal system to flourish continuously as long as human life is developing in this world.

MINIMUM LAWS, ONLY WHEN NEEDED

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا
تَسْـَٔلُوا۟ عَنْ أَشْيَآءَ إِن تُبْدَ لَكُمْ تَسُؤْكُمْ ۖ
وَ إِن تَسْـَٔلُوا۟ عَنْهَا حِينَ يُنَزَّلُ ٱلْقُرْءَانُ
تُبْدَ لَكُمْ ۖ عَفَا ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا ۗ وَ ٱللَّهُ غَفُورٌ
حَلِيمٌ ﴿١٠١﴾ قَدْ سَأَلَهَا قَوْمٌ مِّن قَبْلِكُمْ ثُمَّ
أَصْبَحُوا۟ بِهَا كَـٰفِرِينَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

O you who have attained to faith! Do not ask about matters which, if they were to be made manifest to you may cause you hardship; if you ask about them while the Quran is being revealed, they will be made manifest to you. God has let them unindicated [and you accordingly unbound] in this respect, for God is All-forgiving, All-clement. People before your time have asked such questions, and they in result thereof stubbornly denied the revelation. [5:101-102]

Laws should be issued only for what requires a legal binding formulation and sanctioning, since people ought to be left in principle to their own moral responsibilities and individual discretion. Besides this, the Quran is permanent, and legal flexibility is essential to cope with human diversity and social change. Tight details and totalitarian laws would contradict the human natural attitudes of free will and different discretion, and would rigidly paralyze the individual and the society and suppress their creativity.

The above verse corrects a mistaken idea that Shari'a is a totalitarian law and that every human deficiency has to be reformed by law, and that this is the Islamic way of reform. What is decided by Shari'a to be an obligation or prohibition is limited, while an enormously spacious amount of room is left to what is allowed and what can be dealt with by the human intellect. In his commentary on the above verse, Ibn Kathir [d.774 A.H./1372 C.E.] quoted an authentic tradition of the Prophet that states, "God determines obligations that should never be neglected, and prohibitions that should never be approached, while He left matters without being oblivious but out of His grace and about the details of these you ought not to pursue enquiries" [reported by al-Daraqutni]. Another tradition of the Prophet quoted also by Ibn Kathir in the same source states, "The greatest wrongdoing that one may commit is to ask about something which has not been forbidden, and it becomes forbidden as a result of his[/her] question". In the same line of the above verse, the Prophet taught the believers that they should avoid any questioning about what he might on purpose let undelineated explicitly so as to save them any additional obligations, and told them that such questioning had been a main factor that had led followers of previous divine messages to disaster, in addition to their discord with them [reported by Muslim, Ibn Hanbal, al-Nisa'i and Ibn Majah].

This is an invaluable legal principle of Shari'a that has been stressed with regard to

the verses 2:67-71 by Muhammad Rashid Rida who edited and extended the commentary of Muhammad Abduh, "*Tafsir al-Manar*", and who indicated that one has to avoid unnecessary enquiries about hypothetical matters that would cause laws to be more complicated and overloaded with details making their absorption and implementation difficult. Early Muslim generations acted according to this advice and they did not make the way of God too burdensome to be followed, since God Himself made it simple but clear and appropriate to the human nature. In contrast to this, later jurists added numerous rules according to their own intellectual reasoning and practice of ijtihad, which were sometimes unnecessary, and these additions were multiplied and accumulated through centuries, and thus Shari'a became a heavy burden on people. What is divine, permanent and perfectly concentrated was mixed with what is human, changeable and superfluous, and the reader may fail in many cases to make a distinction between the two. Instead of adhering to the invaluable Quranic legal principle indicated above and the generally formulated laws in the Quran and Sunna that respond to the essential human needs in all times and places, and understanding the enormous additional details within their historical and educational limits, we like to enjoy the voluminosity of our juristic heritage and think our admirable intellectual efforts in the past can solve our qualitatively different problems in the present. It is essential to conceive of what is divine, permanent and general in order to realize the nature of the Islamic justice and to develop what may be relevant and needed for our contemporary societies.

Say:"Have you considered what God has sent down to you as sustenance, yet you [on your own] hold forbidden some things thereof and [some things] lawful?" Say: "Has God indeed given you leave [to do this], or do you attribute what you yourselves forge to God?" And what think those who attribute their forged lies to God [will happen to them] on the Day of Resurrection? Verily, God is limitless in His bounty to human beings, but most of them are ungrateful. [10:59-60]

قُلْ أَرَءَيْتُم مَّآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ لَكُم مِّن رِّزْقٍ
فَجَعَلْتُم مِّنْهُ حَرَامًا وَ حَلَٰلًا قُلْ ءَآللَّهُ
أَذِنَ لَكُمْ ۖ أَمْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ تَفْتَرُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾
وَمَا ظَنُّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ٱلْكَذِبَ
يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى
ٱلنَّاسِ وَ لَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾

See previously mentioned verses 5:87-88 and their commentary.

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY

And as for those who have attained to faith and whose offspring follow them in faith, We shall unite them with their own offspring, and We shall not let any of their deeds go to waste; [but] every

وَ ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا۟ وَ ٱتَّبَعَتْهُمْ ذُرِّيَّتُهُم بِإِيمَٰنٍ
أَلْحَقْنَا بِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَ مَآ أَلَتْنَٰهُم مِّنْ

human being will be held in pledge for whatever he [/she] has earned. [52:21]

عَمَلِهِم مِّن شَيْءٍ ۚ كُلُّ ٱمْرِئٍۭ بِمَا كَسَبَ
رَهِينٌ ﴿٢١﴾

The above verse stresses the individual responsibility of every human being [see also 74:38 and 6:94, 164; 17:15; 19:95; 35:18; 39:7; 53:38-40]. Each parent and child will be judged individually according to his/her merits and deeds; however, raising children who are conscious of God and committed to morality adds to the merits of the parents, and so they will be rewarded by being united with their offspring, in addition to a full reward of their own deeds. Yet, the righteousness of the parents cannot on its own release the children from their own individual responsibility.

Has that [stubborn denier of the truth] never been told of what was [stated] in the scrolls of Moses and of Abraham who fulfilled [what he was charged with] that no bearer of a burden shall bear the burden of another; and that nothing shall be accounted to a human being but what he [/she] strives for; and that in time one's striving shall [accurately] come in sight, then he [/she] shall be requited for it in full. [53:36-41]

أَمْ
لَمْ يُنَبَّأْ بِمَا فِى صُحُفِ مُوسَىٰ ﴿٣٦﴾
وَإِبْرَٰهِيمَ ٱلَّذِى وَفَّىٰٓ ﴿٣٧﴾ أَلَّا تَزِرُ
وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَأَن لَّيْسَ
لِلْإِنسَٰنِ إِلَّا مَا سَعَىٰ ﴿٣٩﴾ وَأَنَّ سَعْيَهُۥ
سَوْفَ يُرَىٰ ﴿٤٠﴾ ثُمَّ يُجْزَىٰهُ ٱلْجَزَآءَ
ٱلْأَوْفَىٰ ﴿٤١﴾

Here is more emphasis on the individual responsibility that will be the just basis for God's judgement in the eternal life to come and for which any bargain will be of no use or acceptance [see the previous verse 2:286 and the commentary on it].

STATE AUTHORITY AND THE USE OF FORCE

Indeed, We sent aforetime the conveyors of Our messages with clear signs and messages, and We sent down along with them the book and the balance [to weigh right and wrong] so that people observe [in dealing with one another] justice; and We provided on the earth [for human use] iron and in it there is great might, as well as many benefits for human beings; and through all these [means] God marks out those who would stand up for [the principles of justice presented by] Him and the conveyors of His

لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا
بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ وَأَنزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ
وَٱلْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ ٱلنَّاسُ بِٱلْقِسْطِ ۖ
وَأَنزَلْنَا ٱلْحَدِيدَ فِيهِ بَأْسٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَنَٰفِعُ
لِلنَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ ٱللَّهُ مَن يَنصُرُهُۥ

messages, even though He [Himself] is beyond the reach of human sensory perception. Surely,God is All-mighty, Exalted in power. [57:25]

وَرُسُلَهُۥ بِٱلْغَيْبِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ قَوِىٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٢٥﴾

God's guidance, as represented in His revealed books, provides measurement for right and wrong, and learning and implementing this guidance develop a capability of judgement, supported by the Prophet's practice and the human's personal wisdom. God's revelation and the human's wisdom ought to be combined [2:129, 151, 231; 3:48, 81, 164; 4:54, 113; 5:110] in order to secure justice, since sticking to the letter alone and applying a text in a vacuum isolated from human social and intellectual dynamism can never secure justice. The human element represented in those who understand and implement the law among the authorities and the masses, ought to be educated and trained to observe and defend justice. Besides this, political power supported by material force for securing public order is essential to implement law which is developed as a social and intellectual outcome, and "iron" symbolizes such needed organizational and material power. Iron can also be of great benefits in a non-war environment, as the industrial development has proved since the human being discovered iron and developed its use for various aspects of human life. However, technological development has not maintained the balance between the human being and the machine, and thus the benefits of iron, industry and technology have become mixed with human sufferings [e.g. physical and social diseases, deterioration of environment and natural resources ... etc.]. God's guidance enables the human being to maintain the balance between the human and material development and provides the moral and legal safeguards for this badly-needed balance.

THE HUMAN DIGNITY

لَآ إِكْرَاهَ فِى ٱلدِّينِ ۖ قَد تَّبَيَّنَ
ٱلرُّشْدُ مِنَ ٱلْغَىِّ ۚ فَمَن يَكْفُرْ بِٱلطَّٰغُوتِ
وَيُؤْمِنۢ بِٱللَّهِ فَقَدِ ٱسْتَمْسَكَ بِٱلْعُرْوَةِ
ٱلْوُثْقَىٰ لَا ٱنفِصَامَ لَهَا ۗ وَٱللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ
عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٥٦﴾

Let there be no coercion in matters of faith; the right way has become distinct from the [way of] error: hence, whoever rejects the powers of injustice, and believes in God has indeed taken hold of the most unfailing support that shall never give way, and God is All-hearing, All-knowing. [2:256]

In the above verse, the Quran secures the rights of free belief, and what is inseparable from it such as free expression of this belief, and free assembly of the believers, whether in the form of a temporary gathering or a permanent organization for the support of this belief. These rights are essential for the public in order to maintain justice and stand against injustice, and to balance the public obligation of observing the law and order. What the Quran states as rights related to religious beliefs, applies to all rights related to anything that a human being may believe in or view in general. These rights have to be secured and defended practically and organizationally, and they must be primarily guarded by the people and their institutions and by the courts so as to challenge the enormous power of the modern state with all its overwhelming human skills and technology. Belief cannot initially and truly exist and continue unless it is accepted intentionally and voluntarily. God-consciousness cannot produce its moral and behavioral consequences if it is not deeply rooted in the human heart and mind by free will and full conviction. Pressures would lead to a false belief that would be fruitless in this life, and which cannot be accepted or rewarded by God in the eternal life to come. Accordingly, human consent is conditional for any legitimate obligation, and compulsion nullifies any human statement or agreement [see what preceded in this chapter about the same verse under "General Principles"].

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِذَا تَدَايَنتُم بِدَيْنٍ
إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى فَٱكْتُبُوهُ ۚ وَلْيَكْتُب
بَّيْنَكُمْ كَاتِبٌۢ بِٱلْعَدْلِ ۚ وَلَا يَأْبَ كَاتِبٌ
أَن يَكْتُبَ كَمَا عَلَّمَهُ ٱللَّهُ ۚ فَلْيَكْتُبْ
وَلْيُمْلِلِ ٱلَّذِى عَلَيْهِ ٱلْحَقُّ وَلْيَتَّقِ ٱللَّهَ
رَبَّهُۥ وَلَا يَبْخَسْ مِنْهُ شَيْـًٔا ۚ فَإِن كَانَ
ٱلَّذِى عَلَيْهِ ٱلْحَقُّ سَفِيهًا أَوْ ضَعِيفًا أَوْ لَا
يَسْتَطِيعُ أَن يُمِلَّ هُوَ فَلْيُمْلِلْ وَلِيُّهُۥ

O you who have attained to faith! Whenever you give or take credit for a stated term, set it down in writing, and let a scribe write it down between you equitably, and let not any scribe refuse to write it down as God has taught him; so let him write, and let the debtor dictate, but he [/she] should be conscious of God his [/her] Lord and not diminish anything of what he [/she] owes. And if the debtor is weak of mind or body, or is unable [by any means] to dictate himself [/herself], then let his[/her] guardian

dictate equitably.
And call upon two of your men to act as witnesses, and if two men may not be available, then a man and two women from among such as are acceptable to you as witnesses, so that if one of the two women makes a mistake, the other will remind her. The witnesses should not refrain [to give this testimony] whenever they are called upon. And be not loath to write down [the provisions of any debt] whether small or great, together with the time given [for paying back]; this is more equitable in the sight of God, and more helpful for testimony, and more likely it prevents you from having doubts. If, however, [the credit] concerns present merchandise that you transfer directly to one another, no blame is held against you if you do not write it down. And have witnesses whenever you trade with one another, but neither scribe nor witness must suffer harm; for if you do [harm them] it will be evil-doing on your part. And remain conscious of God, since it is God who teaches you [herewith], and God has full knowledge of everything. [2:282]

بِٱلْعَدْلِ ۚ وَٱسْتَشْهِدُوا۟ شَهِيدَيْنِ مِن
رِّجَالِكُمْ ۖ فَإِن لَّمْ يَكُونَا رَجُلَيْنِ فَرَجُلٌ
وَٱمْرَأَتَانِ مِمَّن تَرْضَوْنَ مِنَ ٱلشُّهَدَآءِ
أَن تَضِلَّ إِحْدَىٰهُمَا فَتُذَكِّرَ إِحْدَىٰهُمَا
ٱلْأُخْرَىٰ ۚ وَلَا يَأْبَ ٱلشُّهَدَآءُ إِذَا مَا
دُعُوا۟ ۚ وَلَا تَسْـَٔمُوٓا۟ أَن تَكْتُبُوهُ صَغِيرًا
أَوْ كَبِيرًا إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلِهِۦ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ أَقْسَطُ
عِندَ ٱللَّهِ وَأَقْوَمُ لِلشَّهَٰدَةِ وَأَدْنَىٰٓ أَلَّا
تَرْتَابُوٓا۟ ۖ إِلَّآ أَن تَكُونَ تِجَٰرَةً حَاضِرَةً
تُدِيرُونَهَا بَيْنَكُمْ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَلَّا
تَكْتُبُوهَا ۗ وَأَشْهِدُوٓا۟ إِذَا تَبَايَعْتُمْ ۚ
وَلَا يُضَآرَّ كَاتِبٌ وَلَا شَهِيدٌ ۚ وَإِن تَفْعَلُوا۟
فَإِنَّهُۥ فُسُوقٌۢ بِكُمْ ۚ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ۖ
وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ ٱللَّهُ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌ
﴿٢٨٢﴾

"... and do not conceal what you have witnessed, and one who conceals his[/her] heart is wrong-doing, and God has full knowledge of all that you do. [2:283]

وَإِن كُنتُمْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ وَلَمْ
تَجِدُوا۟ كَاتِبًا فَرِهَٰنٌ مَّقْبُوضَةٌ ۖ فَإِنْ أَمِنَ
بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا فَلْيُؤَدِّ ٱلَّذِى ٱؤْتُمِنَ
أَمَٰنَتَهُۥ وَلْيَتَّقِ ٱللَّهَ رَبَّهُۥ ۗ وَلَا تَكْتُمُوا۟
ٱلشَّهَٰدَةَ ۚ وَمَن يَكْتُمْهَا فَإِنَّهُۥٓ ءَاثِمٌ
قَلْبُهُۥ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٨٣﴾

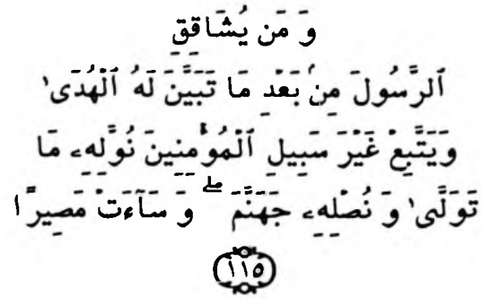
The above mentioned verse 2:282, which is the longest one in the Quran, states essential human rights and obligations in general, along with specific rules about taking or receiving credit in the civil or commercial transactions that the verse indicates. It is a collective responsibility and social obligation that one who enjoys material or personal advantages has to extend their benefits to whomever may be in need of them. Thus, those who can offer credit to others have to do this but they have the right to make the necessary safeguards, those who are capable scribes have to offer their skill when it is needed, and those who witness something have to testify and to say all that they witnessed without any addition or reduction to the truth [2:282, 283]. Besides, a skill such as writing is a social need and not only an individual one, and accordingly it should be provided by the state in public education and offered by it in the public service. The Muslim society is a civilized one

that deals with legal obligations seriously, and documentation is necessary in this respect.

Witnesses are needed in certain cases, and they have to fulfill their responsibility whenever they are needed. Requiring two female witnesses to substitute for a male one does not indicate any moral or intellectual inferiority of women as witnesses, but only underlines the historical and social fact that a woman may be less familiar with business practices and their legal requirements and thus may be less observant and mindful of what she witnesses and has to recall and state as a witness. Physical inconveniences such as menstruation or pregnancy discomforts may be considered in every case according to its own merits, but it must not affect the fundamental human right and obligation of a woman as a general principle. The verse limits this rule to female witnesses of credit transactions; it does not represent a general principle. A women's testimony is equal to and may probably prevail over a man's when she is weighed personally to be more reliable in reporting on what she has witnessed in other cases, as the prominent jurist Ibn al-Qayyim [d.751 A.H./1350 C.E.] rightfully stated in his book "*al-Turuq al-Hukmiyya*". However, if a woman is fully aware of business [especially a businesswoman, a female accountant or lawyer] the reason of the requirement of two women "so that if one of the two women makes a mistake the other will remind her" would be rare, and thus the requirement would lack its raison d'etre and would fulfill no need. Several jurists, including al-Tabari, al-Thawri and Ibn Hazm in addition to Abu Hanifa who made certain restrictions, stated that a woman is eligible for the position of a judge. How then may one think that Shari'a (Islamic law) considers a woman's testimony half of that of a man as a general principle?

If every witness has the right and obligation to tell what he/she has witnessed, he/she must be secured and protected from any harm that may be caused to him/her because of his/her testimony. That right has to be applied as a general principle to any expression of opinion by speech or writing or any other way of expression, which has to be an obligation as well. Rights of belief are meaningless without rights of expression and rights of assembly to practice and defend them. No harm from the authorities or others should reach anyone who expresses what he/she believes or views.

As for one who cuts himself[/herself] off from the Conveyor of God's message after guidance has become obvious to him/her, and follows a path other than that of the believers, We shall leave him[/her] to that which he himself[/she herself] has chosen to turn to, and shall cause him[/her] to endure hell, and how evil a journey's end. [4:115]



Moral and legal responsibility and obligation should be combined with, or even preceded by the human right to acquire education and information so that one can know what is morally or legally accepted or ordered and what is morally or legally forbidden and punished in this life or in the eternal life to come. The divine justice does not assume that every person has to know moral and legal laws on his/her own, nor does it rely on a superficial

way of publicizing these laws; instead it requires that the laws should be made known to the public in a way that makes them clear and convincing, and they should be supported and spread through the social behavior. Thus an individual violation of a law would contradict the human reason and the public practice. Several verses stress the idea of *"having God's guidance be clear in one's mind'"* as a prerequisite for human responsibility in this life and in the life to come [e.g. 47:25, 32]. Education and information represent a human right and obligation in an Islamic society. The family is the first institution that provides education and information to the children at the earliest stage. Later, those who are entrusted with authority from among the people by the people, *"'uli al-'amr minkum"* [4:59] are responsible for enabling the public - children and adults - to enjoy their right and fulfill their obligation of acquiring knowledge. A Prophet's tradition teaches that acquiring knowledge is the duty of every Muslim individual, male or female [reported by Ibn Abd el-Barr and al-Bayhaqi, and al-Tabari in his small collection], and it is the obligation of the authorities to enable the individuals to fulfill their responsibilities and potentials, [see for example Ibn Hazm, d. 456 A.H/1053 C.E.] *al-Ihkam*, vol. 5 ch. 31, esp pp. 113-114, Cairo]

O Children of Adam! Take your adornment at every place of worship; and eat and drink, yet do not go beyond natural and reasonable limits, for God loves not those who go beyond moderation. Say: "Who has forbidden the beauty that God has brought forth for His creatures, and the good things, among the means of sustenance?" Say: "They are [lawful] in the life of this world for all who have attained to faith, and they will be theirs alone on the Day of Resurrection." Thus, clearly do We spell out these messages to those who know.
Say:"Verily, my Lord has only forbidden shameful deeds, whether outward or inward, and evil-doing and trespassing against justice and reason, and associating with God others for which He never sent down any warrant, and attributing to God that of which you have no knowledge." [7:31-33]

يَٰبَنِىٓ ءَادَمَ خُذُوا۟
زِينَتَكُمْ عِندَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَكُلُوا۟ وَٱشْرَبُوا۟
وَلَا تُسْرِفُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُسْرِفِينَ
﴿٣١﴾ قُلْ مَنْ حَرَّمَ زِينَةَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّتِىٓ
أَخْرَجَ لِعِبَادِهِۦ وَٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ مِنَ ٱلرِّزْقِ ۚ
قُلْ هِىَ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ
ٱلدُّنْيَا خَالِصَةً يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ
نُفَصِّلُ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾ قُلْ
إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّىَ ٱلْفَوَٰحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا
وَمَا بَطَنَ وَٱلْإِثْمَ وَٱلْبَغْىَ بِغَيْرِ ٱلْحَقِّ
وَأَن تُشْرِكُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزِّلْ بِهِۦ
سُلْطَٰنًا وَأَن تَقُولُوا۟ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا
تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

Human beings not only have rights to essentials and needs, but also refinement and adornment. They have intelligence and taste, and ought to be enabled to fulfill the human potentials and not live within the limits of biological survival. God's messages have come to secure such a fulfillment of human potentials intellectually and legally, as every individual has the right and obligation for this fulfillment of his/her potentials, and those who are entrusted with authority from among the people by the people (*'uli al-'amr minkum*) have

to secure the individuals' fulfillment of their potentials. The above verse opposes the common understanding of the divine message as a restriction by nature or a suppression of human attitudes. God's guidance is balanced and fair and it aims to respond to all legitimate human aspirations. All that God has brought forth to beautify the human life and make it pleasant and enjoyable is legitimate and lawful for God's worshippers in this life, and they alone will enjoy such pleasures in the eternal life to come. God has only forbidden what may hurt the individual or the society physically, intellectually, morally or spiritually, since injustice can be done to the human merits in these various areas. Ascribing divinity to others beside God may mean a negligence or misuse of human intellectual and spiritual functions, and this can hurt the human individual and society in their stability, balance and capability.

Those who follow the Conveyor of God's message, the unlettered Prophet, whom they find mentioned in the Torah and the Gospel that they had: [the Prophet] who enjoins upon them the doing of what is right and forbids them the doing of what is wrong, and makes lawful to them the good things of life and forbids the bad and impure things, and lifts from them their burdens and the shackles that have been [before] upon them. It is those who believe in him, and honor him, and support him and follow the light which is sent down with him, it is they who will attain to success. [7:157]

ٱلَّذِينَ
يَتَّبِعُونَ ٱلرَّسُولَ ٱلنَّبِيَّ ٱلْأُمِّيَّ ٱلَّذِى
يَجِدُونَهُۥ مَكْتُوبًا عِندَهُمْ فِى ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ
وَٱلْإِنجِيلِ يَأْمُرُهُم بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَىٰهُمْ
عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ وَيُحِلُّ لَهُمُ ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ
عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْخَبَٰٓئِثَ وَيَضَعُ عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ
وَٱلْأَغْلَٰلَ ٱلَّتِى كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ فَٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا۟ بِهِۦ وَعَزَّرُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ
وَٱتَّبَعُوا۟ ٱلنُّورَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أُنزِلَ مَعَهُۥٓ ۙ
أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾

Since the message of God makes lawful the good things of life that are physically and morally wholesome and forbids the bad things that are physically and morally unhealthy and harmful, it is a human right to enjoy these good things of life. It is the obligation of the Islamic authorities to secure the acquisition of these good things through fair chances of work and an equitable compensation of the human effort for those who are able to work, or through social aid for those who are not able to work temporarily or permanently. The bad and harmful things which are prohibited by God are not only alcohol and pork, but also the non-nutritive or harmful foods or drinks which a person may have to consume because he/she cannot afford to use what is nutritive, or because of bad habits. Enjoining the doing of what is right and good implies the human right of getting education: children and adults, to know what is right and good and what is wrong and evil for them physically, intellectually and morally through educational institutions or mass media. Before inflicting penalties on those who do wrong, or hand in hand with these penalties, the public should be educated about God's guidance and how it secures the good of the individual and the society, physically and morally 4:115. Education and social reform are essential to maintain the doing of what is right and good and to restrict the doing of what

is wrong and evil. God's message releases the human beings from their burdens and shackles, whether these were imposed through individual ignorance, shortsightedness and whims or through the misguidance and exploitation of one another. Those who believe in this message and support it have to secure the human rights and obligations which it indicates in all avenues of life, and maintain comprehensive justice for all the society and, as much as possible, for the whole world, by developing production, distribution and exchanges of all essentials, needs and refinement, as the goals of Shari'a guide.

God commands justice, the doing of good, and giving to [one's] relatives; and He forbids all that is shameful, and that runs counter to reason, in addition to aggression; He exhorts you so that you may bear this in mind. [16:90]

إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِٱلْعَدْلِ وَ ٱلْإِحْسَٰنِ وَ إِيتَآيِٕ
ذِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ وَ يَنْهَىٰ عَنِ ٱلْفَحْشَآءِ
وَ ٱلْمُنكَرِ وَ ٱلْبَغْىِ ۚ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾

Justice is comprehensive, and applies to the ruled as well as the rulers [see the commentary on the previous verse in the following section "The Rulers-Ruled Relations"]. The individual has rights which should be secure for him/her, and at the same time he/she has to fulfill his/her obligations if he/she acts justly. The authorities have the obligation to secure individual rights by law and in practice, while they also have the right to obtain the fulfillment of each individual's obligations, the maintenance of public order and the support and co-operation of the people. Mutual rights and obligations have to be observed by the rulers and the ruled. However, the authorities may enjoy the upper hand when they represent and defend public rights. Thus a protection of public property or public order and tranquility or public health or public economic and financial stability have priority over individual interests when certain measures that conflict with these interests are necessary. On the other hand, the obligations of the authorities are greater, and cannot be merely equal or reciprocal to an individual violation of law, since the authorities represent the whole society. For example, the rights of the defendant and the prisoner of war should be secured, although each has transgressed the public security.

Going beyond justice to magnanimity and kindness should be urged among the people and the authorities when this is impressive and reforms the offensive attitudes of the wrong-doer. Special care ought to be devoted to the family as it is the early social milieu for educating and practicing rights and obligations together and observing the balance between them. Besides, it is a human need that immorality and aggression have to be forbidden and in some cases punished, just as morality and justice ought to be secured and encouraged. Chances for good and evil, for developing human potentials and destroying or crippling them cannot be equal in the name of justice, since hurting others as individuals or as a society is against the very essence of justice.

And never pursue that of which you have no knowledge; verily, the

وَ لَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ

hearing, and the sight, and the heart - for all of these you will be accountable [on the Day of Judgement]. [17:36]

لَكَ بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلسَّمْعَ وَ ٱلْبَصَرَ
وَ ٱلْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْـُٔولًا ﴿٣٦﴾

Enjoying the human senses and maintaining and developing their abilities: physical, intellectual, spiritual and moral, represent a basic human right. However, this right, as any other right, is combined with the obligation to refrain from any misuse or abuse of it. Attempts to use one's sensory abilities to violate the privacy of others or to know the secrets of the state are strictly forbidden. Sensory enjoyment should not be at the expense of other individuals or of the rights of the society as a whole. Absolute freedom of one individual is a violation of the freedom of other individuals and of the society as a whole, and it may hurt the individual's own morality as well. Spreading rumors that may hurt individuals or the society without scrutiny, or spying and violating home sanctity and personal privacy to get information are morally and legally forbidden [verses 24:27-29; 49:6-8, 12].

We have conferred dignity on the children of Adam, and carried them on land and sea, and provided for them sustenance out of the good things of life, and favored them far above many of Our creation.[17:70]

وَ لَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِىٓ ءَادَمَ وَ حَمَلْنَٰهُمْ فِى
ٱلْبَرِّ وَ ٱلْبَحْرِ وَ رَزَقْنَٰهُم مِّنَ ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ
وَ فَضَّلْنَٰهُمْ عَلَىٰ كَثِيرٍ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا
﴿٧٠﴾

God has favored the human being with the spiritual and intellectual faculties to make judgements about right and wrong, and with free will to choose what he/she may believe in or how he/she may act [e.g. 90:10; 91:7-9]. Human beings can use their physical and intellectual abilities to move from place to place through land or sea, or by other ways including air and space [e.g. 42:29; 45:12-13]. It is the right and obligation of the individuals, the society and the authorities to secure and develop the human powers to their full potentials in various dimensions. The human being is created to be universal, and to move from place to place to earn his/her living or to gain more knowledge, and to contact other peoples and develop human relations and economic co-operation with them.

It is a human right and obligation to acquire sustenance out of the good things of life that ought to be nutritive and fairly distributed in the society and exchanged in the whole world. This has to be secured through fair chances for work, and laws that secure justice in business and in the labor market and prevent exploitation and fraud by all means. The human dignity cannot be maintained and developed unless awareness of individual and public responsibility is nurtured, and the fulfillment of human obligations is combined with the demanding of human rights. The "human dignity" which the Quran states combines rights and duties. It is comprehensive for the human totality: physical, intellectual, spiritual and moral. It is universal as it secures dignity for the human being as a human being, regardless of gender, ethnicity, faith or power. It is stated by God who is the Creator of all humanity and is not biased with or against any of them, and it is guarded by God-consciousness which is deeper in its roots and wider in its range than any

human philosophy, national constitution or international document.

O You who have attained to faith! Do not enter houses other than your own, until you have obtained permission and have felt welcome and have greeted the people thereof; this is better for you and it [aims] to remind you [of the proper behavior]. And if you do not find anyone therein, do not enter until permission is given to you; and if you are told to go back, then go back; this is more righteous on your side, and God has full knowledge of all that you do. It will not be held against you, if you [freely] enter houses not used as residence, which are of some use for you; and God knows all that you do reveal, and all that you may conceal. [24:27-29]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا تَدۡخُلُواْ
بُيُوتًا غَيۡرَ بُيُوتِكُمۡ حَتَّىٰ تَسۡتَأۡنِسُواْ
وَتُسَلِّمُواْ عَلَىٰٓ أَهۡلِهَاۚ ذَٰلِكُمۡ خَيۡرٞ لَّكُمۡ
لَعَلَّكُمۡ تَذَكَّرُونَ ٢٧ فَإِن لَّمۡ تَجِدُواْ
فِيهَآ أَحَدٗا فَلَا تَدۡخُلُوهَا حَتَّىٰ يُؤۡذَنَ
لَكُمۡۖ وَإِن قِيلَ لَكُمُ ٱرۡجِعُواْ
فَٱرۡجِعُواْۖ هُوَ أَزۡكَىٰ لَكُمۡۚ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا
تَعۡمَلُونَ عَلِيمٞ ٢٨ لَّيۡسَ عَلَيۡكُمۡ جُنَاحٌ
أَن تَدۡخُلُواْ بُيُوتًا غَيۡرَ مَسۡكُونَةٖ فِيهَا
مَتَٰعٞ لَّكُمۡۚ وَٱللَّهُ يَعۡلَمُ مَا تُبۡدُونَ وَمَا
تَكۡتُمُونَ ٢٩

Human rights protect one's home and privacy, the same as they protect one's person. The above verses teach the medieval Arabs and all people the sanctity of homes and a refined etiquette in entering them. One cannot enter another's home unless he/she obtains permission and feels that he/she is welcome, and permission should be asked in a decent way [49:4-5]. Such measures secure the privacy of the home's occupant, and the integrity of the visitor who is taught in other verses to resist any desire of spying, backbiting and conjecture [49:6, 12]. Libel and slander are strictly forbidden morally and legally, and any offense against someone's integrity and honor is considered grave and is punished deteringly [24:11-21; 23-24]. While the Quran considers inter-visiting a social need that should develop among the believers, it takes measures to guard the rights of home inviolability and privacy. The visitor is not only required to obtain permission to enter the home of those who are visited, but he/she has to feel that he/she is welcome by those whom he/she is visiting, and should exchange greetings with them. This is not required for places open for the public, such as business facilities, professional offices, governmental agencies, schools, museums, hotels etc.

If two groups of believers fall to fighting, make peace between them; but then, if one of them commits aggression against the other, then fight the one that commits aggression until it reverts to God's commandment, and if it reverts, make peace between the two [groups] with justice, and deal equitably [with both]: God loves those who act equitably. [49:9]

وَإِن طَآئِفَتَانِ مِنَ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ ٱقۡتَتَلُواْ
فَأَصۡلِحُواْ بَيۡنَهُمَاۚ فَإِنۢ بَغَتۡ إِحۡدَىٰهُمَا
عَلَى ٱلۡأُخۡرَىٰ فَقَٰتِلُواْ ٱلَّتِي تَبۡغِي
حَتَّىٰ تَفِيٓءَ إِلَىٰٓ أَمۡرِ ٱللَّهِۚ فَإِن
فَآءَتۡ فَأَصۡلِحُواْ بَيۡنَهُمَا بِٱلۡعَدۡلِ
وَأَقۡسِطُوٓاْۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلۡمُقۡسِطِينَ ٩

Justice is comprehensive, and it is an essential command of God, which has to be observed by all the believers, men and women. People should not stand as passive outsiders when a party is suffering from injustice and its human rights are violated. They have to make all political pressures and use legal measures to force the violators to stop their violation. If all these efforts fail to secure justice for the wronged party, and the violators go further to commit a serious aggression, the party that suffers has to struggle to defend its rights and resist the aggression, and other believers have the obligation to support the victim of aggression. The verse states an essential principle of a universal concern about defending justice and human rights.

Indeed, We sent aforetime the conveyors of Our messages with clear signs and messages, and We sent down along with them the book and the balance [to weigh right and wrong] so that people observe [in dealing with one another] justice; and We provided on the earth [for human use] iron and in it there is great might, as well as many benefits for human beings; and through all these [means] God marks out those who would stand up for [the principles of justice presented by] Him and the conveyors of His messages, even though He [Himself] is beyond the reach of human sensory perception. Surely, God is All-mighty, Exalted in power. [57:25]

لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا
بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَ أَنزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ
وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ ۖ
وَأَنزَلْنَا الْحَدِيدَ فِيهِ بَأْسٌ شَدِيدٌ وَ مَنَافِعُ
لِلنَّاسِ وَ لِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ مَن يَنصُرُهُ
وَرُسُلَهُ بِالْغَيْبِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ
(٢٥)

The above verse was presented with a commentary in the "General Principles" but it is repeated here since its relevance to human dignity is obvious. God's books revealed and conveyed to the people by the conveyors of His message provide them with means of measurement to weigh right and wrong with justice and to deal with one another and make judgements about these dealings with fairness and balance. God-consciousness and moral values provide the solid base for the human rights and obligations, but people also need human wisdom in explaining and implementing God's messages about justice, and this wisdom is represented in the practice of the conveyors of God's messages and the authorities afterwards. Besides this, there should be a power to secure the enjoyment of rights and fulfillment of obligations, and it is represented in the compulsory power that only the state authorities enjoy through the armed forces, and this is symbolized in the verse by "iron". However, iron has great benefits for human beings beside its use in weaponry, and this has been proved throughout the long centuries of human civilization. A balance should be made in the use of God's gifts of minerals and energy in defense and in civilizational development, and another balance should be observed between the material technological advances and the human spiritual and moral development.

RULERS-RULED RELATIONS

HONESTY

وَ لَا
تَأْكُلُوٓا أَمْوَٰلَكُم بَيْنَكُم بِٱلْبَٰطِلِ وَ تُدْلُوا
بِهَآ إِلَى ٱلْحُكَّامِ لِتَأْكُلُوا فَرِيقًا مِّنْ
أَمْوَٰلِ ٱلنَّاسِ بِٱلْإِثْمِ وَ أَنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ
﴿١٨٨﴾

And devour not one another's possessions wrongfully, nor offer them to those who rule, so as to wrongfully and knowingly devour what is owned by others. [2:188]

Corruption is a serious peril for the relations between the rulers and the ruled, and it can occur in both directions: there may be an attitude from the ruled to corrupt and an attitude from the rulers to be corrupted. These attitudes often develop simultaneously, but sometimes one party may take the initiative and persuade the other to participate in the corruption. The above verse addresses the ruled who may use corruption to deprive one another of their rights or possessions. A tradition of the Prophet condemns the person who offers a bribe, the person who accepts it and any who mediates between both [reported by Ibn Hanbal]. The same rule applies also to any transgression of public rights or property. Honesty is a social value that should be observed by the whole society, and any dishonest initiative may start an epidemic. Thus, moral education and God-consciousness should be combined with social justice. Those who enjoy authority, be it political, administrative, judicial or another kind, have to resist any temptation to invite or encourage corruption directly or indirectly, or to receive it. However, the wide masses are more important in maintaining honesty in the society as a whole and guarding those who are in power against any corruption. Yet despite this, it may be remarkable that in any given time and place there are honest have-nots and corrupting and corrupted haves!

وَ لْتَكُن مِّنكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ
إِلَى ٱلْخَيْرِ وَ يَأْمُرُونَ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ
وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ ۚ وَ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ
ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

Let there be a community from among you that invites to all that is good, and enjoins the doing of what is [known by common sense and sound minds to be] right, and forbids the doing of what is [known by common sense and sound minds to be] wrong, and it is they who attain to success. [3:104]

This is an invitation to develop groups, bodies and means that take the initiative to positively practice the virtues which are supposed to be shared by the whole Muslim society [3:110], namely inviting to all that is good and enjoining the doing of what is known by common sense and sound minds to be right (*ma`ruf*), and forbidding the doing of what

is known by common sense and sound minds to be wrong (*munkar*). These groups and bodies may be governmental, public or a mixture of both, national or local. Political parties, professional unions, or social organizations may be contemporary representatives of such groups. Besides these, educational institutions and mass media provide effective vehicles to develop and extend this constructive function. Through such groups and means the whole public becomes trained to speak out and express its opinions as individuals or groups, in words or actions and to listen to different views. The Quran warns strongly and repeatedly, against the damaging consequences of social passiveness towards moral deviation and deterioration, whether this comes from below or from above [8:25; 11:113], as do the traditions of the Prophet. A significant one pictures the destiny of the society as that of passengers on a ship who may all lose their life if they allow one person to cause the ship to sink [reported by al-Bukhari, Ibn Hanbal and al-Tirmidhi].

You are the best people that has ever been brought forth for [the good of] humanity: you enjoin the doing of what is [known by common sense and sound minds to be] right and forbid the doing of what is [known by common sense and sound minds to be] wrong, and believe in God. Had the People of the Book attained to [such a] faith, it would have been for their own good; among them are some who have faith, but most of them are iniquitous. [3:110]

كُنتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ
أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ ۗ
وَلَوْ ءَامَنَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَٰبِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُم ۚ
مِّنْهُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ الْفَٰسِقُونَ ﴿١١٠﴾

God does not merely send down His messages - for which its conveyors strived hard and suffered much - for people to merely accept the fact that there is One God with the same passiveness that one may have in accepting the fact that any star or planet or galaxy exists. Such a passive acknowledgement or knowledge would not cause the human beings any benefit, and definitely God is in no need of it. God's messages aim that God-consciousness would have its deep and wide effects in the human heart and mind and that these effects spread from the individuals to the whole society. God-consciousness ought to deepen and widen morality, and urge positive stands and actions of enjoining what is right and good and forbidding what is wrong and evil, otherwise an emerging deviation, however limited it may be in the beginning, may spread and reach most of the society if it is not stopped as early as possible [8:25; 11:113]. This is the essence of all of God's messages, and the believers in any of them are invited to meet with Muslims on these common grounds. Although many of these believers have chosen to be indulged in egotistic and materialistic interests, the Quran fairly states that some of them are sincerely committed to the faith, although they maintain their beliefs and have never thought of conversion to Islam. Besides the inspiring teaching of fairness and honesty in making judgement about others, the verse underlines the common ground of moral activism on which Muslims can meet others to maintain and develop a moral watchfulness in the whole society and in all fields, especially in the rulers-ruled relations.

MORAL AND PRACTICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR LEADERSHIP

And it was by God's grace that you [O Prophet] did deal gently with your followers; and if you have been harsh and hard of heart, they would have indeed broken away from you. Pardon them, then, and pray that they be forgiven, and take counsel with them in matters [that need such counselling], and when you have decided upon what has to be done [as a result of the counselling], put your trust in God; surely, God loves those who put their trust in Him. [3:159]

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ
مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ لِنتَ لَهُمْ ۖ وَلَوْ كُنتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ
ٱلْقَلْبِ لَٱنفَضُّوا۟ مِنْ حَوْلِكَ ۖ فَٱعْفُ عَنْهُمْ
وَٱسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِى ٱلْأَمْرِ ۖ
فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ ﴿١٥٩﴾

The above verse points out an essential merit of leadership: appreciation of human attitudes, inclinations, weaknesses and limitations, and meeting them with understanding, compassion and forgiveness. A leader should keep always in mind the experienced positives and the future potentials of any person when he/she deals with him/her, and should avoid restricting himself/herself only to the given moment. Besides, the leader represents all of the people whom he/she leads, and cannot deal with a person as if this dealing is simply part of a relation between any two individuals. A leader has to be mindful of the effect of his/her words or actions in response to a particular person or on all of the people under his/her leadership. Whenever a follower crosses the boundaries and makes an error, the leader has not only to pardon such a person but also to pray for God's forgiveness for this person as a sign of the leader's genuine pardoning.

Participation in decision-making of matters of common concern - and even sometimes in private matters with certain importance - is essential in the relations between the leader and those whom he/she leads, and if this was required in the relation between the Prophet - who was guided and supported by God - and the believers, it should definitely be required in the relations between the rulers and the ruled in general [see 42:38]. The Prophet always maintained this consultation in all matters of common concern such as war, and even in a private affair that represented a common concern [e.g. the false rumors about his wife 'A'isha, see 24:11-25]. Participation in making public policy and important decisions is a basic human right that should be secured for everyone, whatever his/her faults and shortcomings before might have been. The Prophet was urged to forgive those who had erred and to involve them in making decisions about matters that required such involvement. A human being is never infallible, and fallible human beings should enjoy their rights and participate in common matters and never be isolated, since interaction of individuals with the whole society secures self-correction for all. In the same time, such a collective discussion of common matters does not mean anarchy. As soon as a decision is reached as a result of such a discussion, it should be accepted and carried out by all. The leader's decision is not separate from or parallel or equal to common consultation, but it is reached through this consultation and is based on it, as many classical commentators on the Quran have pointed out [e.g. see the examples given by Ibn Kathir in his commentary

on the above verses, especially his consultation with his Companions in the battles of Badr, the Ditch (al-Khandaq) or the Confederates (al-Ahzab), and in the false accusation of his wife 'A`isha].

RULERS FROM THE PEOPLE ENTRUSTED WITH AUTHORITY BY THEM

God does command you to render back all with which you have been entrusted to those who are entitled to it, and whenever you rule over people, to rule with justice. Excellent is what God exhorts you to do; surely, God is All-hearing, All-seeing. O You who have attained to faith! Obey God, and obey the Conveyor of His message, and among you those who have been entrusted with authority by you. If you differ on any matter among yourselves, refer to it God and the Conveyor of His message, if you do [truly] believe in God and the Last Day. This is the best [for your common benefit] and the best for proper comprehension [and final determination]. [4:58-59]

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَن تُؤَدُّواْ ٱلْأَمَٰنَٰتِ إِلَىٰٓ أَهْلِهَا
وَ إِذَا حَكَمْتُم بَيْنَ ٱلنَّاسِ أَن تَحْكُمُواْ
بِٱلْعَدْلِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُم بِهِۦٓ ۗ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًۢا بَصِيرًا ﴿٥٨﴾ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا
ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ أَطِيعُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَ أَطِيعُواْ
ٱلرَّسُولَ وَ أُوْلِى ٱلْأَمْرِ مِنكُمْ ۖ فَإِن
تَنَٰزَعْتُمْ فِى شَىْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ
وَ ٱلرَّسُولِ إِن كُنتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَ ٱلْيَوْمِ
ٱلْأَخِرِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَ أَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا ﴿٥٩﴾

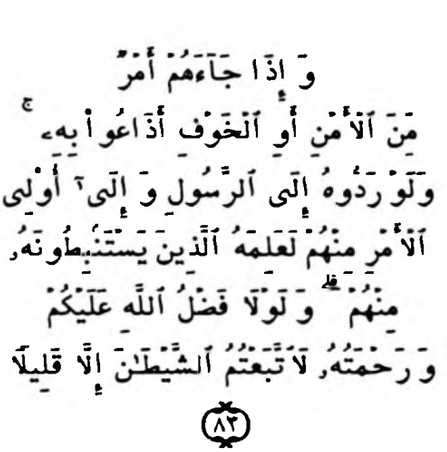
The authority over people is a responsibility for those who are entrusted from among the people by them with it ('uli al-'amr minkum), as they have to practice their authority with justice. The supreme law for a Muslim society is the law of God as it is revealed in the Quran and in the authentic and permanently binding traditions of the Prophet (*Sunna*). It has superiority and control over any other social or legal rule that represents a human product, although respect of the authorities and loyalty to them are essential and strongly ordered by the Quran and Sunna. The absolute obedience without hesitation or reservation is to God's laws, then comes the obedience to the leaders whose decisions have to be over to make sure that they should comply with God's moral and legal teachings and respond to the human needs. The imperative "obey" comes first in the verse 59 to order obedience to God alone indicating the superiority, initiality, and independence of God's authority, while comes next to required obedience to the Prophet together with those who are entrusted from among the people with authority by them.

The authentic traditions of the Prophet that represent God's revelation are permanently binding and form an inseparable part of God's law. Meanwhile, his words and practices which represent his human thinking and experience, as in conducting war in the battlefield, or over any other matter in which the Prophet himself relied on his personal knowledge and discretion, had to be obeyed by his Companions as coming from their supreme leader but cannot be considered permanently binding laws [see for example the commentary of Ibn Kathir and al-Qurtubi [d. 671 A.H./1272 C.E.] on the verse 3:159]. The leaders who succeed the Prophet after his death in his capacity as a leader, should be

entrusted with authority from the people by the people themselves, as the above verse 59 strongly emphasizes. People have their responsibility as they participate in choosing their leaders, in the policy making process and in deciding the important matters of common concern [3:159; 42:38] as well as in watching their rulers and observing their compliance with the supreme legal and moral norms of God.

In practicing their responsibilities, differences may emerge among those who are entrusted with authority by people, as they represent an institutional collective leadership not a single person, as the plural form used in the verse 59 indicates. Besides, differences may occur between the leadership as a whole on one side and the public on the other, and such differences should be sorted out by an institution that has supreme power in interpreting God's laws through advisory and judicial capacities; "*This is the best [for the common benefit] and the best for proper comprehension [and a final determination].*" The prominent jurist Ibn Taymiyya called rightfully the above verses "the verses about the rulers and the ruled", as they spell out clearly the mutual rights and obligations of both.

And when there comes to them some matter, be it of security or fear, they spread it, whereas if they would but refer it to the Conveyor of God's message and to those from among the believers who have been entrusted with authority by them, such of them who investigate the matter would have directly known [the facts] about it from them. And but for God's bounty and grace towards you, all but a few of you would have followed Satan. [4:83]



It is a public obligation to avoid spreading news that affects public security without scrutinizing it or investigating its sources. While the ruled have to refer such sensitive matters to those from among them who are entrusted with authority by them ('uli al-'amr minhum), the rulers have to maintain the flow of accurate information to the people: from the beginning in order to secure the right of the public to be informed in general, or on request, and with certain safeguards as necessary. In any case, the courts should always ensure that the public rights of demanding public information and the state rights of restricting its release are secured in a balanced way in their different cases. The verse states that when anyone who wants to investigate a matter related to public security addresses the concerned authorities directly he/she "would have known [the facts about] it from them", and in this way the authorities' obligation to secure the public right of obtaining accurate information is emphasized. Accordingly, the burden of proof of the essentiality that a certain piece of information remain restricted for the good of the state and the public interest rests on the authorities. Thus, the Quranic verse supports the most recent and progressive tendencies about the acquisition of information which is regarded as one of the basic human rights.

EQUAL SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF MEN AND WOMEN

The believers, both men and women, are in charge of [and responsible for] one another: they [all] enjoin the doing of what is right, and forbid the doing of what is wrong; they keep up prayers, render the purifying welfare dues (zakat) and obey God and the Conveyor of His Message. It is they upon whom God will bestow His grace; surely, God is All-mighty, All-wise. [9:71]

وَٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ
وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَآءُ بَعْضٍ ۚ
يَأْمُرُونَ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ
ٱلْمُنكَرِ وَيُقِيمُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ
ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَيُطِيعُونَ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥٓ ۚ
أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ ٱللَّهُ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ
حَكِيمٌ ﴿٧١﴾

The above verse states an essential social and legal principle, that men and women are equally responsible for and in charge of one another, and that they both have to enjoin the doing of what is right and good and forbid the doing of what is wrong and evil, while maintaining their relation to God and commitment to His guidance through prayer, assuring the social solidarity through rendering the welfare dues (*zakat*), and following as a whole the teachings of God and the Conveyor of His message. Significantly, the verse uses both the masculine plural and feminine plural separately to state without any confusion or ambiguity the rights and responsibilities of women which are equal to, and independent from those of men. Women share with men the social and political responsibilities of the public in the policy making process and in deciding important matters of common concern; they may also share leading social and political positions when they are capable of carrying out any of them. In the Islamic juristic heritage, both al-Tabari and Ibn Hazm stated that a woman can be a judge if she fulfills the requirements for the position [see Ibn Rushd, *Bidayat al-Mujtahid* vol. II, Ibn Hazm, *al- Muhalla* vol. X: the discussion of the requirements for the position of a judge, also: *al-Ihkam* vol. III: discussion of including women in the masculine plural when it is used]. The above verse emphasizes how the Quran has represented God's justice in its divine superiority and did not reflect the human social or legal thinking of Arabia or elsewhere at the time of revelation.

MORAL RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GOVERNMENT IN GUIDING PUBLIC OPINION AND ACTIONS

Those who if We firmly establish them [and enable them to seize power] in the land, keep up prayer and render purifying welfare dues (zakat), and enjoin the doing of what is right and forbid the doing of what is wrong; with God rests the final outcome of all events. [22:41]

ٱلَّذِينَ إِن مَّكَّنَّٰهُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ
أَقَامُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَوُا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ
وَأَمَرُوا۟ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَوْا۟ عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ ۗ
وَلِلَّهِ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلْأُمُورِ ﴿٤١﴾

Since spreading righteousness and justice and resisting evil and injustice sum up the message of Islam and its followers, this becomes the essential duty of those who are entrusted from among the people with authority by them in any land. Such individuals have to use their authority to secure the moral values and principles of justice in God's message in the land under their power, and support morality, justice and peace all over the world. It is only when such a commitment to righteousness and justice is fulfilled internally and universally that Muslims become a constructive power in the world for the good of themselves and the whole humanity [3:110], and the Conveyor of God's message will be the witness over them in fulfilling their responsibility, while they become witness over the whole humanity in this regard [22:78]. This is a universal moral responsibility of the whole believers, men and women, but should be secured and supported by those who are in power.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN POLICY MAKING "SHURA"

...and take counsel with them in matters [that need such counselling], and when you have decided upon what has to be done [as a result of the counselling], put your trust in God; surely, God loves those who put their trust in Him. [3:159]

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ
مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ لِنتَ لَهُمْ ۖ وَلَوْ كُنتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ
ٱلْقَلْبِ لَٱنفَضُّوا۟ مِنْ حَوْلِكَ ۖ فَٱعْفُ عَنْهُمْ
وَٱسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِى ٱلْأَمْرِ
فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ ﴿١٥٩﴾

And those who respond to [the call] of their Lord, and keep up prayer, and whose rule [in all matters of common concern] is based [always] on consultation among themselves, and who spend [on those who are in need and on what the society as a whole needs] out of what We provide for them as sustenance. [42:38]

وَٱلَّذِينَ
ٱسْتَجَابُوا۟ لِرَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ
وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَىٰ بَيْنَهُمْ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ
يُنفِقُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾

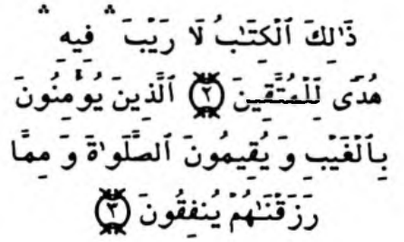
Here we see the people's participation in policy making and in deciding matters of common concern, together with the individual commitment to the social needs as fundamentals of the Islamic society, side by side with responding to the call of God and keeping up prayer. "Shura" is an essential foundation for such a society, with its comprehensive perspective and binding consequences, starting from the nuclear level in the family. The spouses have to conduct family matters through "mutual consent and consultation" [2:233], and the younger members - the children - should be educated and trained by their

parents to stand for morality and righteousness [31:17]. Similarly, spending on the needy individuals and for the collective interests also begins in the family and the neighborhood [e.g. 2:83, 177, 180, 215; 4:8, 36, 135; 6:152; 16:90; 17:26; 30:38]. The family is the early and primary society for learning and practicing moral values, righteousness and justice, and these spread through the families to the whole society [25:74]. Unless the people themselves become used to the practice of shura and collective decision making from below, this fundamental precept cannot be expected to dominate morally and legally the practice of the authorities at the top.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC JUSTICE

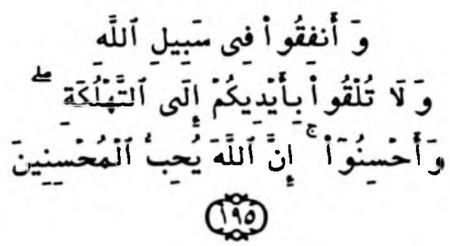
GIVING AND SPENDING ON THE NEEDY

This is the Book wherein is no doubt, [meant to be] a guidance for all the God-conscious, who believe in [the existence of] that which is beyond the reach of human sensory perception, keep up prayer, and spend [on those who are in need and on what the whole society needs] out of what We have provided for them as sustenance. [2:2-3]


ذَٰلِكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبُ لَا رَيْبَ ۛ فِيهِ ۛ
هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٢﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ
بِٱلْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَمِمَّا
رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ﴿٣﴾

The God-conscious person resists the restriction of his/her knowledge to what the physical senses can perceive, and the neglect of the human intellectual power of abstraction, inference and imagination. He/she worships only God, whose existence he/she realizes through these human intellectual faculties. Worshipping God alone, and keeping up prayers to Him represents conceptually and behaviorally this God-consciousness. Just next to this, the verse speaks of spending on those who are in need an on what the whole society requires. This signifies the place of "giving" in Islam; the God-conscious person has to give from what he/she has to the have-nots, and this giving may be material, in the form of money, food or clothes, or human, in the form of physical help, teaching or other services, since God-consciousness has to be proved by the resistance of egocentrism and selfishness, and the nurturing of caring about others and altruism. Such an indication of the fundamentals of God- consciousness underlines the importance of the social acts in the religious belief, and rejects strongly that piety may be only reflected and represented in prayers. Worshipping God in its true sense, ought to be as deep, as wide and as comprehensive as the consciousness of Him, and should mean following His guidance in its totality. God Himself is in no need of being recognized and worshiped, but this is meant to bring out deep concrete benefit to His human creatures through the spreading of good deeds that help the needy individuals and the well-being of the society.

And spend in God's cause [on those who are in need and on what the society needs], and let not your own hands throw you into destruction; and do always what is good; God loves those who do good. [2:195]


وَأَنفِقُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ
وَلَا تُلْقُوا۟ بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى ٱلتَّهْلُكَةِ ۛ
وَأَحْسِنُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ
﴿١٩٥﴾

Here is another Quranic verse that stresses the principle of "giving" to individuals who are in need or for the society's well-being in general. The verse warns people that their failure or shortcoming in fulfilling this responsibility will lead to a collective self-destruction or suicide. Such an awareness of the individual responsibility towards other individuals and towards the society as a whole is emphasized in many verses of the Quran, and several of the Prophet's traditions picture the function of the Muslims' collectivity as the inter-action and interdependence of one human body [reported by Muslim and Ibn Hanbal], and the joint reinforcement of the parts of a building [reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim al-Tirmidhi and al-Nisa'i] and the common interests of passengers on a ship [reported by al-Bukhari, Ibn Hanbal and al-Tirmidhi].

مَّثَلُ
ٱلَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَٰلَهُمْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ
كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنۢبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلَ فِى كُلِّ
سُنۢبُلَةٍ مِّاْئَةُ حَبَّةٍ ۗ وَ ٱللَّهُ يُضَٰعِفُ لِمَن
يَشَآءُ ۗ وَ ٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٦١﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ
يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَٰلَهُمْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ثُمَّ لَا
يُتْبِعُونَ مَآ أَنفَقُواْ مَنًّا وَ لَآ أَذًى ۙ لَّهُمْ
أَجْرُهُمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ وَ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَ لَا
هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٢٦٢﴾ ۞ قَوْلٌ مَّعْرُوفٌ
وَمَغْفِرَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّن صَدَقَةٍ يَتْبَعُهَآ أَذًى ۗ
وَ ٱللَّهُ غَنِىٌّ حَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٦٣﴾ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُواْ لَا تُبْطِلُواْ صَدَقَٰتِكُم بِٱلْمَنِّ
وَ ٱلْأَذَىٰ كَٱلَّذِى يُنفِقُ مَالَهُۥ رِئَآءَ ٱلنَّاسِ
وَ لَا يُؤْمِنُ بِٱللَّهِ وَ ٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْأَخِرِ
فَمَثَلُهُۥ كَمَثَلِ صَفْوَانٍ عَلَيْهِ تُرَابٌ
فَأَصَابَهُۥ وَابِلٌ فَتَرَكَهُۥ صَلْدًا ۖ لَّا
يَقْدِرُونَ عَلَىٰ شَىْءٍ مِّمَّا كَسَبُواْ ۗ
وَ ٱللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٢٦٤﴾
وَمَثَلُ ٱلَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَٰلَهُمُ ٱبْتِغَآءَ
مَرْضَاتِ ٱللَّهِ وَ تَثْبِيتًا مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ كَمَثَلِ
جَنَّةٍۭ بِرَبْوَةٍ أَصَابَهَا وَابِلٌ فَـَٔاتَتْ أُكُلَهَا
ضِعْفَيْنِ فَإِن لَّمْ يُصِبْهَا وَابِلٌ فَطَلٌّ ۗ

The parable of those who spend their possessions in the way of God is that of a grain out of which grow seven ears, in every ear a hundred grains; so God multiplies [His blessings] to whom He wills, and God is All-embracing, All-knowing. Those who spend their possessions in the way of God, and do not follow up their spending with stressing their own generosity and hurting [the feelings of] others [on whom they spend] shall have their reward with their Lord, and no fear shall they have, and neither shall they grieve. Kind words and forgiveness are better than giving charity followed by hurting, and God is All-sufficient, All-clement.

O You who have attained to faith! Do not void your giving charity by stressing your generosity and hurting others [whom you give], like one who spends out of his [/her] possessions to show off to people and believes not in God and the Last Day. His[/her] parable is that of a smooth rock with [a little] soil upon it, and then a rainstorm hits it and leaves it hard and bare. Such [persons] shall be unable to gain from all that they have earned, and God guides not those who [stubbornly] reject the truth.

And the parable of those who spend their possessions seeking the acceptance of God and their own self-assertion, is that of a garden, high and fertile: [if] heavy rain falls on it, it would double its yield, and if it receives no heavy rain, a light moisture [would bring forth

fruits], and God sees well whatever you do. Would any of you like to have a garden of date-palm and vines, with running waters beneath it, and have all kinds of fruit therein for him[/her], and then be overtaken by old age, having [only] weak children [to look after him/her or the garden] - and then a fiery whirl-wind smites it, and it is utterly burned up? Thus does God make the signs clear to you, so that you may give serious thought [for what you should do].

O you who have attained to faith! Spend [on those who are in need and on what the whole society needs] out of the good things which you have legitimately earned, and out of that which We bring forth for you from the earth, and choose not for your spending the bad things which you yourselves would not accept to take unless you close your eyes. And know that God is All-sufficient, Ever to be praised.

Satan assures you a prospect of poverty and bids you to do what is shameful, whereas God promises you His forgiveness and His bounty, and God is All-embracing, All-knowing. He grants wisdom to whom He wills; and whoever is granted wisdom has indeed been granted bountifully. But none bears this in mind save those who properly use their minds. And whatever you spend [on those who are in need and on what the whole society needs, or whatever you may pledge [to spend in this way], be sure that God knows it all, and the wrong-doers shall have no supporters. If you give charity openly, it is quite praisable, but if you make them reach the needy in secret, it will be even better for you, and will acquit you of some of your wrong-doing, and God is well aware of all that you do.

It is not for you [O Prophet] to make people [actually] follow the right path, since it is God [alone] who guides whom He wills [according to one's choice]. And whatever good you may spend [on the needy or for the society], is for your own good, and you should do so seeking

وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٢٦٥﴾ أَيَوَدُّ
أَحَدُكُمْ أَن تَكُونَ لَهُۥ جَنَّةٌ مِّن نَّخِيلٍ
وَأَعْنَابٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ لَهُۥ
فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ وَأَصَابَهُ ٱلْكِبَرُ
وَلَهُۥ ذُرِّيَّةٌ ضُعَفَآءُ فَأَصَابَهَآ إِعْصَارٌ فِيهِ
نَارٌ فَٱحْتَرَقَتْ ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمُ
ٱلْءَايَٰتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٦٦﴾ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا
ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَنفِقُوا۟ مِن طَيِّبَٰتِ مَا
كَسَبْتُمْ وَمِمَّآ أَخْرَجْنَا لَكُم مِّنَ
ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ وَلَا تَيَمَّمُوا۟ ٱلْخَبِيثَ مِنْهُ
تُنفِقُونَ وَلَسْتُم بِـَٔاخِذِيهِ إِلَّآ أَن
تُغْمِضُوا۟ فِيهِ ۚ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَنِىٌّ
حَمِيدٌ ﴿٢٦٧﴾ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ يَعِدُكُمُ ٱلْفَقْرَ
وَيَأْمُرُكُم بِٱلْفَحْشَآءِ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ يَعِدُكُم
مَّغْفِرَةً مِّنْهُ وَفَضْلًا ۗ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ
﴿٢٦٨﴾ يُؤْتِى ٱلْحِكْمَةَ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَمَن
يُؤْتَ ٱلْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِىَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ۗ
وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّآ أُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ﴿٢٦٩﴾
وَمَآ أَنفَقْتُم مِّن نَّفَقَةٍ أَوْ نَذَرْتُم مِّن نَّذْرٍ
فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعْلَمُهُۥ ۗ وَمَا لِلظَّٰلِمِينَ مِنْ
أَنصَارٍ ﴿٢٧٠﴾ إِن تُبْدُوا۟ ٱلصَّدَقَٰتِ فَنِعِمَّا
هِىَ ۖ وَإِن تُخْفُوهَا وَتُؤْتُوهَا ٱلْفُقَرَآءَ
فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۚ وَيُكَفِّرُ عَنكُم مِّن
سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ
﴿٢٧١﴾ ۝ لَّيْسَ عَلَيْكَ هُدَىٰهُمْ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
يَهْدِى مَن يَشَآءُ ۗ وَمَا تُنفِقُوا۟ مِنْ خَيْرٍ
فَلِأَنفُسِكُمْ ۚ وَمَا تُنفِقُونَ إِلَّا ٱبْتِغَآءَ

God's acceptance, and whatever good you may spend, shall be rendered back to you in full, and you shall not be wronged.
[And give] to the needy, who because of their commitment to God's cause are restricted from going about the earth [in search of livelihood]. One who is unaware [of their circumstances] may suppose them wealthy, because of their abstinence from begging, but you can recognize them by their [characteristic] mark: they beg not importunately. And whatever of good you may spend, surely, God has knowledge of it all.
Those who spend out of their possessions [for the sake of God] by night and by day, secretly and openly, shall have their reward with their Lord; no fear need they have, and neither shall they grieve. [2:261-274]

وَجْهَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَمَا تُنفِقُوا۟ مِنْ خَيْرٍ يُوَفَّ
إِلَيْكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٧٢﴾ لِلْفُقَرَآءِ
ٱلَّذِينَ أُحْصِرُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ لَا
يَسْتَطِيعُونَ ضَرْبًا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ يَحْسَبُهُمُ
ٱلْجَاهِلُ أَغْنِيَآءَ مِنَ ٱلتَّعَفُّفِ تَعْرِفُهُم
بِسِيمَٰهُمْ لَا يَسْـَٔلُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ إِلْحَافًا ۗ
وَمَا تُنفِقُوا۟ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِهِۦ عَلِيمٌ
﴿٢٧٣﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَٰلَهُم بِٱلَّيْلِ
وَٱلنَّهَارِ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِندَ
رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ
﴿٢٧٤﴾

The above verses present a picturesque elaboration on the principle of "giving" to or "spending" on the needy individuals or for the needs of the society as a whole, and spell out significant concepts and ethics related to it. Such "giving" or "spending", ought not to be directed only to satisfy consuming needs, but to provide the necessary training or reasonable equipment or capital to create chances for work or business. This act, whether it only satisfies consuming needs or goes beyond urgent demands to create or increase productive potentials, would thus be circulated in the whole social body and would develop the human and material resources; accordingly the economic revenues would multiply such as *"a grain out of which grow seven ears, in every ear a hundred grains"*. "Giving" or "spending" definitely has its economic rewards for the whole society, but its moral essence is also essential as it secures the human development which is fundamental for the continuation and flourishing of social and economic progress. Thus, "giving" or "spending" must not be an act of showiness followed by stressing the benevolence and generosity of the givers or spenders, and hurting the receivers in one way or another [2:262-266], as such "arrogance" on the one side and "humiliation" on the other would affect the moral and material effectiveness and continuation of the whole process.

The Quranic parables picture impressively how such mishandling would reduce or eliminate the soil in which the seeds of giving or spending are planted, and no fruits can therefore be expected, while a proper moral practice would yield the expected results or more according to other variable factors. However, giving or spending openly is not forbidden, especially when this is meant for the well-being of the society as a whole [2:271]. Giving or spending in public may actually be encouraged if it persuades others to compete and race in this virtue. In general, giving or spending has to become a social tradition through successive generations, and it cannot continue in this way and bring its rewards

through time to the weak elderly and children, if the moral roots which secure the everlasting life are ignored. When one is giving or spending from one's possessions, it is a prerequisite that these possessions are earned legitimately and honestly [2:267-269]. It is meaningless and fruitless to gain money through causing harm to certain individuals or to the whole society, then to turn a part of the harmful earnings to some other individuals or for the social well-being. Giving or spending has to be from the "good", legitimate and honest earnings, and a wise person has to resist any temptation or justification to gather illegitimate earnings in order to spend on needy individuals or the social well-being without hurting his/her own good life. It is the devil who tries to convince the individuals that giving or spending would later hurt their own life and tempts them to do what is unreasonable and dishonorable. A person who enjoys wisdom and deep thinking would realize that earning and spending are inseparable from the moral and economic development of the individual and the society. Tricks that are played by the human being in the illegitimate gaining or showy spending or niggardliness may succeed in deceiving his/her own self or other human beings, but God is never deceived [2:270].

The giving or spending on needy individuals should not be limited to Muslims only, but should be offered to all who are in need, according to the above verse 2:272. This verse addressed the Prophet and the Muslims in Medina not to exclude non-Muslims needy from their spending, since the factor which should be considered in this respect is the "need," not the "faith" [see the commentaries of al-Tabari, Ibn Kathir, Al-Razi, al-Qurtubi and others on this verse and the Prophet's traditions that they repeated]. Accordingly, the human need of a non-Muslim has to be fulfilled for itself without any attempt to impose Islam on the needy in return [see especially the commentary of al-Razi on the verse]. It was reported that Caliph Umar decided a regular assistance from the Zakat assets to an elderly and needy Jew, and the Muslim leader Khalid ibn al-Walid considered the Muslim public treasury responsible for supporting the non-Muslim needy in Hira, as reported by Abu Yusuf in his work, "*al-Kharaj*." A basic principle of human rights and socio-economic justice in Shari'a is that all human beings enjoy equal rights which should be secured to them as human beings and children of Adam, regardless of their gender, ethnicities or beliefs [17:70].

Limitations, restrictions or full disability that make a person unable to go about the earth and move in search of livelihood, mean that such a person is in need. Those who are restricted from freely moving through the world because of their beliefs represent a significant example of those who deserve giving or spending, but they are not the only ones. All those who cannot go about the earth in search of livelihood for physical disability or oppressive measures are deprived from basic elements of human rights and of the dignity which is secured by God to all the children of Adam as represented in the Quran: "*and carried them on land and sea, and provided for them sustenance out of the good things of life.*" Work is essential for earning livelihood, and moving around is necessary for widening the chances of work as well as fulfilling the universality of the human being [17:70], and both are fundamental rights and obligations that secure the human dignity.

Giving or spending may be regulated at a fixed time once or more through the year, but it may also be casual according to emerging individual or social needs "day and night" [2:274]; it may be mandatorily fixed by law, or voluntary left to the individual attitude.

The basic rights and obligations are determined by law, especially through the mandatory payment of the purifying dues for the social welfare (*zakat*), but there is always spacious room for individual attitudes and competitiveness in giving and spending [see also 3;133-134; 57:21].

You will never attain to true piety and benevolence unless you spend [on others] of that which you yourselves love and value, and whatever you spend, God has full knowledge thereof. [3:92]

لَن
تَنَالُواْ ٱلۡبِرَّ حَتَّىٰ تُنفِقُواْ مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ ۚ
وَمَا تُنفِقُواْ مِن شَيۡءٖ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِهِۦ عَلِيمٞ
﴿٩٢﴾

This verse on the principle of giving or spending on others underlines the psychological and moral basis of this behavior which is essential for the society. Benevolence and altruism require consistent and persistent self-training so that one can spend on others not only of what may be spared, but also out of what he/she is fond of [also 2:177] if the other's need for it exceeds that of the owner, since giving others just what one can easily do without or probably wants to get rid of would not develop true benevolence or altruism. Reaching this high standard requires that each person become used to resisting selfishness and excessive fondness of possessions, and spends on others from what he/she himself/herself likes and wants to keep, and "*those who are saved from the covetousness of their own selves - it is they who attain to success*" [59:9].

And [condemned also are] those who spend out of their possessions on others to show off to people, and believe not in God and the Last Day, and any whosoever has Satan as a soul-mate, how evil a soul-mate has he[/she]. [4:38]

وَٱلَّذِينَ
يُنفِقُونَ أَمۡوَٰلَهُمۡ رِئَآءَ ٱلنَّاسِ وَلَا
يُؤۡمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَلَا بِٱلۡيَوۡمِ ٱلۡأٓخِرِ ۗ
وَمَن يَكُنِ ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنُ لَهُۥ قَرِينٗا فَسَآءَ قَرِينٗا
﴿٣٨﴾

Flaunting wealth and stressing the giver's or spender's own benevolence while hurting the feelings of the needy have been warned against in the previously mentioned verse 2:263, as these evil feelings and acts undermine the effectiveness and continuation of the "giving" or "spending" process with regard to the individual morality as well as the socio-economic justice. A person who cares only about his/her image among the people, and has never been truly conscious of God or of his/her social responsibility of which he/she will be accountable before God on the day of Judgement, has really chosen to be close to the devil and to follow his inspiration. In a previously mentioned verse, the Quran warned every human being that "*Satan assures you a prospect of poverty and bids you to do what is shameful*" [2:268], so how thoughtless and ill-advised is one who chooses the devil as his/her soul mate!

Tell my servants who have attained to faith that they should keep up prayers, and spend [on whosoever is in need and on what the whole society needs] out of what We have provided for them as sustenance, secretly and openly, before the coming of a Day on which there is no place for bargaining, or intimate relationship. [14:31]

قُل لِّعِبَادِيَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ يُقِيمُوا۟
ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَيُنفِقُوا۟ مِمَّا رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ سِرًّا
وَعَلَانِيَةً مِّن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِىَ يَوْمٌ لَّا بَيْعٌ فِيهِ
وَلَا خِلَٰلٌ ﴿٣١﴾

This is another Quranic emphasis on the habit and tradition of "giving" and "spending" secretly or openly which has been previously indicated and commented on [especially 2:261-274]. It is connected here with keeping up prayers to indicate that both are forms of worshipping God, and that doing the good to others is inseparable from worshipping the One God and both interact together [notice also the connection of keeping up the prayers and rendering the purifying dues for social welfare (*zakat*) in many Quranic verses: e.g. 2:43, 83, 110, 177, 277; 4:162; 5:12, 55; 9:5, 11, 18, 71; 19:31, 55; 21:73; 22:41, 78; 24:37, 56; 27:3; 31:4; 33:33; 58:13; 73:20; 98:5]. In another place, the improper practice of prayers through being absent minded or aiming only to attract people's attention is connected with pushing the orphan aside and having no concerns about feeding the needy, and acting wrongfully in this way in one's relations with God and with the people is considered by the Quran as undermining the essence of faith [107:1-7].

God has bestowed more abundant means of sustenance on some of you than on others; and yet, they who are more abundantly favored are [often] unwilling to hand over [some of] their sustenance to those whom their right hands possess, so that they [all] may be equal[in fulfilling the main needs of life] therein. Are they, then, denying God's favors [by acting so selfishly and greedily]? [16:71]

وَٱللَّهُ فَضَّلَ
بَعْضَكُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ فِى ٱلرِّزْقِ ۚ فَمَا
ٱلَّذِينَ فُضِّلُوا۟ بِرَآدِّى رِزْقِهِمْ عَلَىٰ مَا
مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَٰنُهُمْ فَهُمْ فِيهِ سَوَآءٌ ۚ أَفَبِنِعْمَةِ
ٱللَّهِ يَجْحَدُونَ ﴿٧١﴾

The principle of "giving" and "spending" is sharply underlined in the above verse. Those on whom God has bestowed more means of sustenance than others but who are unwilling to give some of God's bounty to those who are in need, are actually lacking gratefulness to their Lord and Sustainer. Although the verse mentions giving to those whom one's "right hand possess", it applies rather to all who may need the support of others to obtain their needs. Those who have plenty of God's favors ought to be fair and generous in paying their employees in order to prove their gratitude to the Giver and Sustainer. Even with regard to those whom *"one's right hand possess,"* an authentic tradition of the Prophet indicates that they are merely brothers whom God has placed under one's authority and they should all eat the same food and be equally clothed. Moreover, they should not be required to do what would over-burden them, otherwise the one who has them

himself/herself should help in such a case [reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Hanbal, al-Tirmidhi]. Those who are unable to work temporarily or permanently have to be supported by the whole society, the public revenues of which mainly come from those who have sufficient resources, since the well-being of the whole society depends economically and socially on securing the needs of all its members. Another verse clearly underlines the social dimension of private ownership [57:7]. The individual is the basis of the society and the economy, but a fair and fine balance needs to be struck between the individual and the social well-being.

[As for such evil-doers], behold, We [but] try them as We tried the owners of a certain garden, who vowed that they would surely harvest its fruits in the morning, and they allowed no place for any exception [about unanticipated circumstances according to God's will]. Then there came on the [garden] a visitation from your Lord, [which swept away] all around, while they were asleep. So it became in the morning, barren and bleak. As the morning broke, they called to one another, "Go early to your tillage as you intend to harvest the fruits".
So they departed, whispering to one another: "Let not a single needy person break in upon you into the garden this day." And early they went, strongly determined upon their purpose. But as soon as they saw the garden [as it had become], they said: "Surely we have gone astray, and we have been rendered destitute." Said one of them, the most right-minded among them: "Did I not tell you, 'will you not extol God in His glory?' " They said: "Glory be to our Lord! Surely, we were evil-doers." Then they turned to themselves, blaming one another. They said: "Woe to us! We have indeed been transgressors. It may be that our Lord will grant us something better instead [as we repent]; surely, we do turn to Him with hope".
Such is the suffering [with which We try some people in this life], but greater by far will be the suffering [which the evil-doers have to bear] in the life to come, did they but know. [68:17-33]

إِنَّا بَلَوْنَٰهُمْ كَمَا بَلَوْنَآ
أَصْحَٰبَ ٱلْجَنَّةِ إِذْ أَقْسَمُوا۟ لَيَصْرِمُنَّهَا
مُصْبِحِينَ ﴿١٧﴾ وَلَا يَسْتَثْنُونَ ﴿١٨﴾
فَطَافَ عَلَيْهَا طَآئِفٌ مِّن رَّبِّكَ وَهُمْ
نَآئِمُونَ ﴿١٩﴾ فَأَصْبَحَتْ كَٱلصَّرِيمِ ﴿٢٠﴾
فَتَنَادَوْا۟ مُصْبِحِينَ ﴿٢١﴾ أَنِ ٱغْدُوا۟
عَلَىٰ حَرْثِكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰرِمِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾
فَٱنطَلَقُوا۟ وَهُمْ يَتَخَٰفَتُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ أَن لَّا
يَدْخُلَنَّهَا ٱلْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكُم مِّسْكِينٌ ﴿٢٤﴾
وَغَدَوْا۟ عَلَىٰ حَرْدٍ قَٰدِرِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾ فَلَمَّا
رَأَوْهَا قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّا لَضَآلُّونَ ﴿٢٦﴾ بَلْ نَحْنُ
مَحْرُومُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾ قَالَ أَوْسَطُهُمْ أَلَمْ أَقُل
لَّكُمْ لَوْلَا تُسَبِّحُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾ قَالُوا۟ سُبْحَٰنَ
رَبِّنَآ إِنَّا كُنَّا ظَٰلِمِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾ فَأَقْبَلَ
بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ يَتَلَٰوَمُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾
قَالُوا۟ يَٰوَيْلَنَآ إِنَّا كُنَّا طَٰغِينَ ﴿٣١﴾
عَسَىٰ رَبُّنَآ أَن يُبْدِلَنَا خَيْرًا مِّنْهَآ إِنَّآ
إِلَىٰ رَبِّنَا رَٰغِبُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾ كَذَٰلِكَ
ٱلْعَذَابُ ۖ وَلَعَذَابُ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ أَكْبَرُ ۚ لَوْ
كَانُوا۟ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

The principle of "giving" or "spending on the needy" or "sharing" has been emphasized in the successive messages of God since early times [e.g. 2:83; 6:141]. God calls on the human beings to worship Him only, and His messages, if truly understood, may take them away from their egotism and greed, and direct them towards sensitivity towards others and human togetherness. In the above verses, the owners of the garden combined their lack of God-consciousness with their refrainment from helping the needy: *"... [they] vowed that they would surely harvest its fruits in the morning; and they allowed no place for any exception [about unanticipated circumstances according to God's will] .... So they departed whispering to one another, 'Let not a single needy person break in upon you into he garden this day.'"* As their greed tempted them to forget God and to refrain from giving and sharing with the needy, they were reminded that God's will and might are above their planning. It was not only the poor and the needy who could not receive their share of what God entrusted the garden's owners with, but the owners themselves were deprived from any fruits of the garden, as they saw that *"the garden had become barren and bleak"* and that they had *"been rendered destitute"*. The message is clear: the haves should give *"and spend [on the have-nots]out of that which He [God] has made you trustees ..."* [57:7]. It is a test for the rich and the poor, and God's guidance secures justice for all.

Everyone has to work hard to earn his/her own living, and those who may be deprived from any chance to secure their needs temporarily or permanently have to be supported by those who are prospering. The whole society contributes to the individual's wealth, and giving to the needy would add to the purchasing power and economic development. It is a circle of mutual benefit that is achieved by human co-operation and solidarity, whereas selfishness and greed lead to a deterioration of faith and morality as well as a decline and conflict in the society, and they result in human suffering in this life and the life to come. However, self-correction is always possible as long as one is alive, and *"it may be that our Lord will grant us something better instead [as we repent]; surely, we do turn to Him with hope"*.

And as for one whose record will be placed in his [/her] left hand, he [/she] shall say: "Would that I had never been given this record of mine, and that I had never known this account of mine! Would that [death] had been the end! Of no avail to me is all that I have [ever] possessed, [and] all my power has perished from me!" [The stern command will go forth]: "Seize you him [/her] and bind you him [/her], and let you him [/her] in the blazing fire, and then thrust him [/her] to a chain, [with other evil-doers] whereof the length is seventy cubits; for behold he [/she] did not believe in God the All-majestic, and did not urge to feed the needy! So, no friend

وَ أَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ
كِتَٰبَهُۥ بِشِمَالِهِۦ فَيَقُولُ يَٰلَيْتَنِي لَمْ أُوتَ
كِتَٰبِيَهْ ﴿٢٥﴾ وَ لَمْ أَدْرِ مَا حِسَابِيَهْ ﴿٢٦﴾
يَٰلَيْتَهَا كَانَتِ ٱلْقَاضِيَةَ ﴿٢٧﴾ مَآ أَغْنَىٰ
عَنِّي مَالِيَه ﴿٢٨﴾ هَلَكَ عَنِّي سُلْطَٰنِيَهْ
﴿٢٩﴾ خُذُوهُ فَغُلُّوهُ ﴿٣٠﴾ ثُمَّ ٱلْجَحِيمَ
صَلُّوهُ ﴿٣١﴾ ثُمَّ فِي سِلْسِلَةٍ ذَرْعُهَا
سَبْعُونَ ذِرَاعًا فَٱسْلُكُوهُ ﴿٣٢﴾ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ
لَا يُؤْمِنُ بِٱللَّهِ ٱلْعَظِيمِ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَ لَا يَحُضُّ
عَلَىٰ طَعَامِ ٱلْمِسْكِينِ ﴿٣٤﴾ فَلَيْسَ لَهُ

has he [/she] here this Day; nor has he [/she] any food except the loathsome filth which none do eat but the evil-doers." [69:25-37]

فَلَيْسَ لَهُ ٱلْيَوْمَ هَٰهُنَا حَمِيمٌ ﴿٣٥﴾ وَلَا طَعَامٌ إِلَّا
مِنْ غِسْلِينٍ ﴿٣٦﴾ لَّا يَأْكُلُهُۥٓ إِلَّا
ٱلْخَٰطِـُٔونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

The above verses strikingly present the features of the wealthy who do not give or spend on others in need, or share. They may combine in their hands wealth and authority, and they will be accountable for all that they were entrusted with. As a symbol of their wrong behavior and deviation from the right path, the record of all what they did in their whole life before will be placed in their left hand, and they will be shocked by its accuracy and comprehensiveness. They will never be able to deny or argue about their record, but will only wish that their death would have been for ever. Their horrible suffering is a result of their denial of God and their reluctance in helping those in need or feeding those who are hungry. In return for this, such evil-doers will find no helper or supporter in the life to come, and their food will be only filth *"which none do eat but evil-doers."* How evil then are the present and future consequences of the refrainment from giving and spending on those who are in need, and how severe will be the suffering for this evil-doing in this life - individually and socially - and in the eternal life to come! The Quran is emphasizing in various ways how caring and helping and togetherness is central in the divine message and the human accountability.

And those who give food, however much they themselves may cherish what they give, to the needy and the orphan and the captive, [saying in their hearts], "We feed you only for the sake of God: no recompense do we desire from you, nor thankfulness." [76:8-9]

وَيُطْعِمُونَ
ٱلطَّعَامَ عَلَىٰ حُبِّهِۦ مِسْكِينًا وَيَتِيمًا
وَأَسِيرًا ﴿٨﴾ إِنَّمَا نُطْعِمُكُمْ لِوَجْهِ ٱللَّهِ لَا
نُرِيدُ مِنكُمْ جَزَآءً وَلَا شُكُورًا ﴿٩﴾

The above verse indicates *"the captives"*, in addition to the needy and the orphan, as among those who should be helped. This reference to the captives' needs is significant, especially when we bear in mind how such needs have been ignored until most recently. The reference to *"food"* in the verse serves merely as an example for all the human needs and rights of a captive, whether he/she may be a prisoner in a domestic jail or a prisoner of war in another country. In the past this may also have applied to prisoners of war who might have been enslaved, and anyone who is in charge of any of them "has to feed him [/her] as he [/she] himself [/herself] eats, and clothe him [/her] as he himself [/she herself] is clothed, and does not overburden him [/her] with work, and if this happens the one in charge has to help the slave," as the Prophet taught [reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi, and Ibn Majah]. Another verse indicates that whenever an enemy seeks shelter or asylum among Muslims, this should be granted [9:6], and any refugee has to be protected and supported as a wayfarer [9:60]. Meanwhile, the right of such a person to be repatriated to his/her land is guaranteed whenever he/she wants [9:6].

But nay, [O evil-doers, here is your record]: you are not generous towards the orphans, and you do not urge one another to feed the needy, and you devour the inheritance [of others] with greed, and you love wealth boundlessly. [89:17-20]

كَلَّا ۖ بَل لَّا تُكْرِمُونَ ٱلْيَتِيمَ ﴿١٧﴾
وَلَا تَحَٰٓضُّونَ عَلَىٰ طَعَامِ ٱلْمِسْكِينِ
﴿١٨﴾ وَتَأْكُلُونَ ٱلتُّرَاثَ أَكْلًا لَّمًّا ﴿١٩﴾
وَتُحِبُّونَ ٱلْمَالَ حُبًّا جَمًّا ﴿٢٠﴾

The above verses present an ugly view of Meccan society, or of some of its wealthy at least, at the time of the revelation of the Quran. The weak, such as the orphans and the needy were neglected, and the greed for wealth, whatever its source might have been, was dominant. The divine message came to support the weak and secure justice for everyone, since it emphasizes that worshipping the One God is inseparable from securing justice and help in all avenues of life. Money cannot be earned through devouring others' possessions or violating their rights, and spending money should be without waste and should not ignore the individual or social needs. It is significant that Muhammad himself, whom God chose to convey His message of justice, was an orphan and was not rich [93:6, 8].

But one may not try to cross the high and steep obstacle, and can you conceive what this high and steep obstacle is? [It is to have the strong will and overcome selfishness and covetousness for] freeing the human being from bondage, or giving food in a time of burning demand to an orphaned relative or to a needy person lying in dust. And those who have attained to faith and enjoin upon one another patience in adversity, and enjoin mercifulness and compassion - such are they who have chosen to be on the right side; whereas those who reject stubbornly Our messages, they are such as have chosen to be on the sinister side, whom fire will be embracing. [90:11-20]

فَلَا ٱقْتَحَمَ ٱلْعَقَبَةَ ﴿١١﴾
وَمَآ أَدْرَىٰكَ مَا ٱلْعَقَبَةُ ﴿١٢﴾ فَكُّ رَقَبَةٍ
﴿١٣﴾ أَوْ إِطْعَٰمٌ فِى يَوْمٍ ذِى مَسْغَبَةٍ
﴿١٤﴾ يَتِيمًا ذَا مَقْرَبَةٍ ﴿١٥﴾ أَوْ مِسْكِينًا
ذَا مَتْرَبَةٍ ﴿١٦﴾ ثُمَّ كَانَ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟
وَتَوَاصَوْا۟ بِٱلصَّبْرِ وَتَوَاصَوْا۟
بِٱلْمَرْحَمَةِ ﴿١٧﴾ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَٰبُ
ٱلْمَيْمَنَةِ ﴿١٨﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا
هُمْ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْمَشْـَٔمَةِ ﴿١٩﴾
عَلَيْهِمْ نَارٌ مُّؤْصَدَةٌ ﴿٢٠﴾

Struggling against selfishness and greed is made analogous in the above verse with crossing a high and steep obstruction. He/she who wins in this struggle is the one who can go beyond his/her inclination towards possession and accumulation of wealth to contribute to freeing the human being from bondage, or helping the needy whether they are related to him/her or not. Those who are helpful, supporting and compassionate, are following the right way that leads to justice and peace in the society and the world in this life, and will be rewarded in the eternal life to come. On the contrary, those who are lost in their egotism and pursuit of material pleasures and choose to be on the sinister side will be surrounded in the end by their own greed, and they will become prisoners of their burning desires and whims in this life, and suffer in the life to come from the fire that takes hold

of them from all directions.

Therefore, the orphan shall you never wrong, nor chide one who seeks [your] help, but of the bounty of your Lord shall you [ever] speak [in words and deeds]. [93:9-11]

فَأَمَّا ٱلْيَتِيمَ فَلَا تَقْهَرْ ﴿٩﴾ وَأَمَّا
ٱلسَّآئِلَ فَلَا تَنْهَرْ ﴿١٠﴾ وَأَمَّا
بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ فَحَدِّثْ ﴿١١﴾

Muhammad himself was an orphan: *"Has He not found you an orphan, and given you shelter?"*, and was not rich *"And has found you in want, and given you sufficiency?"* [9:6, 8]. The same sura that states these facts about Muhammad's childhood, forbids Muhammad and all the followers of his message from suppressing the orphan, or chiding anyone who legitimately seeks help be it material, moral, or of any other kind. If one cannot help a person, he/she has to express this kindly, since hurting the feelings of a person who seeks help has its bad consequences on the one who asks, and the other who is asked and shows insensitivity and egotism, and on the society as a whole. Even when one helps, he/she should not combine his/her good deed with a bad one by hurting the feelings of the one whom he/she has helped [2:262-264], since dignity should always be secured for all human beings [17:71]. When a person gives to those who are in need from what God has granted him/her, he/she is expressing his/her gratitude for God's bounties and favors, be they material, physical, intellectual or moral through extending their benefits to help others. In general, social justice and solidarity have been an urgent and constant goal of the message of Islam.

Nay, surely, the human being becomes grossly overweening whenever he [/she] believes himself [/herself] to be self- sufficient. [96:6-7]

كَلَّآ إِنَّ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ
لَيَطْغَىٰٓ ﴿٦﴾ أَن رَّءَاهُ ٱسْتَغْنَىٰٓ ﴿٧﴾

The faith in the One God brings out individual and social balance. God has sent His message for the benefit of human beings, as it helps them to reach and maintain this balance. Selfishness and arrogance are not merely immoral, they also result in psychological and social troubles. People should feel their equality and develop among themselves mutual understanding and co-operation in order to have a healthy individual and social life. Egotism and delusions of self-sufficiency destroy the individual and social balance, and the faith in God and human accountability maintains the balance and protects people from superiority and inferiority complexes as well.

Surely, the human being is to his [/her] Lord most ungrateful; and to this he himself [/she herself] indeed bears witness, and in the love of wealth he [/she] is vigorous. [100:6-8]

إِنَّ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ لِرَبِّهِۦ لَكَنُودٌ ﴿٦﴾
وَإِنَّهُۥ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ لَشَهِيدٌ ﴿٧﴾ وَإِنَّهُۥ لِحُبِّ
ٱلْخَيْرِ لَشَدِيدٌ ﴿٨﴾

The Quran points out the strengths of the human being [e.g. 17:70; 95:4; 96:5], as well as his/her weaknesses [e.g. 4:28; 14:34; 16:4; 17:11, 100; 18:54; 21:37; 22:66; 33:72; 36:77; 43:15; 70:19; 80:17]. Some people may feel their need for God when they are burdened by troubles but they forget Him when they are at ease, while others become most ungrateful when they are touched by any pressure in life [e.g. 10:12; 11:9-11; 17:11, 67-69, 83; 39:8, 49; 41:49- 51; 42:48; 89:15]. The above verses refer to the human weakness of ungratefulness to God, and sometimes to other people, and the human mania of accumulation of possessions and wealth. Islam aims to secure socio-economic justice through a comprehensive reform: in the human mind and heart as well as in the socio-economic structure and relations. The belief in God, from which all sustenance for the human being comes, and the subsequent belief in the human accountability due to what God has granted the person, provides a solid spiritual and moral basis for a psychological and social balance since it pushes against egotism and covetousness.

Woe to every backbiter and carper, who piles up wealth and becomes obsessed by its enormity and variety, thinking that his[/her] wealth will make him [/her] live forever!
Nay, but [in the life to come] such a person will be left to crushing torment! And how can you imagine what that crushing torment will be? A fire kindled by God that roars over the [guilty] hearts. Verily, it will embrace them with outstretched columns. [104:1-9]

وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ هُمَزَةٍ لُّمَزَةٍ ﴿١﴾
ٱلَّذِى جَمَعَ مَالًا وَعَدَّدَهُۥ ﴿٢﴾
يَحْسَبُ أَنَّ مَالَهُۥٓ أَخْلَدَهُۥ ﴿٣﴾
كَلَّا ۖ لَيُنۢبَذَنَّ فِى ٱلْحُطَمَةِ ﴿٤﴾
وَمَآ أَدْرَىٰكَ مَا ٱلْحُطَمَةُ ﴿٥﴾
نَارُ ٱللَّهِ ٱلْمُوقَدَةُ ﴿٦﴾
ٱلَّتِى تَطَّلِعُ عَلَى ٱلْأَفْـِٔدَةِ ﴿٧﴾
إِنَّهَا عَلَيْهِم مُّؤْصَدَةٌ ﴿٨﴾
فِى عَمَدٍ مُّمَدَّدَةٍۭ ﴿٩﴾

These are verses that merely aim to cure the human mind and heart of the mania of wealth accumulation. This moral disease is developed by the human desire for a permanent happy life in this world, and the deceptive thought that wealth can secure such eternal happiness. Accordingly, one does not want to give, spend on others in need, help or share, as he/she thinks that every spending would reduce his/her security in the imagined eternity of this world. In this way, one undermines his/her own happiness in this world, as he/she becomes isolated and imprisoned within his/her wealth, and his/her only concern with regard to others is to trace their faults so that he/she may convince himself/herself that he/she is the only human being who is on the right track and deserves what he owns. Such a person actually becomes poor and unhappy in this life, as his/her accumulated wealth never brings him/her real satisfaction and inner happiness, and shuts him/her inside his/her ever-blazing greed and material obsession. In the eternal life to come, this wealth would not support or shield him/her from suffering the consequences of erroneous thinking and wrong- doing, and God's punishment will be surrounding this person, just as his/her wealth is surrounding him/her in this worldly life.

أَرَءَيْتَ ٱلَّذِى يُكَذِّبُ بِٱلدِّينِ ﴿١﴾ فَذَٰلِكَ
ٱلَّذِى يَدُعُّ ٱلْيَتِيمَ ﴿٢﴾ وَلَا يَحُضُّ عَلَىٰ
طَعَامِ ٱلْمِسْكِينِ ﴿٣﴾ فَوَيْلٌ لِّلْمُصَلِّينَ
﴿٤﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ عَن صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ ﴿٥﴾
ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ يُرَآءُونَ ﴿٦﴾
وَيَمْنَعُونَ ٱلْمَاعُونَ ﴿٧﴾

Have you ever seen a human being who contradicts the [essence of] faith [in God and His Judgement]? Then such is the one who thrusts the orphan away, and feels no urge to feed the needy.

Woe, then, unto those who pray, but their hearts and minds from [the essence and message of] their prayers are remote, those who [want but] to be seen and praised, whereas they refuse to help others [who need help]. [107:1-7]

Thrusting away the orphan and feeling no urge to feed the needy are considered in the above verse as a contradiction to the faith in God and His Judgement. Even if one who claims to be a believer observes the practice of prayer to God, but he/she is actually keen to be seen praying by people and be praised by them, and he/she does not help others who need help, then such a person is really far from the genuine worship of God that should be intended and practiced only to reach God's acceptance. The above verses stress strongly how the socio-economic justice is the cornerstone in God's message. God does not need to be just theoretically or intellectually recognized by human beings; His messages to human beings are meant for their own benefit, and should be reflected in the human relations between the haves and have-nots who are all tested by God in their dealings with one another and in observing their rights and fulfilling their obligations.

NO EXPLOITATION, NO REVERSED INJUSTICE AGAINST PREVIOUS TRANSGRESSORS

ٱلَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ ٱلرِّبَوٰا۟ لَا يَقُومُونَ
إِلَّا كَمَا يَقُومُ ٱلَّذِى يَتَخَبَّطُهُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ
مِنَ ٱلْمَسِّ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّمَا
ٱلْبَيْعُ مِثْلُ ٱلرِّبَوٰا۟ ۘ وَأَحَلَّ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْبَيْعَ
وَحَرَّمَ ٱلرِّبَوٰا۟ ۚ فَمَن جَآءَهُۥ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِّن
رَّبِّهِۦ فَٱنتَهَىٰ فَلَهُۥ مَا سَلَفَ وَأَمْرُهُۥٓ
إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَمَنْ عَادَ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ
أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ
﴿٢٧٥﴾ يَمْحَقُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلرِّبَوٰا۟ وَيُرْبِى
ٱلصَّدَقَٰتِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ كَفَّارٍ
أَثِيمٍ ﴿٢٧٦﴾

Those who devour usury shall not rise but as one who blunders through being affected by Satan, for they say, "Buying and selling is like usury," while God has made buying and selling lawful and prohibited usury. Hence, whosoever receives [positively] his[/her] Lord's admonition and gives over, he may keep his past gains, and it will be for God to judge him[/her], but whosoever returns to it, they are destined for the fire, therein to abide. God blots out usury, whereas He augments charitable offerings with fruitfulness [from various angles], and God loves not any ingrate and persisting evil-doer. [2:275-276]

Riba or usury is forbidden because it is merely an exploitation of the haves for the have-nots. It presents a constant and increasing profit that is effortless and risk-free on the side of the usury gainer, while the payer of usury is forced, from the beginning, to accept paying it on time and in addition to the principal, regardless of his/her circumstances, because of his/her need. In general, however, Islam is not against earning money and acquiring profit from fair dealings in which every party gives and takes in a fair way, and thus the rights and obligations of the involved parties are parallel and balanced.

The supporters of exploitation argue that making money and gaining profit any way is the same, and ought to be legitimized. This selfish and greedy attitude contradicts the socio-economic justice of Islam, which encourages gains and profits that are earned through a balanced and fair deal of "give and take" from all the parties involved, and the consent and free will of all are secured without any physical or moral pressure. The principle of Shari`a in this respect is the parallel balance of the gain and loss (or taking and giving) on the side of every party involved in the deal. If this is observed, various infinite forms of deals may be initiated and developed.

Surpassing justice, which has to be observed by all, and reaching individual generosity and charity, is, furthermore, encouraged and rewarded. Public security is materially and morally benefitted from giving to individuals who are in need, as well as to the needs of the society as a whole. The material needs of the society as a whole will be met, and social solidarity and cooperation would bring out material and moral benefits to the receivers, the givers, and the society as a whole. In this way God augments charitable offerings with manifold gains from various angles, while gains of exploitation and usury are blotted out through contradictions of greed and bitterness which restrict total productivity in the long run, especially when they escalate to explosions within the society.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا
ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَذَرُواْ مَا
بَقِيَ مِنَ ٱلرِّبَوٰٓاْ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٧٨﴾
فَإِن لَّمْ تَفْعَلُواْ فَأْذَنُواْ بِحَرْبٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ
وَرَسُولِهِۦ ۖ وَإِن تُبْتُمْ فَلَكُمْ رُءُوسُ
أَمْوَٰلِكُمْ لَا تَظْلِمُونَ وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٧٩﴾
وَإِن كَانَ ذُو عُسْرَةٍ فَنَظِرَةٌ إِلَىٰ
مَيْسَرَةٍ ۚ وَأَن تَصَدَّقُواْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۖ إِن
كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٨٠﴾ وَٱتَّقُواْ يَوْمًا
تُرْجَعُونَ فِيهِ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۖ ثُمَّ تُوَفَّىٰ كُلُّ
نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٨١﴾

O You who have attained to faith! Remain conscious of God, and give up any that remains outstanding from usury, if you are [truly] believers. If you do it not, then know that you are at war with God and the Conveyor of His message. But if you repent, you shall be entitled to the return of your principal: you will do no wrong, and neither will you be wronged. If, however, [the debtor] is in straitened circumstances, grant him[/her] a delay until a time of ease; and it would be for your own good - if you but knew it - to remit [the debt entirely] by way of charity. And be conscious of the Day on which you shall be brought back to God, when every human being shall be repaid in full for what he/she has earned, and none shall be wronged. [2:278-281; Madani except 2:281: revealed in Mina during the Farewell Pilgrimage]

Usury signifies exploitation of one human being by another, and a gain without any human effort or risk. The prohibition of usury is simply an implementation of the general principle that prohibits devouring the possessions of one another wrongfully [4:29], and thus any exploitation in principle. However, this abolition of the unjustly earned excess has to be defined exactly according to the historical and juristic precedents, and not generalized to include any contemporary transactions practiced by banks or other financial institutions. It may be inaccurate to consider all what is called "interest" in contemporary transactions as "usury" or "*riba*", or to regard the two as synonyms.

Prohibition of usury came late in the life of the Prophet, and not many traditions of the Prophet were reported regarding this issue. This should not justify an attitude to extend the prohibition to be "on the safe side," since this would restrict what may be allowed and thus put the people in difficulties and contradict the general goals and principles of Shari`a. This is not the place to analyze in detail the numerous contemporary transactions and find out what can be termed as usury and what cannot.

Even in a definite case of usury, the Quran clearly states that the prohibition cannot be extended to the principal which is earned legitimately, since the divine law secures justice and forbids injustice with regard to anyone who submits to the law of God after having previously violated it, even if this violator was previously "*at war with God and the Conveyor of His message*" [2:279], a party that commited aggression against another but then reverted to God's commandments [49:9]. As pressures of a certain hard time may be the main reason for the debtor's acceptance of the terms of usury, the creditor is urged to delay the due time for paying back the debt if the debtor is going through some difficult circumstances, until he/she becomes at ease. If the creditor can show more generosity by writing off the debt completely then this is encouraged and considered to be for the creditor's own good since it will help him/her to maintain good human relations and morality in this life and to obtain God's reward in full in the eternal life to come. As a general rule justice secures the fulfillment of obligation, but generosity and compassion and going beyond the letter of the law to its essence are urged as voluntary and individually motivated behaviors. In this way, legality and morality go hand in hand and complement one another. Individual generosity, kindness and forgiveness are always encouraged to supersede the general values of justice in this case, as well as in many other cases indicated in the Quran [e.g. 2:109, 178, 237; 3:134, 159; 4:149; 5:13; 24:22; 42:40; 64:114].

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Say: "O God, Lord of all dominion! You grant dominion to whom You will, and take away dominion from whom You will, and You exalt whom You will, and bring low whom You will, in Your hand is all good. Surely, You have power over all things. You cause the night to approach smoothly the day, and You cause the day to approach smoothly the night; You bring forth

قُلِ ٱللَّهُمَّ مَٰلِكَ ٱلْمُلْكِ
تُؤْتِى ٱلْمُلْكَ مَن تَشَآءُ وَ تَنزِعُ ٱلْمُلْكَ
مِمَّن تَشَآءُ ۖ وَ تُعِزُّ مَن تَشَآءُ وَ تُذِلُّ مَن
تَشَآءُ ۖ بِيَدِكَ ٱلْخَيْرُ ۖ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ
شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٢٦﴾ تُولِجُ ٱلَّيْلَ فِى ٱلنَّهَارِ
وَ تُولِجُ ٱلنَّهَارَ فِى ٱلَّيْلِ ۖ وَ تُخْرِجُ

the living out of the dead, and You bring forth the dead out of the living; and You provide beyond reckoning sustenance to whom You will". [3:26-27]

اَلْحَيَّ مِنَ اَلْمَيِّتِ وَ تُخْرِجُ اَلْمَيِّتَ مِنَ
اَلْحَيِّ ۖ وَ تَرْزُقُ مَن تَشَآءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿٢٧﴾

Every twenty four hours, the night gradually and smoothly approaches the day to replace it and the day gradually and smoothly approaches the night to replace it in regular sequence but with a difference in the length of each in different seasons, and all this follows accurate laws and order [36:40]. Similarly, as the dead are brought forth out of the living, the living are brought forth out of nutritive matter that is not alive in itself, like the soil in the case of plants and food in the case of animals and human beings, and all this follows certain laws. Succession in social and political power and the earning of sustenance and economical power also follow certain social laws that, like those physical and biological laws, we have to find out and benefit from. God grants beyond reckoning, but human beings have to thoroughly know the grants of God in the universe and benefit from them, and they should distribute the grants and their benefits with justice. It is the responsibility of human beings to observe and find out the laws of social change and to use them wisely in securing socio-economic justice and development.

PRIVATE OWNERSHIP SHOULD NOT CONTRAVENE PUBLIC INTEREST

And do not entrust to those who are weak of judgement the possessions which God has placed in your charge [for the whole society], but provide sustenance therefrom, and clothing for them, and speak to them kindly and fairly. [4:5]

وَ لَا تُؤْتُوا اَلسُّفَهَآءَ أَمْوَٰلَكُمُ اَلَّتِى
جَعَلَ اَللَّهُ لَكُمْ قِيَٰمًا وَ اُرْزُقُوهُمْ فِيهَا
وَ اُكْسُوهُمْ وَ قُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا ﴿٥﴾

It is significant that the verse uses the second person plural possessive pronoun, "your," to refer to the possessions of those who are weak of judgement, while those possessions are legally owned by those particular "weak" themselves. In this case this pronoun may actually be referring to the whole society, which is entrusted by God, in its totality, with the resources which initially belong to and were created by Him for its use or "rights of usufruct" as it may be put in legal terms [see also 24:33; 57:8]. The society represented by the appointed trustees on these possessions are warned against turning them to those who legally own them as long as they suffer from this intellectual deficiency. Such a provision aims to keep the possessions from any waste and to secure their growth through honest capable persons, and thus secure the interests of the concerned weak of judgement, and the collective interests of the whole society which would be hurt by a decline in any individual property. If the addressees are those who actually manage the possessions, then these possessions are related to them in their role as partial representatives of the collective interests of the society, in addition to their representation of the defected persons, and so their responsibility about the possessions which are under their management is stressed.

Thus the verse significantly underlines the social interest in the individual possessions, since any individual negligence or lack of efficiency would have its negative effects on the collective interests of the society. While Shari'a secures and even encourages private ownership, it does not allow the individual absolute rights when he/she hurts his/her own interests and the collective interests of the whole society; therefore, Shari'a interferes in such cases to maintain the balance between both sides which may require a restriction of the individual rights temporarily and exceptionally. Shari'a is neither inclined to absolute individualism nor absolute collectivism; it basically secures individual rights and balances them by observing and guarding social interests whenever this becomes necessary. All human rights and duties, individual and social, although underlined in general in the Quran and Sunna, have to be spelled out and specified clearly and in detail, and should not be decided in totalitarian or arbitrary ways from above, but by the whole people in adherence with the indicated rulers-ruled relations especially "shura", as previously explained.

O You who have attained to faith! There are many among the clergy and monks, who transgressively devour people's possessions and turn others away from the way of God. And there are those who treasure up gold and silver and do not spend them in the way of God: announce unto them a grievous suffering [in the life to come]; on the Day when those [treasures] shall be heated in the fire of hell, and therewith shall be branded their foreheads, their sides, and their backs; [and they will be told:] "These are what you treasured up for yourselves. Taste you, then, what you treasured up." [9:34-35]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ ٱلْأَحْبَارِ
وَٱلرُّهْبَانِ لَيَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَٰلَ ٱلنَّاسِ
بِٱلْبَٰطِلِ وَيَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ
وَٱلَّذِينَ يَكْنِزُونَ ٱلذَّهَبَ وَٱلْفِضَّةَ وَلَا
يُنفِقُونَهَا فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ فَبَشِّرْهُم بِعَذَابٍ
أَلِيمٍ ﴿٣٤﴾ يَوْمَ يُحْمَىٰ عَلَيْهَا فِى نَارِ
جَهَنَّمَ فَتُكْوَىٰ بِهَا جِبَاهُهُمْ وَجُنُوبُهُمْ
وَظُهُورُهُمْ ۖ هَٰذَا مَا كَنَزْتُمْ لِأَنفُسِكُمْ
فَذُوقُواْ مَا كُنتُمْ تَكْنِزُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

The Quran forbids the wrongful devouring of others' possessions [4:29] regardless of the person of the devourer or the purpose for the devouring. In the above verse, the Quran specifies the clergy and monks, who may be involved in devouring others' possessions and in hoarding treasures of gold and silver, but may hide behind their religious positions, or may claim that they have done so for the benefit of their houses of worship. Religions and houses of worship and those who are involved in them are secure according to Shari`a, but this should not mean that such abuse of religion may go without moral or legal condemnation. What is assigned for spending in God's cause should be earned lawfully [2:267], and hoarding gold and silver which was frozen out of circulation and from benefiting the economy and society may need to be guarded or organized, if not controlled

and restricted. The verse does not only guard the morality of the clergy and monasticists in particular against personal greed or class privilege, but it also sets up a general principle of social justice by condemning a concentration of wealth to a certain limited number of people, and freezing it aside out of public circulation. The people who are related to religion and commit such offenses against their own morality as well as against the socio-economic justice, are warned with a grievous suffering in the life to come. This also applies to anyone who may gain through devouring others' possessions wrongfully, or may enjoy an accumulation of wealth just for the sake of accumulation.

Believe in God and the Conveyor of His message, and spend [on those in need and for the needs of the society as a whole] out of that unto which He has made you trustees, and those of you who have attained to faith and spend [on the needy individuals and for the social well-being] shall have a mighty reward. [57:7]

ءَامِنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ
وَأَنفِقُوا۟ مِمَّا جَعَلَكُم مُّسْتَخْلَفِينَ فِيهِ ۖ
فَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مِنكُمْ وَأَنفَقُوا۟ لَهُمْ أَجْرٌ
كَبِيرٌ ۝٧

God has created on the earth and in the universe resources which are sufficient for the human beings and all the creatures, and this is what is meant in the above verse and in other verses such as *"And there is no living creature on earth but depends for its sustenance on God; and He knows each's final and transitional stays: all [this] is in a clear record"* [11:6, also 29:60; 51:22]. The human beings are entrusted with developing their human potentials comprehensively as well as improving these natural resources and distributing their revenues fairly on themselves [e.g. 11:61, and see about seeking God's bounties 16:14; 17:12, 66; 28:73; 30:46; 35:12; 45:12; 67:15]. Hence individual ownership is fundamental in the Islamic society, economics and law, but the social dimension ought to also be considered, since any individual earning has inter-relations with other individuals and with the society as a whole. The Quran reminds the "owners" as they are legally called, that they are merely "trustees" of what God has put in their possession according to ontological facts, since all the resources are initially created by God for the benefit of His creatures, and people are tested to use their potentials in developing the human and material sources [e.g. 11:61; 62:10; 67:15]. Every individual has to give or spend beyond his/her direct needs, on the needy individuals and for the social well-being. In this way, Islam guards the socio-economic justice and solidarity conceptually and practically, while it considers the individual and his/her activities the basis for the human and material development.

What God has turned over to the Conveyor of His message from the people of the cities, belongs to God and the Conveyor of His Message, and the near of kin [of the deceased fighters] and the orphans, and the needy and the wayfarer; in order that it may not be [merely a benefit limited to a particular group] going round and round among only those of you who [may fight and] thus would become wealthy.
Hence, follow whatever the Conveyor of the message gives you [thereof] and refrain from whatever he forbids you, and be conscious of God; surely, God is strict in retribution.
Such [war-gains] are due to the poor among those who were driven from their homes and their possessions seeking God's bounty and [His] goodly acceptance, and supporting the cause of God and the Conveyor of His message: it is they who have proved to be true [to their commitment]. And [this is also due] to those who before them had homes [in the place to which the former migrated] and embraced the faith, and who show their affection to all that migrated to them [in search of refuge], and have no ill feeling about whatever the others may have been given, but they rather give them preference over themselves, even though they feel a private need, and those who are saved from the covetousness of their own selves, it is they who attain to success.
And those who come later after them pray, "O our Lord! Forgive us, and our brethren who preceded us in faith, and let not our hearts have any hard feelings against those who have attained to faith. O our Lord! Verily, You are All-compassionate, Most Gracious." [59:7-10]

مَّآ أَفَآءَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ
رَسُولِهِۦ مِنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْقُرَىٰ فَلِلَّهِ وَ لِلرَّسُولِ
وَ لِذِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ وَ ٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰ وَ ٱلْمَسَٰكِينِ
وَ ٱبْنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ كَىْ لَا يَكُونَ دُولَةًۢ بَيْنَ
ٱلْأَغْنِيَآءِ مِنكُمْ ۚ وَ مَآ ءَاتَىٰكُمُ ٱلرَّسُولُ
فَخُذُوهُ وَ مَا نَهَىٰكُمْ عَنْهُ فَٱنتَهُوا۟ ۖ
وَ ٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ شَدِيدُ ٱلْعِقَابِ
﴿٧﴾ لِلْفُقَرَآءِ ٱلْمُهَٰجِرِينَ ٱلَّذِينَ
أُخْرِجُوا۟ مِن دِيَٰرِهِمْ وَ أَمْوَٰلِهِمْ يَبْتَغُونَ
فَضْلًا مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَ رِضْوَٰنًا وَ يَنصُرُونَ ٱللَّهَ
وَ رَسُولَهُۥٓ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلصَّٰدِقُونَ ﴿٨﴾
وَ ٱلَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُو ٱلدَّارَ وَ ٱلْإِيمَٰنَ مِن
قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَ لَا
يَجِدُونَ فِى صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِّمَّآ أُوتُوا۟
وَ يُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَ لَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ
خَصَاصَةٌ ۚ وَ مَن يُوقَ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِۦ
فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٩﴾ وَ ٱلَّذِينَ
جَآءُو مِنۢ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا ٱغْفِرْ لَنَا
وَ لِإِخْوَٰنِنَا ٱلَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِٱلْإِيمَٰنِ
وَ لَا تَجْعَلْ فِى قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِّلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟
رَبَّنَآ إِنَّكَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٠﴾

Just as Islam sets its principles about earning and spending to secure socio-economic justice, it does not ignore the "gains of war" and decides how to deal with them. Such gains cannot be considered as personal earnings of the fighters, since if this were the case then the gains of successive battles might be repeatedly seized by the same hands, and thus the fighters would be a privileged and wealthy group, while they are really fighting for the cause of God and are representing the whole society. Therefore, as soon as gains of war

were seized by the Muslim fighters in their first serious confrontation with the enemies, the Quran pointed out that such gains should be included in the state revenues and could not be individual or tribal property, and they have to be put under the control of God's law and the Prophet's leadership [8:1]. The above verse states the right of the whole society, to "what God has turned over to the Conveyor of His message from the people of the cities". It belongs initially to God, and the right of the whole society is significantly qualified in Islamic legal terminology as the right of God, in order to underline its unrelinquishability. The leadership, represented by the Prophet while he was alive and the legitimate Islamic government afterwards, has the right and obligation to allocate the gains of war, for the benefit of the fighters' families, the orphans, the needy and the wayfarer "in order that these [gains of war] may not be [merely a benefit limited to a particular group] going round and round among only those of you who [may fight and] thus would become wealthy". The Quran has repeatedly and significantly stressed the obligation of material and moral support for those who have to stay in a land rather than their own home land, "the wayfarers," as an emphasis of universality and securing equal rights for any human being in any part of the world.

Besides, the above verses state sharply that the whole society and all the needy among it have a right to these gains of war, as long as they are truly in need. This has applied in the past to those who were driven from their homes and possessions in Makka (Mecca), and to those who received them warmly in Madina (Medina) and showed hospitality and even altruism in this respect. Such public rights and social benefits extend to the whole society with all its components and in its successive generations, even though the gains of war are acquired by a certain group at a certain time, and in this way such gains reach all "those who come later after" the generation that witnessed the war and seized its gains. The verses make the concept of "public rights", and accordingly "public revenues, property and money", very clear at such an early stage of the Islamic state, (just four years after its establishment in Medina) and this principle is essential to secure socio-economic justice.

Equal opportunities may require special assistance to those who are seriously deprived before for certain involuntary circumstances, otherwise they would never benefit as much from the later equal opportunities as those who have already enjoyed a privileged situation. Such a principle, which is known in our days as "affirmative action," was considered by the Prophet when he specifically distributed the gains of the confrontations with Banu al-Nadir early in the third year after his migration to Madina (Medina) among the immigrants who had to leave their property behind them in Makka (Mecca) when the oppression forced them out of their homes, and excluded the Medinese Supporters in spite of their invaluable defence of Islam, since they were in their homes with their property. Two poor Medinese Muslims were included in the distribution because of their poverty [See: Ibn Kathir, al-Bidaya wa al-Nihaya, Beirut:1987, vol.IV, p.77].

FAIR BENEFIT FOR INVOLVED PARTIES AND REQUIRED CONSENT FROM ALL

O you who have attained to faith! Do not devour one another's possessions transgressively, but let mutual agreement be the basis in a legitimate trade, and do not destroy yourselves; surely, God is Most Gracious to you. [4:29]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُواْ لَا تَأۡكُلُوٓاْ أَمۡوَٰلَكُم بَيۡنَكُم
بِٱلۡبَٰطِلِ إِلَّآ أَن تَكُونَ تِجَٰرَةً عَن
تَرَاضٖ مِّنكُمۡۚ وَلَا تَقۡتُلُوٓاْ أَنفُسَكُمۡۚ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُمۡ رَحِيمٗا ٢٩

In the above verse, the possessions are also related to the plural pronoun of the second person and thus to the whole society with regard to the final and total economic interests, although every individual possession has legally its own owner. The collective interests of the whole society can be hurt and even damaged through individual attempts of stripping others of what they legitimately possess using fraud, exploitation or any way of transgression. Socio-economic justice has to include care over the earning of money, not only its spending. Spending money on the needy individuals and the social well-being has to be from what is earned legitimately [see the previously mentioned verse 2:267 and the commentary]. Illegitimate earnings or "devouring the possessions of one another wrongfully" encompasses any unfair or dishonest dealing that may emerge in any time or place; it is morally and economically damaging. The basis for any legitimate earning should be the mutual consent of the concerned parties who have to both gain mutually from the transaction. Fraud, exploitation or any way of transgression including injustice in the labor market and relations, would be harmful to some individuals as well as to the whole society and its economy in the end, since economy cannot be stable and flourish continuously and increasingly, unless fairness is observed and guarded in all dealings.

SOCIAL WELFARE DUES "ZAKAT"

The charity offerings "sadaqat" are really meant only for the poor and the needy, and those who are in charge thereof, and those whose hearts have to be won over, and for the freeing of human beings from bondage or relieving the over-burdened with debt and [for] that which can serve the cause of God, and [for] the wayfarer: [this is] an ordinance from God, and God is All-knowing, All-wise. [9:60]

إِنَّمَا
ٱلصَّدَقَٰتُ لِلْفُقَرَآءِ وَ ٱلْمَسَٰكِينِ
وَ ٱلْعَٰمِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَ ٱلْمُؤَلَّفَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَ فِى
ٱلرِّقَابِ وَ ٱلْغَٰرِمِينَ وَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ
وَ ٱبْنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ ۖ فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَ ٱللَّهُ
عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٦٠﴾

Charity can complement and supplement socio-economic justice, but it cannot be the only basis for it. Shari'a has its legal principles which direct and guide earning and spending, such as those that forbid earning money through fraud or any form of exploitation and transgression, and those that forbid wasting money on excessive luxuries or extravagance or any spending that may be harmful to the individual or the society, the morality or the economy [e.g. for luxuries 11:116; 17:16; 21:13; 23:33, 64; 34:34; 43:23; 56:45, for extravagance 6:141; 7:31; 17:26-27; 25:67; for example of other harmful practices 4:29, 5:90-91, 6:151, 7:32,80, 16:90, 17:31-38]. Since directing the processes of earning and spending into the right channels to secure the individual and social benefits represents the basis of the socio-economic justice in Islam, offering charity can complement and supplement it, bridge any limited remaining gaps, and correct any possible shortcoming.

Besides and may be more importantly, encouraging individual initiatives and competitiveness for "giving" and "spending" for social development has its great benefits for the individual as well as the society. Such morally and economically "purifying" payments for the social welfare are partially mandatory dues "*zakat*" and partially voluntary charity "*sadaqa, infaq*". The above verse indicates the categories that are eligible for and deserve receiving such social payments. Those who are permanently unable to earn their living such as the elderly and the seriously disabled or ill, as well as those who may be temporarily hindered from earning their living such as the children and the sick or those who suffer from an individual or public economic crisis, are at the head of those who deserve social assistance.

Significantly, the Quran makes a distinction between those who are temporarily and those who are permanently in need (e.g. the poor/ *al-fuqara'*, the needy/ *al-masakin*, the overburdened debtors/ *al-gharimin*, and the wayfarer/ *ibn al-sabil*), although it states the right of each for public help. Such a differentiation emphasizes the fact that Islam does not encourage the human being to live permanently on social assistance if he/she will be able to work after some time, and if the existing difficulty can be overcome, and it urges his/her resumption of earning his/her own living through productive work as soon as he/she is able to do so. It is significant that Islam has taken various measures to construct the existing status of slavery which was inherited from pre-Islamic traditions and was

against all the Islamic principles, and among these measures an assignment of social assistance and public funds was made for freeing human beings from bondage.

Besides this, social assistance is also assigned to individuals or groups who may be under economic pressures and over-burdened by financial obligations, and such assistance may address the urgent consuming needs, or help to resume economic functioning, including rehabilitation and training of individuals for other work. Offering social assistance to someone who has left his/her homeland and is unable to return to it because of economic or political difficulties is pioneering, and it emphasizes how Islam considers the whole world as one and regards any part of it to be a legitimate home for any member of humanity, which forms one equal family. It is natural to put such social assistance funds under an independent administrative body, and thus the expenses including the salaries of the public officials, are covered from the revenues. Any other social needs that may emerge and may not be included in these previous categories can be addressed within this wide and comprehensive category of assigning social assistance for any spending "that can serve the cause of God", as this covers any emerging spending that secures socio- economic justice and development in different circumstances. Spending on material development and public work such as construction of public roads, bridges, railways, buildings, dams and irrigation systems etc, should be financed by taxes and other sources rather than zakat revenues which have to respond directly to urgent and short-term human needs. Besides this, all the state measures of social assistance, allow spacious room for voluntary charity through individual and organized contributions, or for any mandatory obligation decided by the legitimate authorities to meet any emerging public need.

Of their wealth take [O Prophet] an offering [due to social welfare], so that you cleanse them thereby [in their possessions as well as their morality] and cause them to grow in purity, and pray for them, as - behold - your prayers are a comfort for them; and God is All-hearing, All-knowing. [9:103]

خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَٰلِهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ
وَتُزَكِّيهِم بِهَا وَصَلِّ عَلَيْهِمْ ۖ إِنَّ صَلَوٰتَكَ
سَكَنٌ لَّهُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٠٣﴾

The collection and distribution of the purifying dues for social welfare [zakat] which supplements the Islamic principles of socio-economic justice, is included in the responsibilities of the authorities which are entrusted, from among the people by the people "uli al-amr minkum" [4:59], to enforce the Islamic law. The mutual relationship of the rulers and the ruled is essential for the common benefit of the society. While the Prophet's prayers for the payers of zakat was a source of comfort to them, the Islamic authorities that succeed the Prophet in his political leadership have to serve the public, including the zakat payers, in developing the spiritual and moral values through various channels, such as adult education, public media programs, religious teaching and celebrations in worship houses. However, there ought always to be a sufficient room for voluntary contributions, individual initiatives and competitive efforts for the social well-being. The Islamic social justice is not totalitarian or authoritarian since it is not imposed only from above, but is

developed and maintained through the whole people, and the habit of giving and spending from the haves to the have-nots has to be continuously nurtured so as to become a deeply-rooted and widely-practiced social tradition.

And those in whose possessions there is a due share, determined and recognized and acknowledged [by them], for one who asks [for help] and one who is deprived [of the needs of life]. [70:24-25]

وَٱلَّذِينَ فِىٓ أَمْوَٰلِهِمْ حَقٌّ
مَّعْلُومٌ ۝٢٤ لِّلسَّآئِلِ وَٱلْمَحْرُومِ
۝٢٥

The Quran is talking here about the "right" of one who needs help to get it, and the "obligation" of one who can offer help to do that. Giving help is not something optional; there is always a social factor in what is earned, which requires a parallel consideration of the social welfare in spending it. God's guidance secures the socio-economic justice through the believer's faith in Him, and his/her observance of the moral and legal principles of God's message. Whether one's need for help is known by his/her direct request for help, or by an investigation or a survey or any other means, it has to be met by what can be taken from those who are able to offer help, either voluntarily or by law. However, legal obligations should always allow room for individual volunteering and competitiveness in doing the good and giving, spending on others, and sharing. The purifying dues for the social welfare "*zakat*" represent the legal basic obligation, while spending beyond this obligation from one's energy, knowledge, wealth and all that one may possess on anyone who is in need or on the society as a whole, is urged repeatedly in the Quran that stresses God's limitless rewards for human kindness and generosity.

INDULGENCE IN LUXURY

How [appropriate] it would be among the generations [whom We punished for their evil-doing] before you, if some people of virtue and righteousness spoke out against the [spread of] corruption on earth beside the few whom We saved? But the evil-doers pursued [momentary] pleasures that corrupted their whole being and so lost themselves in evil-doing. Surely, your Lord would never destroy cities as long as they behave righteously [among themselves and stand against evil-doing]. [11:116- 117]

فَلَوْلَا كَانَ مِنَ ٱلْقُرُونِ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ أُوْلُوا۟
بَقِيَّةٍ يَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ ٱلْفَسَادِ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ إِلَّا
قَلِيلًا مِّمَّنْ أَنجَيْنَا مِنْهُمْ ۗ وَٱتَّبَعَ ٱلَّذِينَ
ظَلَمُوا۟ مَآ أُتْرِفُوا۟ فِيهِ وَكَانُوا۟ مُجْرِمِينَ
۝١١٦ وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ لِيُهْلِكَ ٱلْقُرَىٰ
بِظُلْمٍ وَأَهْلُهَا مُصْلِحُونَ ۝١١٧

The maintenance of social justice and development requires essentially self-correction by the people of virtue and righteousness who speak up against any wrong-doing whenever they see it, and who urge others to cooperate together in forbidding what is evil

and supporting what is righteous [also 3:104, 110]. A society, and a civilization would deteriorate and lose the essentials for survival let alone development, if the individuals do not sense their social responsibility towards the whole society. It is natural that evil-doing occurs in any society, but when there is a considerable opposition of what is evil, the whole society is correcting one another and thus it would not suffer because of the existence of the evil-doing which is human and cannot be absolutely excluded, but should be simply resisted and restricted as much as possible.

And when it is Our will to destroy a community [because of their evil-doing], We convey Our commandment to those of its people who have lost themselves entirely in the pursuit of worldly pleasures and excessive luxuries [to reform their behavior]; and [if] they [persistently] commit their evil deeds, such a community determines its own end, and thus [deservingly] reaches its utter destruction by Our will. [17:16]

وَ إِذَآ أَرَدْنَآ أَن
نُّهْلِكَ قَرْيَةً أَمَرْنَا مُتْرَفِيهَا فَفَسَقُواْ فِيهَا
فَحَقَّ عَلَيْهَا ٱلْقَوْلُ فَدَمَّرْنَٰهَا تَدْمِيرًا
(١٦)

Indulging oneself in the pursuit of worldly pleasures and excessive luxuries causes moral and behavioral damage to the individuals, as well as to the society as a whole, since it widens the psychological and social gap between the haves and the have-nots. It perpetuates bitter hostilities among the latter as a result of the sharp and unamendable contrast, while it develops egotism and insensitivity among the former group towards the sufferings of others and indifference about, or opposition of, any change in the social conceptual status quo. Those who have lost themselves entirely in the pursuit of worldly pleasures and excessive luxuries lose human intellectual and practical dynamism in working for a reform of the status quo. Accordingly, they become reactionary, egotistic, rigid protectors of the existing situation and fierce enemies of any change for the better. Economically, those who are indulged in such excessive luxuries allocate enormous amounts to be spent on instant consumable pleasures, and thus they divert from a fair distribution and productive development of material and human resources. They are addressed at first by God's commandments and warnings through His messages in order to change their mentality and behavior which will hurt them as individuals, in addition to hurting the society as a whole in the long run. Naturally such individuals are socially and/or politically influential because of their wealth, and thus their divergence from the right track can be very harmful materially and morally. Therefore, self-indulgence in excessive luxuries has been repeatedly warned against in the Quran [also the verses 11:16; 21:13; 23:33, 64; 34:34; 43:23; 56:45]: after a certain amount of time it becomes destructive for the individual, the society, and civilization, as history has always proved. To resist such a deterioration from its serious consequences, the Quran warns against the early symptoms of excessive and unreasonable spending, even on what is permissible [e.g. 6:141, 7:31, 17:26-27, 25:67].

How many a community that persisted in evil-doing have We brought down, setting up another people after them? And [every time] as soon as they began to feel Our might approaching, behold, they rushed away from it. Do not rush away, but return you unto the luxury that you once exulted in, and to your [luxurious] homes, that you may be called to account [for your behavior there and get the punishment you deserve]. They say: "Alas for us! We have been evildoers." [21:11-14]

وَكَمْ قَصَمْنَا مِن قَرْيَةٍ
كَانَتْ ظَالِمَةً وَأَنشَأْنَا بَعْدَهَا قَوْمًا
ءَاخَرِينَ ﴿١١﴾ فَلَمَّآ أَحَسُّوا۟ بَأْسَنَآ إِذَا
هُم مِّنْهَا يَرْكُضُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ لَا تَرْكُضُوا۟
وَٱرْجِعُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ مَآ أُتْرِفْتُمْ فِيهِ
وَمَسَٰكِنِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُسْـَٔلُونَ ﴿١٣﴾ قَالُوا۟
يَٰوَيْلَنَآ إِنَّا كُنَّا ظَٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٤﴾

Self-indulgence in luxuries ends in individual and social destruction in this life and in the life to come as well, and it isolates the person from the society and also from God. See the verse [17:16] and the commentary on it.

And [to a following generation] We sent to them a conveyor of [Our] message from among themselves, [saying], "Worship God alone! You have no god but He. Will you not, then, become conscious of Him?"
And the leading persons among his people, who stubbornly rejected the truth and denied that they would face another life to come, as they exulted [by their own choice] in the ease and plenty that We granted them in this worldly life, said, "This is but a [mortal] human being like yourselves: he eats of what you eat and drinks of what you drink. And, indeed, if you obey a [mortal] human being like yourselves, you will surely be the losers!" [23:32-34]

فَأَرْسَلْنَا فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ أَنِ
ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرُهُۥٓ ۖ
أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾ وَقَالَ ٱلْمَلَأُ مِن
قَوْمِهِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ وَكَذَّبُوا۟ بِلِقَآءِ
ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ وَأَتْرَفْنَٰهُمْ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا
مَا هَٰذَآ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يَأْكُلُ مِمَّا
تَأْكُلُونَ مِنْهُ وَيَشْرَبُ مِمَّا تَشْرَبُونَ
﴿٣٣﴾ وَلَئِنْ أَطَعْتُم بَشَرًا مِّثْلَكُمْ إِنَّكُمْ
إِذًا لَّخَٰسِرُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

The above verse points out that self-indulgence in the luxuries of this life blocks the human intellectual and social dynamism and makes those who seek only such luxuries the opponents of any change of the status quo under which they enjoy such luxuries. They try any argument that may help them in their opposition, including saying that the conveyor of God's message is merely a human being like them who cannot prove any supernatural power [also 6:8-9; 17:90- 96; 23:24; 25:21; 41:14; 43:60], and that this conveyor and his followers are not rich or socially powerful [e.g. 11:27-31, 91-93; 25:7-11, 20; 34:34-35; 43:31-32]. The Quran repeatedly stresses that any conveyor of God's message is just a human being like the people to whom he is sent, and unless he is one of them he would

not be able to communicate with them.

Besides, the conveyor of God's message has to be judged according to his moral merits and credibility, as well as the sensibility and beneficiality of his message, not according to his wealth or social or political power. The message itself in its content is enough to prove its authenticity and the truthfulness of its conveyor. The belief in the One God and in the human being's accountability is rational and reasonable. However, those who are indulged in the luxuries of this life and are privileged by the status quo fear change, and accountability, and they adhere to their favorable present, especially when God's justice as revealed in His message would affect their unfair socio-economic privileges. To prevent such egotism and separation from the society and from morality, Islam opposes self-indulgence in luxuries and wasteful spending even if the income has come from a legitimate source and is spent on what is permitted in its elements as a principle. The misuse of what is lawful may not be less morally and socially mischievous than the use of the unlawful.

Behold, Qarun was of the people of Moses, but he arrogantly exalted himself above them, [as] We had granted him such treasures that the means for keeping them safe were too heavy a burden for a group of men endowed with strength. When his people [seeing his arrogance] said to him, "Exult not [in you wealth], for, surely, God does not love those who exult [in such worldly pleasures that will soon come to an end]. But seek, through what God has granted you, [the good of] the life to come, without forgetting, withal, your own [rightful] share in this world, and do good as God has done to you, and seek not to commit mischief on earth, for God loves not those who commit mischief.

He [Qarun] said, "What I have is only by virtue of the knowledge that I have." Did he not know that God had brought to an end, before him, many who were superior to him in strength and richer in what they had collected? But the evident and persistent evildoers might not need an enquiry for their evil-doing [to find out as proof].

So he went forth among his people in all his [worldly] glitter, [and] those who cared only for the life of this world said, "Oh, if we but had the like of what Qarun has been given! Surely, he is endowed with mighty fortune." But those to whom true knowledge had been

إِنَّ قَٰرُونَ كَانَ مِن قَوْمِ مُوسَىٰ
فَبَغَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ ۖ وَءَاتَيْنَٰهُ مِنَ ٱلْكُنُوزِ مَآ
إِنَّ مَفَاتِحَهُۥ لَتَنُوٓأُ بِٱلْعُصْبَةِ أُو۟لِى
ٱلْقُوَّةِ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُۥ قَوْمُهُۥ لَا تَفْرَحْ ۖ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلْفَرِحِينَ ﴿٧٦﴾ وَٱبْتَغِ
فِيمَآ ءَاتَىٰكَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلدَّارَ ٱلْءَاخِرَةَ ۖ وَلَا
تَنسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَأَحْسِن كَمَآ
أَحْسَنَ ٱللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ ۖ وَلَا تَبْغِ ٱلْفَسَادَ
فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ
ٱلْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾ قَالَ إِنَّمَآ أُوتِيتُهُۥ
عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ عِندِىٓ ۚ أَوَلَمْ يَعْلَمْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ قَدْ
أَهْلَكَ مِن قَبْلِهِۦ مِنَ ٱلْقُرُونِ مَنْ هُوَ أَشَدُّ
مِنْهُ قُوَّةً وَأَكْثَرُ جَمْعًا ۚ وَلَا يُسْـَٔلُ عَن
ذُنُوبِهِمُ ٱلْمُجْرِمُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾ فَخَرَجَ عَلَىٰ
قَوْمِهِۦ فِى زِينَتِهِۦ ۖ قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ يُرِيدُونَ
ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا يَٰلَيْتَ لَنَا مِثْلَ مَآ أُوتِىَ
قَٰرُونُ إِنَّهُۥ لَذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٧٩﴾ وَقَالَ
ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْعِلْمَ وَيْلَكُمْ ثَوَابُ ٱللَّهِ

granted said, "Woe upon you! The reward of God [in the life to come] is best for those who attain to faith and do what is righteous, and none shall achieve it, save those who steadfastly persevere [in doing the good]."
And thereupon We caused the earth to swallow him and his dwellings; and he had none to support him against God, and [thus] he could never win.
And in the morning those who had longed to be in his place the day before were saying, "Ah! It is indeed God who grants sustenance in abundance or in a certain measure, to whomsoever He wills of His servants [as a test]. Had God not been gracious to us, He would have caused us to be swallowed too. Ah! Those who [arrogantly and stubbornly] deny the truth can assuredly never attain to success."
That abode in the life to come, We shall grant only to those who do not seek neither haughtiness nor any mischief on earth; and the future belongs to the God-conscious. [28: 76-83]

خَيْرٌ لِّمَنْ ءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا ۚ وَلَا
يُلَقَّىٰهَآ إِلَّا ٱلصَّٰبِرُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾ فَخَسَفْنَا بِهِۦ
وَبِدَارِهِ ٱلْأَرْضَ فَمَا كَانَ لَهُۥ مِن فِئَةٍ
يَنصُرُونَهُۥ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ
ٱلْمُنتَصِرِينَ ﴿٨١﴾ وَأَصْبَحَ ٱلَّذِينَ تَمَنَّوْا
مَكَانَهُۥ بِٱلْأَمْسِ يَقُولُونَ وَيْكَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ
يَبْسُطُ ٱلرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِۦ
وَيَقْدِرُ ۖ لَوْلَآ أَن مَّنَّ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا لَخَسَفَ
بِنَا ۖ وَيْكَأَنَّهُۥ لَا يُفْلِحُ ٱلْكَٰفِرُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾
تِلْكَ ٱلدَّارُ ٱلْءَاخِرَةُ نَجْعَلُهَا لِلَّذِينَ لَا
يُرِيدُونَ عُلُوًّا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا فَسَادًا ۚ
وَٱلْعَٰقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾

This is a story of someone who was so exulted in his wealth and the luxuries of this wordly life, that he denied God's bounty and forgot the life to come, and his accountability for his arrogance and wealth on the Day of Judgement. He was of the people of Moses, but he did not benefit from God's guidance conveyed by that Messenger, and so being from among this group did not make such an arrogant denier of God's laws immune from His punishment. The story shows that luxurious life may have its temptations to some others who are not rich, while some may be aware that what counts is keeping to the truth and to righteousness and steadfastness under all circumstances. It also demonstrates that God's reward is in the life to come, for those merits are far better than whatever pleasures exist in this short wordly life that are connected with shortsightedness and ungratefulness.

Identifying Qarun here with Korah of the Old Testament [Numbers XVI] cannot be proved nor is it necessary, since, as in the case of "Dhu-l-Qarnayn," it is the moral message that is the main objective of the story, whatever the historical identification of the person may be. The story ends with a clear moral message, that exultation on earth is not less condemned than spreading damage and evil-doing, and that the successful end, whether in the long run in this life or in the life to come, is for the God-conscious. Their faith in God and in their accountability urge them to resist both complexes of superiority when they have power, and inferiority when they lack it.

Never did We send a warner to a community, but those who lost themselves entirely in the pursuit of the pleasures and luxuries of this world say, "Behold, we deny that there is any truth in that [message] with which you have been sent," and they would add, "Richer [than you] are we in wealth and in children, and we shall never be made to suffer." [34:34-35]

وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَا فِى قَرْيَةٍ مِّن نَّذِيرٍ إِلَّا قَالَ
مُتْرَفُوهَآ إِنَّا بِمَآ أُرْسِلْتُم بِهِۦ كَٰفِرُونَ
﴿٣٤﴾ وَقَالُوا۟ نَحْنُ أَكْثَرُ أَمْوَٰلًا
وَأَوْلَٰدًا وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُعَذَّبِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾

Here is another reference to the mentality and behavior of the privileged and self-indulged in the luxuries of this life. Their thinking and actions are centered around their wealth and their clan and social power, and they are not ready for any fair argument or unselfish behavior. The above verse states that the intellectual, moral and social egotism of such people is almost a general fact, and this explains why Islam presents its guidance for earning and spending which aims to guard morality and justice with regard to the individual and the society. Earning plenty of money from legitimate sources is legally and economically accepted in Islam, if it is balanced with fair spending for the individual and social needs, and an avoidance of both obsessions of wealth accumulation and of wasteful spending.

Just in the same way, whenever We sent a warner before you to any town, those among them who lost themselves entirely in the pursuit of pleasures and luxuries, always said: "We found our forefathers following a tradition in belief, and we are certainly following in their footsteps. [43:23]

وَكَذَٰلِكَ مَآ
أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ فِى قَرْيَةٍ مِّن نَّذِيرٍ إِلَّا
قَالَ مُتْرَفُوهَآ إِنَّا وَجَدْنَآ ءَابَآءَنَا عَلَىٰٓ
أُمَّةٍ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰٓ ءَاثَٰرِهِم مُّقْتَدُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

The self-indulged in the luxuries of this life are reactionary as well as egotistic. To them, what is conceptually or morally right or wrong, is what has been inherited as a tradition of their forefathers. Their individuality is asserted only in the pursuit of pleasures and luxuries, not in judging or scrutinizing their way of life. Their self-indulgence in luxuries blocks their common sense, morality and social feelings, and hinders them from being creative, taking any initiative or supporting any reform. In the depths of their own hearts and minds, they are sure of the unjust privileges they enjoy in the present, and so they oppose any change that may put such privileges at risk. Not only has one to earn money legitimately without exploitation or fraud or any transgression, but also one must spend some of this money on the individual and social development in all dimensions: physical, intellectual, spiritual and moral.

NO SQUANDERING

And render to the kindred their due rights, as well as the needy, and the wayfarer, but squander not [your possessions] senselessly.

Surely, the squanderers are in the party of the devils; and the devil has always been ungrateful to his Lord. [17:26-27]

وَءَاتِ ذَا
ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ حَقَّهُۥ وَٱلْمِسْكِينَ وَٱبْنَ
ٱلسَّبِيلِ وَلَا تُبَذِّرْ تَبْذِيرًا ﴿٢٦﴾ إِنَّ
ٱلْمُبَذِّرِينَ كَانُوٓا۟ إِخْوَٰنَ ٱلشَّيَٰطِينِ ۖ
وَكَانَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ لِرَبِّهِۦ كَفُورًا ﴿٢٧﴾

According to al-Tabari's commentary on the previous verses, squandering money means spending it for unrighteous or unreasonable purposes, even if they are permissible. When such spending is sizable, the waste in quantity is added to the lack of purpose and quality in the expenditure. Squandering money, which may include money wasted on luxuries and other meaningless spending, has its moral and social damages, since spending becomes a personal obsession, and the social and economic interests of the whole people are ignored or are at least not seriously considered. Even the individual interests of the spender him/herself are not considered in a balanced way that secures the personal needs in all human dimensions and in the future as well as the present. Squandering what God has entrusted the human being with [see 57:7], without any real benefit to the individual or to the society, is a waste of God's gifts and an ingratitude towards the Lord and Grantor of gifts and bounties. Since Satan has been well known for his ingratitude to God, the squanderers are actually joining the party of Satan, or the party of the ungrateful to God. Such a severe condemnation of the squanderers stresses the fact that the Islamic socio-economic justice starts from the proper conduct of the earning and spending in the right way in order to secure the individual and social short and long term interests in a balanced way, and after this securing of the foundations, the social welfare dues (zakat) come to complement and support them.

Those [worshippers of the All-merciful] who, when they spend, are neither prodigal nor parsimonious, but hold a just [balance] between these [two extremes]. [25:67]

وَٱلَّذِينَ إِذَآ أَنفَقُوا۟ لَمْ يُسْرِفُوا۟
وَلَمْ يَقْتُرُوا۟ وَكَانَ بَيْنَ ذَٰلِكَ قَوَامًا ﴿٦٧﴾

This is another emphasis on the required moderation in spending, that stands in the middle between extravagance or wastefulness, and tightfistedness. See the previously mentioned verses [17:26-27, 29] and the commentary on them.

STATUS OF NON-MUSLIMS IN THE MUSLIM SOCIETY AND STATE

Human beings are favored by God, as a species of His creatures in its totality and generality, wherever their in-born or acquired differences may be. All human beings, whatever their origins, races, colors, languages, faiths and homelands may be, are equally favored by human merits that have been granted to them by God since the creation of the first couple: Adam and his mate. Significantly, the term "*Children of Adam*" is used 8 times in the Quran to refer to all of humanity [see verses 7:26-27;31,35,172; 17:70; 19:58; 36:60], "*the human being*" in more than 65 verses [e.g. 4:28; 10:12; 11:9; 12:5; 16:4; 17:11,13-14,100; 18:54; 21:37; 29:8; 31:14; 33:72; 53:39-41; 55:3; 70:19-22; 75:14-15,36; 76:1-2; 80:24-30; 82:6-8; 84:6; 86:5-11; 95:4-6; 96:2-8; 100:6-8; 103:2-3], and "*the human beings*" in more than 230 verses [e.g. 2:21-2,44,124,143,164-5,188,200-1,204-7,213,251,264; 3:4,14,110,134,140,187; 4:1,37-8,53,58,79,114,133,161,165,174; 5:32; 6:91,122; 7:85,158; 8:47; 9:34; 10:11,19,21-3,75,99; 11:85,118-9; 16:44,61; 17:89,106; 22:1-2,5,8,11,40,65,73-6,78; 24:35; 26:183; 29:2-3,43; 30:30,39,41,58; 31:18,20,33; 34:28; 35:15,28,45; 39:27,41; 40:57; 42:42; 49:13; 57:25; 83:2-6; 99:6-8; 114:1-6]. On other numerous occasions, the Quran specifically deals with "those who believe" in its revelation by God and its message through Prophet Muhammad.

The human merits, physical, intellectual and spiritual, psychological, and moral are granted to the entire human species, and they have to be respected by all human beings in their enormous diversity through their various relations. Prophet Muhammad stood up when he saw a funeral of a Jew passing by, and when he was asked by his companions about such a gesture of respect he said, "Isn't this a human soul" [reported by al-Bukhari].

The development of these human merits to their maximum has to be secured by the Muslim state authorities for all human beings who live under the sovereignty and responsibility of the state. The verse 17:70 underlines to the human beings some of God's favors to the human beings which have to be secured and developed, such as universal movement and interrelations by all means of transportation and communication, wise use of economic resources to produce good things of life without waste or pollution, and all what makes "human civilization" a characteristic merit of a human society, differently from groupings of other creatures. Non-Muslims are a part of these privileged humans, whose merits have to be respected and developed within the Muslim society and through the Muslim state. Socio-economic justice development, including security, public health, education, work and market opportunities with fair relations, as well as different welfare plans, have to be offered to all human beings, Muslims and non-Muslims, who live under the sovereignty and responsibility of the Muslim state. Within the society, all members have to deal with one another as fellow humans, each with wide activities and responsibilities throughout the neighborhood, work groupings, the local community or county.

HUMAN DIVERSITY AND CHANGE

And had your Lord willed, He would have made all humankind one single people; but [He willed it otherwise, and so] they continue to have their differences [to test them as to how they tackle them], except those upon whom your Lord has bestowed His grace [through benefiting from His guidance in resolving their differences]. And to that end [of testing them] has He created them [all]. But [as for those who refuse to resolve their differences rightfully and to benefit from the divine guidance], your Lord's words shall be fulfilled: "I shall assuredly fill hell with [the evil-doers from] the invisible beings and the human beings as well." [11:118-9]

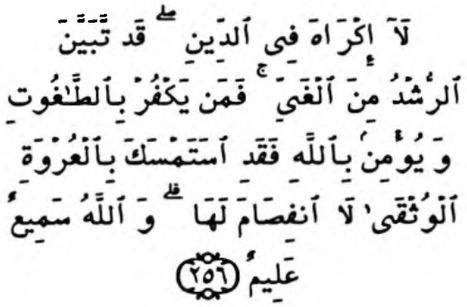
وَلَوْ شَآءَ
رَبُّكَ لَجَعَلَ ٱلنَّاسَ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً ۖ وَلَا
يَزَالُونَ مُخْتَلِفِينَ ﴿١١٨﴾ إِلَّا مَن رَّحِمَ
رَبُّكَ ۚ وَلِذَٰلِكَ خَلَقَهُمْ ۗ وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَةُ
رَبِّكَ لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنَ ٱلْجِنَّةِ وَٱلنَّاسِ
أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١١٩﴾

The human diversity that has come out of the one original human community is repeatedly stressed in the Quran. This concept, clearly indicated in the above verses, had been emphasized about 20 more times [e.g. 2:213, 5:48, 6:42,108,7:38, 10:19; 13:30; 16:63,92-3; 23:44; 29:18; 35:24,42; 40:5; 41:25; 42:8; 43:22-3,33; 45:17,28; 46:18]. Differences are human, and the Quran repeatedly stresses that they will be judged by God on the Day of Judgement [e.g. 2:113,153; 3:55; 5:48; 6:164; 10:19,93; 16:33-9,92,124; 22:69; 32:25; 39:3,46]. Among the merits granted by God to the human species, the human intellect and free will are distinct, and lead to continuous acquired differences, added to the in-born physical-psychological-intellectual differences that come about due to hereditary or environmental factors. The universal spread of humanity, which represents a main human merit according to the previous verse 17:70, had been a further contributor to the factors of human diversity. In addition, there is a constant human change within the same human being or the human society at a given time and place [e.g. the Quran 2:155; 3:140,186; 5:148; 6:165; 8:53,13; 13:11; 18:7; 21:35; 76:2; 89:15-16].

According to such widely-spread differences and continuous changes, a human consensus on the message of Islam, as well as other issues judged by the human intellect, cannot be reached or set as a goal, since it is against the human nature of diverse thinking and free will:*"let, then, any who wills, believe in it [the truth], and let one who wills reject it."* [18:29]. Human differences are natural, and those who benefit from God's grace through conceptual and ethical guidance would wisely and successfully handle their differences. Humans with their merits are created to be continuously tested in this world's life by such a challenge in dealing with human differences. Co-existence and co-operation among different human beings are stressed in the Quran, and there should be no doubt or illusion about this, since thinking about patterned humanity in faith -or otherwise- contradicts the natural human diversity. Muslims have to understand this fact in dealing

with others, through developing common grounds of moral values, constructive discussion, and productive cooperation.

NO COERCION IN MATTERS OF FAITH


لَآ إِكۡرَاهَ فِي ٱلدِّينِ ۖ قَد تَّبَيَّنَ
ٱلرُّشۡدُ مِنَ ٱلۡغَيِّ ۚ فَمَن يَكۡفُرۡ بِٱلطَّٰغُوتِ
وَيُؤۡمِنۢ بِٱللَّهِ فَقَدِ ٱسۡتَمۡسَكَ بِٱلۡعُرۡوَةِ
ٱلۡوُثۡقَىٰ لَا ٱنفِصَامَ لَهَا ۗ وَٱللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ
عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٥٦﴾

Let there be no coercion in matters of faith; the right way has become distinct from [the way of] error. Hence, whoever rejects the powers of injustice and evil and believes in God has indeed taken hold of the most unfailing support that shall never give way, and God is All-hearing, All-knowing.[2:256]

This principle of freedom of faith is assured in many other Quranic verses. As examples, we read "*And if your Lord had so willed, whoever is on earth would surely have attained to faith, all of them, all together; would you then think that you could compel people to become believers?*" [10:99], "*He said, 'O my people! What do you think if I stand on a clear evidence from my Lord, and He has graced me with mercy from Him, to which you have remained blind; shall we force it on you while it is hateful to you?' *" [11:28], "*And you cannot by any means be one who forces them [to believe]*", "*And so [O Prophet,] exhort them; you are only one who has to exhort; you cannot control [their decision] and compel them [to believe]*" [88:21-22]. Forcing any person to act in any way nullifies the moral and legal responsibility of that person in such an action, whether it is good or evil; consequently, he/she cannot be respectively rewarded or punished for that forced action. Accordingly, imposing Islam by force on any human being will never bring out God's acceptance and reward to the imposer or the one upon whom it was imposed.

Significantly, it was reported that the reason for the revelation of the above mentioned verse 2:256 was that some people of pre-Islamic Yathrib (Medina) would vow that if they had a son, he would be raised as a Jew. After the advent of Islam, the parents asked Prophet Muhammad if they could force such a son to be a Muslim, but the Prophet told them that it was only the son who could choose his faith according to his free will, and the verse was revealed to assure this principle. Another report attributed the reason of revelation to another incident, in which two sons of a Yathribi were persuaded to be Christians by some Syrian merchants whom they joined. Their parents wanted to get them back by force, but the Prophet stressed their right to make their own free decision, and the verse was revealed to support what the Prophet had said. Al-Zamakhshari, the distinguished linguist and commentator of the Quran, commented on the above verse: "God has not conducted the matter of faith through compelling and forcing, but through enabling [the person to make his/her own decision] and willfully choosing". He mentioned the verse 10:99 as another example of this invaluable Quranic principle.

As an impressive practice of this principle, Muslim jurists discussed whether a Muslim husband's invitation of his wife to Islam would be an abuse of the type that would be qualified as imposition. While Hanafis were inclined to allow this invitation to Islam, strictly stressing that it should not be explicitly or implicitly connected with any pressure, Shafi'is were reluctant to condone such an invitation lest some imposition may be connected or implied, [Abdul Karim Zaydan, *Ahkam al-Dhimyyin wa-l-Must'minin fi dar al-Islam*; University of Baghdad, p.629]. Ibn al-Qayyim reported a view that a Muslim husband is not authorized to forbid his Christian or Jewish wife to drink wine, since this is not forbidden in her faith, but she has to avoid reaching drunkenness and intoxication [Ibn al-Qayyim, *Ahkam Ahl al-Dhimma*, Beirut:1961, II:p,439]. Consistently, most jurists exempted the Christians and Jews from the punishment for drinking liquor that could be inflicted on a Muslim. The Malikis, distinctly from others, saw that a non-Muslim under the protection of the Muslim state "*dhimmi*" and accused of adultery or fornication "*zina*" should be tried by his/her own religious community, according to its law [Zaydan, *Ahkam al-Dhimyyin wa-l-Must'minin*, Beirut, p.251-2].

Muslims cannot claim that their history has always proved a commitment to and an observation of the this rule within the Muslim society or state, since a human deviation occasionally happened, but such a violation has never been a dominant situation- for a long time or through extensive places- nor a general rule, as non-Muslim historians and lawyers have stated. Gustave von Grunebaum admitted that "there was in the East during the Middle Ages less physical persecution of nonconformists than in the West, where by the way with the exception of the Jews, sizable religious minorities were as good as nonexistent." It is true that individual rulers -not the Muslim state authorities as a whole- might have harmed non-Muslim communities or some prominent members, this usually followed a period of conspicuous prosperity and political ascendency where "the Muslims themselves were equally exposed to the arbitrary and unrestrained power of the monarch" [*Medieval Islam*, Chicago:1946, p.180]. Majid Khadduri has expressed this overview of the Muslim-non Muslim relations in history: "If a spirit of intolerance had at times been shown, it was the symptom of a growing oppressive rule which caused the Muslim populace at large to suffer no less than non-Muslims. Mob violence may have been at times focussed against non-Muslims, but mob violence indicates a dissatisfaction and unjust rule under which neither Muslims nor dhimmis could live with prosperity and security. If certain caliphs and governors were harsh and brutal, others were inclined to show magnanimity and generous spirit. Under reckless rule, the dhimmis may have suffered persecution, but the Muslims were not much better off...The general treatment of the dhimmis under Muslim rule, however, must be measured in terms of such suffering at the hands of careless caliphs and individual Muslims, but in the spirit of tolerance embodied in the law and in the general spirit prevailing in each age and generation, and this must also be judged in terms of the relative prosperity and security enjoyed by the majority" [War and Peace in the Law of Islam, Baltimore:1955, pp.200-201].

URGING THE FOLLOWERS OF EARLIER DIVINE MESSAGES (PEOPLE OF THE BOOK, PARTICULARLY JEWS AND CHRISTIANS) TO OBSERVE AND PRACTICE THE TEACHINGS OF THESE MESSAGES

سَمَّٰعُونَ لِلْكَذِبِ أَكَّٰلُونَ لِلسُّحْتِ ۚ
فَإِن جَآءُوكَ فَٱحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ
أَوْ أَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ ۖ وَإِن تُعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ
فَلَن يَضُرُّوكَ شَيْـًٔا ۖ وَإِنْ حَكَمْتَ
فَٱحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِٱلْقِسْطِ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾

...Thus, if they come to you [in order to rule among them], you may either rule among them or leave them [to deal with their matter on their own]; and if you let them [on their own] they can not cause you any harm; but if you [decide to] rule among them, rule with justice; verily, God loves those who act with justice. [5:42]

وَكَيْفَ
يُحَكِّمُونَكَ وَعِندَهُمُ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةُ فِيهَا حُكْمُ
ٱللَّهِ ثُمَّ يَتَوَلَّوْنَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ ۚ وَمَآ
أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ بِٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾ إِنَّآ أَنزَلْنَا
ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةَ فِيهَا هُدًى وَنُورٌ ۖ يَحْكُمُ بِهَا
ٱلنَّبِيُّونَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَسْلَمُوا۟ لِلَّذِينَ هَادُوا۟
وَٱلرَّبَّٰنِيُّونَ وَٱلْأَحْبَارُ بِمَا ٱسْتُحْفِظُوا۟
مِن كِتَٰبِ ٱللَّهِ وَكَانُوا۟ عَلَيْهِ شُهَدَآءَ ۚ فَلَا
تَخْشَوُا۟ ٱلنَّاسَ وَٱخْشَوْنِ ۖ وَلَا
تَشْتَرُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِى ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۚ وَمَن لَّمْ
يَحْكُم بِمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ
ٱلْكَٰفِرُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾ وَكَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ فِيهَآ أَنَّ
ٱلنَّفْسَ بِٱلنَّفْسِ وَٱلْعَيْنَ بِٱلْعَيْنِ
وَٱلْأَنفَ بِٱلْأَنفِ وَٱلْأُذُنَ بِٱلْأُذُنِ وَٱلسِّنَّ
بِٱلسِّنِّ وَٱلْجُرُوحَ قِصَاصٌ ۚ فَمَن تَصَدَّقَ
بِهِۦ فَهُوَ كَفَّارَةٌ لَّهُۥ ۚ وَمَن لَّمْ يَحْكُم بِمَآ
أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

But how is it that they ask you to be their judge, seeing that they have the Torah that contains God's rules, then thereafter they turn their backs [to it]?
Verily, We sent down the Torah, wherein there is guidance and light, thereby the Prophets who submitted themselves to God judge among the Jewish people, and so did the people who were truly devoted to God [rabbis] and the distinctive persons, in as much as what of God's writ had been entrusted to them and they were witnesses to. Therefore, [O children of Israel] fear not people, but fear you only Me; and sell not My messages for a trifling gain; and whoever judges not according to what God has sent down, they are the stubborn deniers of the truth.
And therein [in the Torah] We ordained for them a life for a life, and an eye for an eye, and a nose for a nose, and an ear for an ear, and a tooth for a tooth; and a [similar] retribution for wounds; but whosoever forgoes [this] out of generosity and magnanimity, that shall be for him[/her] an expiation [for some past wrongdoing]. And whoever does not rule according to what God has sent down - they are the evildoers. [5:43-45]

And we sent 'Isa ibn Maryam (Jesus the son of Mary) to follow in the footsteps of those [earlier prophets], confirming the truth of the Torah that he found before him, and We gave to him the Gospel, wherein is guidance and light, confirming the truth of the Torah that he found there before him, and as a guidance and an admonition unto those who are God-conscious. And the followers of the Gospel are bidden to judge in accordance with what God has sent down therein, and they who do not judge in accordance with what God has sent down, they are truly the iniquitous. [5:46-7]

وَ قَفَّيْنَا عَلَىٰٓ ءَاثَـٰرِهِم بِعِيسَى ٱبْنِ مَرْيَمَ
مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ ۖ
وَءَاتَيْنَـٰهُ ٱلْإِنجِيلَ فِيهِ هُدًى وَ نُورٌ
وَمُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ
وَهُدًى وَ مَوْعِظَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾ وَ لْيَحْكُمْ
أَهْلُ ٱلْإِنجِيلِ بِمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ فِيهِ ۚ
وَمَن لَّمْ يَحْكُم بِمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ فَأُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ هُمُ
ٱلْفَـٰسِقُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾

And to you We have sent the Book, setting forth the truth, confirming the truth of whatever remains of earlier revealed books, and watching over it; so judge between them [the People of the Book] according to what God has revealed, and follow not their whims, diverging from the truth that has come to you. To each of you We have appointed a law and a way to follow. And had God so willed, He would have made you all one single people, but [He willed it otherwise] so as to test you through what He has given you. Vie, then, with one another, in good deeds; unto God you shall return, and He will make you understand all on which you differed. [5:48]

وَ أَنزَلْنَآ إِلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَـٰبَ
بِٱلْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ ٱلْكِتَـٰبِ
وَ مُهَيْمِنًا عَلَيْهِ ۖ فَٱحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَآ
أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ ۖ وَ لَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَآءَهُمْ عَمَّا
جَآءَكَ مِنَ ٱلْحَقِّ ۚ لِكُلٍّ جَعَلْنَا مِنكُمْ
شِرْعَةً وَ مِنْهَاجًا ۚ وَ لَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ
لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً وَ لَـٰكِن لِّيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِى
مَآ ءَاتَىٰكُمْ ۖ فَٱسْتَبِقُوا۟ ٱلْخَيْرَٰتِ ۚ إِلَى
ٱللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ
فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

And if they would but truly observe the Torah and the Gospel and what was sent down to them from their Lord, they would eat of the blessings of what is above them and what is underneath them. Some of them do reasonably behave but many of them do indeed what is wrong. [5:66]

وَ لَوْ أَنَّهُمْ أَقَامُوا۟ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةَ وَ ٱلْإِنجِيلَ
وَ مَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِم مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ لَأَكَلُوا۟ مِن فَوْقِهِمْ
وَمِن تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِهِم ۚ مِّنْهُمْ أُمَّةٌ مُّقْتَصِدَةٌ ۖ
وَ كَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ سَآءَ مَا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾

Say: "O people of the Book! You have no valid ground unless you [truly] apply the Torah and the Gospel and all that was sent to you by your Lord." Yet, what

قُلْ يَـٰٓأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَـٰبِ لَسْتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَىْءٍ
حَتَّىٰ تُقِيمُوا۟ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةَ وَ ٱلْإِنجِيلَ وَ مَآ

has been sent to you by your Lord makes many of them react with more arrogant aggression and stubborn rejection of the truth; but you should not feel any sorrow for those who stubbornly deny the truth. [5:68]

أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُم مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ ۗ وَلَيَزِيدَنَّ كَثِيرًا
مِّنْهُم مَّآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَّبِّكَ طُغْيَٰنًا وَكُفْرًا ۚ
فَلَا تَأْسَ عَلَى ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٦٨﴾

Invite [all humanity] to the way of your Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation, and argue with them in the fairest and most constructive manner; for your Lord knows best as to who strays from His path, and best knows He as to who are the right- guided. [16:125]

ٱدْعُ إِلَىٰ سَبِيلِ
رَبِّكَ بِٱلْحِكْمَةِ وَٱلْمَوْعِظَةِ ٱلْحَسَنَةِ ۖ
وَجَٰدِلْهُم بِٱلَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ
أَعْلَمُ بِمَن ضَلَّ عَن سَبِيلِهِۦ ۖ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ
بِٱلْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿١٢٥﴾

And do not argue with the people of the Book, except in the most kindly and constructive way, unless it be with those who are bent on evil doing [with whom you have to avoid any argument], and say: "We believe in what has been sent down to us, and in that which has been sent down to you; our God and your God is one; and it is to Him that we [all] submit ourselves." [29:46]

وَلَا تُجَٰدِلُوٓا۟
أَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ إِلَّا بِٱلَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ إِلَّا
ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ مِنْهُمْ ۖ وَقُولُوٓا۟ ءَامَنَّا
بِٱلَّذِىٓ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَأُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ
وَإِلَٰهُنَا وَإِلَٰهُكُمْ وَٰحِدٌ وَنَحْنُ لَهُۥ
مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾

Say,"O People of the Book! come unto the [basic] word which we and you both can hold, that we [together] shall worship none but the One God, and shall never associate any else with Him, nor shall we take from among us lords instead of God." And if they turn away, then say," Bear witness that we have submitted our whole-selves unto Him." [3: 64]

قُلْ يَٰٓأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ
تَعَالَوْا۟ إِلَىٰ كَلِمَةٍ سَوَآءٍۭ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ
أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِۦ شَيْـًٔا
وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِّن دُونِ
ٱللَّهِ ۚ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا۟ فَقُولُوا۟ ٱشْهَدُوا۟ بِأَنَّا
مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾

Followers of earlier divine messages are urged to observe their messages, since the essence of God's messages through successive conveyors is one and the same: "*And We assuredly sent among every people a conveyor of God's message saying: "Worship God, and turn aside of the powers of evil and injustice." And then among these people were some whom God has guided, while others inevitably fell into serious erroneousness. Go, then, about the earth, and find out what was the end of those who denounced the truth as a lie"* [16:36], "*And before your time We never sent any conveyor of [Our] message except with Our revelation [which he had to convey to people] that there is no deity save Me, [and that] therefore you worship Me [alone]"* [21:25]. The belief in the One God to whose

guidance the human being should submit his/her whole-self and act accordingly, is the corner-stone of all God's messages, which liberates the human being from within so that he/she rejects and resists any external suppression or internal obsession. All God's creation has its proper and fair place in this perspective, since the Supreme Being to whom submission is absolute is One, and all others are merely His creation. The accountability of every human individual in his/her dealing with others according to the principle of justice and kindness presented in God's messages secures the effectiveness of the belief and its moral-behavioral consequences. This accountability is secured through the individual spirituality and consciousness self-correction, and to the social educational and legal supervision according to God's guidance.

Muslims agree with all believers in God and His messages on these grounds, and these believers are addressed by the Quran to observe these essentials in their life. It is their own intellect and morality which are naturally expected to persuade them from within to acquire, compare and judge the teaching of Islam in the light of what they have been already believing in, rather than any Muslim intentional interference, let alone any pressure. Muslims are merely required to objectively present their message in a reasonable and decent way, and answer all who have questions about them.

When a dialogue may be conducted for mutual knowledge of one another, it has to be only between those who are fair and honest on all sides, and should be based on common sense and practiced in good faith. As an example, the Quran calls the attention of a Muslim not to start any discussion - even about the faith - on the premise that he/she has the entire truth and the other merely stands on falsehood [34:24]. Such a discussion would certainly be futile. One can be naturally so certain about his/her belief, but he/she cannot impose his/her faith on others beforehand, and all parties have to explore others' beliefs in an unprejudiced way, assuming that truth may be on their side. The Quran calls the People of the Book to the essence of God's message which represents the common grounds "*That we [together] shall worship none but the One God and shall never associate any with Him, nor shall we take from among us lords instead of God.*" I think that such a basis is accepted by all who share the Abrahamic faith and follow any of God's messages and books. The believers in the "Trinity" always stress their belief in the One God. Any who may turn away from sharing such common grounds is acting according to psychological not theological considerations, and then Muslim participants in such a discussion are not allowed any response except to politely but firmly emphasize their submission to the One God, something that none of the People of the Book can deny in principle, whatever the difference on theological details may be.

THE ONE ESSENCE, AND VARIOUS DETAILS TO RESPOND TO DIFFERENT HUMAN CIRCUMSTANCES IN GOD'S SUCCESSIVE MESSAGES; MUHAMMAD STRESSES THAT THE BELIEF IN THE PREVIOUS MESSAGES OF GOD IS ESSENTIAL FOR A BELIEVER IN HIS MESSAGE

We have sent to you [O Muhammad] revelation, as We sent it to Nuh

إِنَّآ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ كَمَآ

أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰ نُوحٍ وَ ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ ۚ
وَ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَ إِسْمَٰعِيلَ
وَ إِسْحَٰقَ وَ يَعْقُوبَ وَ ٱلْأَسْبَاطِ وَ عِيسَىٰ
وَ أَيُّوبَ وَ يُونُسَ وَ هَٰرُونَ وَ سُلَيْمَٰنَ ۚ
وَ ءَاتَيْنَا دَاوُۥدَ زَبُورًا ﴿١٦٣﴾ وَ رُسُلًا قَدْ
قَصَصْنَٰهُمْ عَلَيْكَ مِن قَبْلُ وَ رُسُلًا لَّمْ
نَقْصُصْهُمْ عَلَيْكَ ۚ وَ كَلَّمَ ٱللَّهُ مُوسَىٰ
تَكْلِيمًا ﴿١٦٤﴾ رُّسُلًا مُّبَشِّرِينَ وَ مُنذِرِينَ
لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ حُجَّةٌۢ بَعْدَ
ٱلرُّسُلِ ۚ وَ كَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٦٥﴾

[Noah] and the prophets after him; and [also] We sent inspiration to Ibrahim (Abraham), and Isma'il [Ishmael], and Is-haq (Isaac) and Ya'qub (Jacob) and their descendants [the tribes, al-Asbat]; and to 'Isa (Jesus), and Ayyub (Job), and Yunus (Jonah), and Harun (Aaron), and Sulayman (Solomon), and to Dawud (David) We gave a book of divine wisdom. About some conveyors of [God's] messages We have told you; about others We have not; and to Moses God spoke directly. [These] conveyors of [God's] messages who bear good tidings and warning [were sent by God], so that people might have no excuse before God after [the coming] of the conveyors of [God's] messages, and God is indeed All-mighty, All-wise. [4:163-165]

وَ أَنزَلْنَآ إِلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ
بِٱلْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ
وَ مُهَيْمِنًا عَلَيْهِ ۖ فَٱحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَآ
أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ ۖ وَ لَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَآءَهُمْ عَمَّا
جَآءَكَ مِنَ ٱلْحَقِّ ۚ لِكُلٍّ جَعَلْنَا مِنكُمْ
شِرْعَةً وَ مِنْهَاجًا ۚ وَ لَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ
لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً وَ لَٰكِن لِّيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِى
مَآ ءَاتَىٰكُمْ ۖ فَٱسْتَبِقُوا۟ ٱلْخَيْرَٰتِ ۚ إِلَى
ٱللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ
فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

...To each of you We have appointed a law and a way to follow. And had God so willed, He would have made you all one single people, but [He willed it otherwise] so as to test you through what He has given you. Vie, then, with one another, in good deeds; unto God you shall return, and He will make you understand all on which you differed. [5:48]

وَ مَآ أَرْسَلْنَا مِن رَّسُولٍ
إِلَّا بِلِسَانِ قَوْمِهِۦ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَهُمْ ۖ فَيُضِلُّ
ٱللَّهُ مَن يَشَآءُ وَ يَهْدِى مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَ هُوَ
ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٤﴾

And never have We sent forth any conveyor of [God's] message otherwise than [with a message] in his own people's tongue, so that he might make [the truth] clear to them, then God lets go astray one that He wills, and lets be guided one that He wills [according to what each person chooses by his/her free will granted by God], and He alone is the All-mighty, All-wise. [14:4]

And We assuredly sent among every people a conveyor of God's message saying: "Worship God, and turn aside of the powers of evil and injustice." And then among these people were some whom God has guided, while others inevitably fell into serious erroneousness. Go, then, about the earth, and find out what was the end of those who denounced the truth as a lie. [16:36]

وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِى كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَّسُولًا
أَنِ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱجْتَنِبُوا۟
ٱلطَّٰغُوتَ ۖ فَمِنْهُم مَّنْ هَدَى ٱللَّهُ وَمِنْهُم
مَّنْ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِ ٱلضَّلَٰلَةُ ۚ فَسِيرُوا۟ فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ فَٱنظُرُوا۟ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ
ٱلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾

And before your time We never sent [as conveyors of Our messages] any[one] but [mortal] men to whom We sent revelation of [the truth]; and if you [O people] have not realized this, ask those who have knowledge [of earlier revelations]. [We sent them] with clear evidence of truth and with books of divine wisdom. And upon you We have sent down this reminder, so that you might make clear to people what is sent to them, and so that they might reflect. [16:43-44]

وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ
إِلَّا رِجَالًا نُّوحِىٓ إِلَيْهِمْ ۚ فَسْـَٔلُوٓا۟ أَهْلَ
ٱلذِّكْرِ إِن كُنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾
بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ وَٱلزُّبُرِ ۗ وَأَنزَلْنَآ إِلَيْكَ
ٱلذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ
وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

And before your time We never sent any conveyor of [Our] message except with our revelation [which he had to convey to people] that there is no deity save Me, [and that] therefore you worship Me [alone]. [21:25]

وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ
مِن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِىٓ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُۥ
لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّآ أَنَا۠ فَٱعْبُدُونِ ﴿٢٥﴾

Verily, [O you who believe in Me], this community of yours is one wholeness [umma], and I am the Lord of you all; worship, then, Me [alone]. [21:92]

إِنَّ هَٰذِهِۦٓ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً
وَٰحِدَةً وَأَنَا۠ رَبُّكُمْ فَٱعْبُدُونِ ﴿٩٢﴾

And We sent not as Our message-conveyors before you but that they ate food and went about in the market-places, for We cause you [human beings] to be a testing for one another. Will you, then, endure such a testing with patience? Your Lord is All-seeing. [25:20]

وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَا قَبْلَكَ
مِنَ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ إِلَّآ إِنَّهُمْ لَيَأْكُلُونَ
ٱلطَّعَامَ وَيَمْشُونَ فِى ٱلْأَسْوَاقِ ۗ
وَجَعَلْنَا بَعْضَكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ فِتْنَةً
أَتَصْبِرُونَ ۗ وَكَانَ رَبُّكَ بَصِيرًا ﴿٢٠﴾

وَمَا
كَانَ رَبُّكَ مُهْلِكَ ٱلْقُرَىٰ حَتَّىٰ يَبْعَثَ فِىٓ
أُمِّهَا رَسُولًا يَتْلُوا۟ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَٰتِنَا ۚ
وَمَا كُنَّا مُهْلِكِى ٱلْقُرَىٰٓ إِلَّا وَأَهْلُهَا
ظَٰلِمُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

Yet, your Lord would never destroy towns until He sent to the principal one amidst them a conveyor of [God's] message, conveying our signs and messages; and never would We destroy towns except [as a result of the people's deeds] when their inhabitants are indulged in evil-doing. [28:59]

وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِنَ
ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ مِيثَٰقَهُمْ وَمِنكَ وَمِن نُّوحٍ
وَإِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَمُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَى ٱبْنِ مَرْيَمَ ۖ
وَأَخَذْنَا مِنْهُم مِّيثَٰقًا غَلِيظًا ﴿٧﴾ لِّيَسْـَٔلَ
ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ عَن صِدْقِهِمْ ۚ وَأَعَدَّ لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ
عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿٨﴾

And [call to mind that] We took from the Prophets their solemn pledge, and from you [O Muhammad] as well as from Nuh (Noah), Ibrahim (Abraham), Musa (Moses), and 'Isa ibn Maryam (Jesus the Son of Mary) - We took from [all of] them a weighty solemn pledge, so that God might ask the truthful about their truthfulness, and grievous suffering has He readied for all who stubbornly deny the truth. [33:7-8]

إِنَّآ أَرْسَلْنَٰكَ
بِٱلْحَقِّ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا ۚ وَإِن مِّنْ أُمَّةٍ
إِلَّا خَلَا فِيهَا نَذِيرٌ ﴿٢٤﴾

Surely, We have sent you [O Muhammad] with the truth as a bearer of good tidings and a warning; and there never was a people who had no warner. [35:24]

قُولُوٓا۟
ءَامَنَّا بِٱللَّهِ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَآ أُنزِلَ
إِلَىٰٓ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ وَإِسْمَٰعِيلَ وَإِسْحَٰقَ
وَيَعْقُوبَ وَٱلْأَسْبَاطِ وَمَآ أُوتِىَ مُوسَىٰ
وَعِيسَىٰ وَمَآ أُوتِىَ ٱلنَّبِيُّونَ مِن رَّبِّهِمْ
لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُۥ
مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٣٦﴾

Say: "We believe in God, and in that which has been sent down to us, and that which has been sent down to Ibrahim (Abraham) and Isma 'il (Ishmael) and Is-haq (Isaac) and Ya'qub (Jacob) and their descendants (the tribes/ al-Asbat), and that which has been given to Musa (Moses) and `Isa (Jesus) and that which has been given to all the prophets by their Lord; we make no differentiation between them [with regard to our belief in their prophethood], and it is unto Him that we submit ourselves. [2:136; see also 3:84]

ءَامَنَ ٱلرَّسُولُ بِمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِن رَّبِّهِۦ

The Conveyor of God's message, and the believers [in His message] believe in what has been sent down to him

from his Lord; they all believe in God and His angels and His Books and the conveyors of His messages, not differentiating [in belief] between any of the conveyors, and they say: "We have heard, and we obey. Grant us Your forgiveness, O our Lord, and with you is all journeys' end." [2:285]

وَٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۚ كُلٌّ ءَامَنَ بِٱللَّهِ وَ مَلَٰٓئِكَتِهِۦ
وَ كُتُبِهِۦ وَ رُسُلِهِۦ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّن
رُّسُلِهِۦ ۚ وَ قَالُوا۟ سَمِعْنَا وَ أَطَعْنَا ۖ
غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَ إِلَيْكَ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿٢٨٥﴾

O you who have attained to faith! Hold fast unto your belief in God and the Conveyor of His message and in the Book He has sent down step by step to the Conveyor of His message and the Book which He sent down before. And one who stubbornly denies God and His angels and His books and the conveyors of His messages and the Last Day has surely gone far astray. [4:136]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟
ءَامِنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَ رَسُولِهِۦ وَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ
ٱلَّذِى نَزَّلَ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِۦ وَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ
ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنزَلَ مِن قَبْلُ ۚ وَ مَن يَكْفُرْ بِٱللَّهِ
وَ مَلَٰٓئِكَتِهِۦ وَ كُتُبِهِۦ وَ رُسُلِهِۦ وَ ٱلْيَوْمِ
ٱلْءَاخِرِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَٰلًۢا بَعِيدًا ﴿١٣٦﴾

Those who stubbornly deny God and the conveyors of His messages, and desire to make a distinction between the conveyors of His messages, saying: "We believe in one but deny the other," desiring to take a way in between; it is they who are truly [and arbitrarily] denying the truth; and We have readied for those who stubbornly deny the truth humiliating suffering. But as for those who believe in God and the conveyors of His message and make no distinction between any of them [with regard to their prophethood], We shall grant them their rewards [in full], and God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious. [4:150-152]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِٱللَّهِ
وَ رُسُلِهِۦ وَ يُرِيدُونَ أَن يُفَرِّقُوا۟ بَيْنَ ٱللَّهِ
وَ رُسُلِهِۦ وَ يَقُولُونَ نُؤْمِنُ بِبَعْضٍ وَ نَكْفُرُ
بِبَعْضٍ وَ يُرِيدُونَ أَن يَتَّخِذُوا۟ بَيْنَ ذَٰلِكَ
سَبِيلًا ﴿١٥٠﴾ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْكَٰفِرُونَ
حَقًّا ۚ وَ أَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُّهِينًا
﴿١٥١﴾ وَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَ رُسُلِهِۦ
وَلَمْ يُفَرِّقُوا۟ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ سَوْفَ
يُؤْتِيهِمْ أُجُورَهُمْ ۚ وَ كَانَ ٱللَّهُ غَفُورًا
رَّحِيمًا ﴿١٥٢﴾

With regard to faith, He has instituted for you what He had enjoined upon Nuh (Noah), and what We have revealed to you [O Muhammad], as well as what We had enjoined upon Ibrahim (Abraham) and Musa (Moses) and Isa (Jesus): that you steadfastly uphold the faith, and do not cause divisions therein. Those who

شَرَعَ لَكُم مِّنَ ٱلدِّينِ مَا وَصَّىٰ بِهِۦ نُوحًا
وَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ وَ مَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِۦٓ
إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَ مُوسَىٰ وَ عِيسَىٰٓ ۖ أَنْ
أَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلدِّينَ وَ لَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا۟ فِيهِ ۚ

associate others with God, see what you are calling them to is beyond any acceptability on their side; God draws unto Himself one whom He wills [as He has granted every human being and free will], and guides unto Himself everyone who turns unto Him. [42:13]

كَبُرَ عَلَى ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ مَا تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَيْهِ ۚ
ٱللَّهُ يَجْتَبِىٓ إِلَيْهِ مَن يَشَآءُ
وَيَهْدِىٓ إِلَيْهِ مَن يُنِيبُ ﴿١٣﴾

And who could be of better faith than one who submits his [/her] whole self unto God, doing this sincerely and doing good, and follows the creed of Ibrahim (Abraham) who turned away from all that is false? And God exalted Ibrahim(Abraham) with His love. [4:125]

وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ دِينًا
مِّمَّنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُۥ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ
وَٱتَّبَعَ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ حَنِيفًا ۗ وَٱتَّخَذَ ٱللَّهُ
إِبْرَٰهِيمَ خَلِيلًا ﴿١٢٥﴾

"Say: 'My Lord has guided me to a straight path through the ever-true faith of Ibrahim (Abraham), who turned away from all that is false and who was never of those who associate others with God." [6:161]

قُلْ إِنَّنِى هَدَىٰنِى رَبِّىٓ
إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ دِينًا قِيَمًا مِّلَّةَ
إِبْرَٰهِيمَ حَنِيفًا ۚ وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ
ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٦١﴾

And lastly, We have sent Our revelation to you [O Muhammad, telling you:] 'Follow the creed of Abraham who turned away from all that is false and was never of those who associate others with God." [16:123]

ثُمَّ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ أَنِ
ٱتَّبِعْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ حَنِيفًا ۖ وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ
ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٢٣﴾

Surely, as for those who have attained to faith [in this divine writ] and those who follow Judaism and those who turned away [from a previous faith in search for the truth] and the Christians, and the Magians, and [even] those who associate others with God: God will decide between them on Resurrection Day; and God is witness unto everything. [22:17]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَٱلَّذِينَ هَادُوا۟
وَٱلصَّٰبِـُٔونَ وَٱلنَّصَٰرَىٰ وَٱلْمَجُوسَ
وَٱلَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوٓا۟ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَفْصِلُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ
ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ شَهِيدٌ
﴿١٧﴾

The Quran presents the successive messages of God as one in their essence, but various in dealing with the different circumstances in different times and places: *"To each of you We have appointed a law and a way to follow"* [5:48], *"And never have We sent forth any convey of [God's] message otherwise than [with a message] in his own people's*

tongue" [14:4]. Every conveyor of God's message was sent to his own people [e.g. 2:54; 5:20; 7:59, 75, 88, 128; 10:71, 83; 11:25, 38, 78; 19:11; 26:70; 27:56; 46:21], and was described as their brother [7:65, 73, 85; 11:50, 61, 84; 27:45; 29:36]. Muhammad was no exception: *"Now there has come unto you a Conveyor of [God's] message from among yourselves; caring for you that you might not suffer, full of concern about you [your good], [and] full of compassion and mercy towards the believers"* [9:128].

As is obvious in the above verses, the Quran stresses the unity of the successive messages of God in their essence, and every believer in the message of Muhammad has to believe in all earlier messages of God. Muhammad himself has to follow the previous conveyors of God's messages in the faith and in their virtues, especially their persistence and endurance [e.g. 16:123; 6:89], of which he was informed through the Quran. Musa (Moses) and Isa (Jesus) and their messages and books have their special place in the Quran as their times were relatively nearer to the time of Muhammad, and Jews and Christians had lived in the Arabian peninsula. The corner-stone of all messages of God in general, and of the creed of Ibrahim (Abraham) and the Abrahamic religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, in particular, is worshipping the One God alone following His guidance in this life and being always conscious of one's accountability before Him. The Quranic critical statements about the Jews in Arabia have been related to their human behavior with emphasized respect for the divine message: *"But how is it that they ask you to be their judge, seeing that they have the Torah that contains God's rules, then thereafter they turn their backs [to it]? Verily, We sent down the Torah, wherein there is guidance and light..."* [5:43-44]. *"And We gave Musa (Moses) the Book [the Torah] in fulfillment of [Our Message of] doing righteousness, and clearly spelling out all things in detail, and [thus providing] guidance and grace, so that they might have faith in their [final] meeting with their Lord"* [6:154].

As for 'Isa (Jesus), his mother, his person, his message and book, and his companions and followers are impressively presented in the Quran [e.g. 3:33-55; 19:16-34; 57:27; 61:14]. His miraculous virgin birth is stressed, and his moving devotion to his message, his special place among the conveyors of God's messages, and his distinguished character and personality are inspiringly indicated in the Quran [e.g. 3:45-6, 49, 55; 19:29-33]. He is described as *"the word of God brought down to Maryam (Mary) and a spirit from Him"* [4:171]. The difference between Muslims and Christians is not about any of these facts which have made the person of Jesus so distinctive and even unique, but about the interpretation of the "Jesus phenomenon," since the Muslims believe in his humanity, connected at the same time with his special and remarkable place in the history of prophethood and of mankind [e.g. 3:59; 4:171-2; 5:116-9; 19:34-6]. However, the Muslim stand towards Jesus is completely different from the Jewish one [4:156-8], despite the fact that both agree on his humanity.

Muslims did not, and should not, deal with others according to their faith which may be the same as or different from theirs, but according to their actions. The Quran teaches that each individual has to be judged according to his/her own merits and actions, regardless of his/her faith. Non-Muslims are not all the same in their merits and behavior, and among the People of the Book *"there is many a one who, if you entrust him[/her] with a treasure, will [faithfully] restore it to you..."* [3:75], and *"there are upright people, who*

recite God's messages throughout the night and prostrate themselves [before Him]. They believe in God and the Last Day, and enjoin the doing of what is right and good, and forbid the doing of what is wrong and evil, and vie with one another in doing good deeds, and these are among the righteous. And whatever good they do, they shall never be denied the reward thereof; and God has full knowledge of those who are conscious of Him" [3:113-5]. On the other hand there may be Muslim aggressors against whom Muslims have to struggle, in spite of their common faith: *"but if one of the two [groups of believers in Muhammad's message] commits aggression towards the other, fight [O believers as a whole] against the aggressors until they revert to God's commandment, and if they revert, make peace between them with justice"* [49:9].

With regard to others who may not follow any of the Abrahamic religions but believe in a deity of one kind or another, or who may be total atheists, the Quran states that God is the only judge of the faith of any individual on the Day of Judgement, as many verses such as the above mentioned verse 22:17 indicate. He is the only One who knows all the circumstances connected with any individual situation, whether psychological, intellectual, sociological or else *"and He alone has full knowledge of everything"* [e.g. 2:29], *"He knows all that they keep secret as well as all they bring out and make known, and He has full knowledge of what is in the hearts"* [11:5]. Besides, He is the One how free from external pressures and how capable the individual is in his/her decision about faith according to the general principle of divine justice: *"God does not hold any human being responsible beyond the limits of his[/her] ability"* [e.g. 2:286], and the stipulation of free will for any human responsibility about any act in this world life or in the eternal life to come.

Muslims are required to deal with all people with justice and kindness whatever their faith may be, as long as they do not initiate aggression. Even those whom Muslims consider their enemies today, but who have not acted wrongfully against them, could be their friends tomorrow, with peaceful and good approaches prevailing in the end [60:7-8]. No hostile word or action should be initiated by Muslims towards others to avoid a very possible escalation of the dispute which may involve more people or take a longer time to resolve and thus may bring harm to the faith. Muslims have to always be aware of the psychological and social fact, to which the Quran repeatedly calls their attention: *"goodly indeed the doings of a community are made in appearance to its members"* [e.g. 2:212; 3:14; 6:108, 122; 10:12; 13:33; 47:14].

Dealing with one another with honesty and kindness, and cooperating for the common interest of developing the material and social circumstances and securing the dignity of all children of Adam [17:70], would be the best universal language for extending peace, mutual understanding and affection, and thus building up from human solidarity. Furthermore, every human being - whatever his/her faith at the present time may be - has his/her spiritual compass created with him/her according to the Quran, and thus any human is a potential believer at any time: *"And when your Lord brings forth from the loins of the Children of Adam their offspring, and He calls upon them to bear witness about themselves: 'Am I not your Lord?', they answer 'Yes, indeed, we do bear witness thereto.' This has been the case, lest you should say on the Day of Resurrection, 'Of this we were never mindful' "* [7:172]. From such a perspective, every other - whether a

believer or not- has close relations with the 'self' according to the human common grounds: physical, intellectual and spiritual, local and universal. This by no means reduces the special relations between the Muslims and believers in the One God, especially those among them who are related to the Abrahamic faith.

CLOSE RELATIONS: SHARING THE SAME FOOD AND ESTABLISHING THE ONE NUCLEAR FAMILY

Today the good things have been made lawful to you, and the food of those who were given the Book is lawful to you, and your food is lawful to them. And [lawful to you] in wedlock are believing women and women from among those who were given the Book before you, provided that you give them their dowries, taking them in honest wedlock, not in fornication, nor as secret love-companions. As for one who [stubbornly] rejects belief [in God], his[/her] work has failed, and in the life to come he[/she] shall be among the losers. [5:5]

اَلْيَوْمَ أُحِلَّ لَكُمُ الطَّيِّبَاتُ ۖ وَطَعَامُ
الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ حِلٌّ لَكُمْ وَطَعَامُكُمْ
حِلٌّ لَهُمْ ۖ وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ
وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِن
قَبْلِكُمْ إِذَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ
مُحْصِنِينَ غَيْرَ مُسَافِحِينَ وَلَا مُتَّخِذِي
أَخْدَانٍ ۗ وَمَن يَكْفُرْ بِالْإِيمَانِ فَقَدْ
حَبِطَ عَمَلُهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ
الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴿٥﴾

In a more concrete and closer contact than understanding the common human merits, diversity, and spirituality, the one essence of all God's messages and their determined moral impact on human relations and differences, the Quran goes further to allow the Muslims to share with the People of the Book the same food and establish the sacred bond and constant relationship of marriage with Jewish or Christian wives.

PEOPLE OF THE BOOK

No doubt the Quran deals in the above-mentioned verse with the Jews and Christians who were there at the time of Prophet Muhammad and his message, with all their differences from the details of the Islamic beliefs as the Quran indicates. The People of the Book are considered by the Quran as a special category on the grounds of their belief in the One God and His messages, and on the human accountability before God, and thus there is no place to apply to them the prohibition of marrying polytheist women which came in a previously revealed verse [2:221]. Many Quranic verses emphasize the special place of the People of the Book which is distinctive from the others who do not believe in the message of Muhammad but do not share with the believers the common grounds of the faith in the One God [e.g. 3:186; 22:17; 98:1]; the above mentioned verse 5:5 which was revealed after the verse 2:221 allows of the marriage between a Muslim husband and a woman from the People of the Book beyond any argument. Distinguished companions of the Prophet such as Uthman -the third Caliph after his death, Talha ibn 'Ubayd Allah

and Hudhayfa ibn al-Yaman married women from the People of the Book: the first married a Christian and the other two married Jewish women.

The "food" of the People of the Book which is allowed to Muslims includes and is most likely meant to indicate at the first place "the meat," since Muslims have their religious requirement in slaughtering animals. The allowance is naturally limited to the animals the meat of which can be eaten according to the Islamic law, and thus any form of pork cannot be allowed by any means. In general, all dietary prohibitions, such as carrion, blood and liquor [2:17; 5:3,90-1; 6:145; 16:151] cannot be included in this allowance. As the Muslims share the food of the People of the Book and especially the meat if it is not prohibited per se, they should not be reluctant in offering others their food and inviting them to theirs. Rights of women from the People of the Book whom Muslims marry must be secured like those of Muslim wives, and so it is stipulated in the above-mentioned verse that their dowries and all Shari'a requirements for an honest legitimate wedlock are secured.

Other non-Muslims

As for the food and marriage of other non-Muslims beside the People of the Book, such as Hindus, Buddhists, and Confucians, there is a view which considers all such faiths special groups "suigeneris" different from the stubborn rejectors of the belief in the One God and from atheists whose beliefs contradict monotheism or even theism, since the Quran points out that the reason for prohibiting marriage with polytheistic women is that *"Those call unto the fire [of egotism and materialism and utilitarianism in this world's life and of requital for that in the eternal life to come], whereas God calls unto paradise and [unto the achievement of] forgiveness by His leave [and through His guidance]; and He makes clear His messages to people, so that they might bear them in mind"* [2:221]. This view is supported by the fact that the Quran mentions, as distinctive groups from polytheists, the Zoroastrians (the Magians) and those who may convert to another faith in a sincere search for truth, called in the Quran "the Sabians," -a word which was used also for agnostic sect in Harran that existed in early centuries of Islam, the members of which were known as star-worshippers. Zoroastrianism was founded in the 6th century B.C.E. by Zoroaster, promulgated in the "Avesta" -its sacred book- and characterized by worshipping a supreme god Ahura Mazda who requires human beings' good deeds for the help in his cosmic struggle against the evil spirit Ahriman [Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary]. Specifying such groups -who might be the only ones known to the Arabs at the time of Prophet Muhammad's message- may open the door for more groups which have to be treated by Muslims in similar way to the People of the Book. Prophet Muhammad himself dealt with the Magians of Arabia and the Muslim leader Muhammad ibn al-Qasim gave the Buddhists a temple, and apparently the Hindu one also, the sanctity recognized for the Jewish, Christians and Magian temples [al-Baladhuri, *Futuh al-Buldan*, Cairo:1959, p.426-427].

In support of this opinion, it is also mentioned that there is a clear and strong indication in the Quranic verses that whenever "polytheists" are mentioned, the Arab polytheists are specifically meant. Accordingly, the food of others is allowed if it is not

prohibited per se -such as pork and liquor- as is marrying other women who are not against the essence of monotheism. This view is supported by the Islamic legal principle that everything is allowed unless it is clearly and precisely prohibited in the Islamic sources, and this includes marriage -differently from the Hanafi jurists-; and such an opinion is supported by the Quranic verse which follows the indication of prohibited marriages "*And lawful to you are all (women) beyond these for you to seek out (as wives) offering them of your possessions, taking them in honest [legitimate] wedlock, and not in fornication*"[4:24] [Muhammad Abduh & Muhammad Rashid Rida, *Tafsir al-Manar*, Cairo:1375H., vol.6, p.177-219, commentary on the verse 5:5].

Rights of non-Muslim wives

In addition to being equal in general to Muslim wives in their rights and obligations, non-Muslim wives enjoy naturally in the family what is allowed to them in particular according to their religious rights. It has been previously mentioned that the jurists discussed whether inviting non-Muslim wives to Islam may be considered a type of coercion in calling others to Islam which is strictly prohibited [2:256], and those who allowed it strongly stipulated that this should be free from any kind of pressure or abuse of marital relations. The non-Muslim wife can go to her temple and the husband may accompany her in her way if this is necessary for her security. A Christian wife can have a cross with her, and accordingly any sacred object or book -according to the opinion of a wider permission for a Muslim to marry a non-Muslim woman -as long as this may not be an obvious sign of concrete idolatry. She may drink liquor or eat pork, but, as previously mentioned, reaching the state of drunkenness should be avoided since it violates the Muslim husband's rights and hurts his feelings, as well as strongly effecting the children. The most sensitive and delicate task in such a mixed marriage is how to raise the children, especially during their early years, in a way that nurtures in them a respect towards both parents and a tolerance of their different beliefs, even if they are raised as Muslims. This requires from both spouses a wide knowledge, a broad mind, a big heart, and a high level in the art of human dealing with one another and with the children. I feel that it may be difficult or even impossible to formulate such a very fine art in certain definite rules followed by all parents in all cases. It is a challenge that has to be faced each time by every spouse in his/her own way. Besides that, the spouses have to always maintain their mutual understanding and good relations when they grow older and the heat of their early romance fades but the relationship becomes more stable.

In such cases of mixed marriages, children's kindness towards their mother whatever her faith may be goes without saying [e.g.31:15]. Fairness and kindness ought to be maintained in the relations between the Muslim husband and his family on the one side and the in-laws on the other. Close relations within the neighborhood have to be developed and maintained by the Muslim neighbors, whether the neighbors are Muslims or not [4:36]. Many relations of the Prophet give great value to maintaining good relations with the neighborhood whatever the different faith of the neighbors may be, and his practice with his neighbors always supported this essential principle.

JUSTICE AND KINDNESS: THE ESSENTIAL RULE IN MUSLIMS' RELATIONS WITH OTHERS WITHIN THE SOCIETY AND STATE

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِيهِمْ أُسْوَةٌ
حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُو اْ ٱللَّهَ وَ ٱلْيَوْمَ
ٱلْأَخِرَ ۖ وَ مَن يَتَوَلَّ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ
ٱلْغَنِىُّ ٱلْحَمِيدُ ﴿٦﴾ عَسَى ٱللَّهُ أَن
يَجْعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ وَ بَيْنَ ٱلَّذِينَ عَادَيْتُم مِّنْهُم
مَّوَدَّةً ۚ وَ ٱللَّهُ قَدِيرٌ ۚ وَ ٱللَّهُ غَفُورٌ
رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٧﴾

You have had a good example in them for whoever looks forward to [meeting] God and the Last Day. And whoever turns away, surely God is the All-sufficient, the One to whom all praise and thanks are due. It may be that God will bring about affection between you [O believers] and those whom you [now] hold as enemies: for God is All- powerful and God is All-forgiving, All-gracious.[60:6-7]

فَلِذَٰلِكَ
فَادْعُ ۖ وَ ٱسْتَقِمْ كَمَآ أُمِرْتَ ۖ وَ لَا تَتَّبِعْ
أَهْوَآءَهُمْ ۖ وَ قُلْ ءَامَنتُ بِمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ
مِن كِتَٰبٍ ۖ وَ أُمِرْتُ لِأَعْدِلَ بَيْنَكُمُ ۖ
ٱللَّهُ رَبُّنَا وَ رَبُّكُمْ ۖ لَنَآ أَعْمَٰلُنَا وَ لَكُمْ
أَعْمَٰلُكُمْ ۖ لَا حُجَّةَ بَيْنَنَا وَ بَيْنَكُمُ ۖ
ٱللَّهُ يَجْمَعُ بَيْنَنَا ۖ وَ إِلَيْهِ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٥﴾

Concerning this [message] call you, and go straight in the right course as you have been bidden [by God], and do not follow their caprices. And say, "I believe in whatever book God has sent down; and I have been bidden to observe justice between you. God is our Lord as He is your Lord. To us shall be accounted our deeds, and to you your deeds. Let there be no contention between us and you; God shall bring us all together; and with Him is all journeys' end." [42:15]

Not only justice but also kindness provide the basis for the relations of Muslims with others, within the Muslim society and state or all over the world, as long as the others have not initiated war against Muslims, drawn them out of their homeland, or supported others in such an aggression. The classical term for others permanently co-residing with Muslims was "*dhimmis*," which means "given a strict promise of permanently securing all their rights and protecting them." The term is historical as it was used by the Prophet in traditions which required honest fulfillment of such a promise given to others who might submit to Muslim authority. However, the term was not meant to constitute a permanent legal status of a particular resident in the Muslim country according to the Quran and Sunna. The "*dhimmis*" were considered in the juristic heritage as an equal part of the people of the land of Islam "*min dar al-Islam*" [e.g. al-Kasani, *Bada'i' al-Sana'i' fi Tartib al-Shara'i'*, Cairo: 1327-8 H., vol.5: p.281; ak-Sarakhsi, *Sharh al-Siyar al-Kabir* by Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al Shaybani, Hyderabad, India: 1335 H., vol.5: p.516]. The modern term "citizen" may be adequately used in our time. It is essential that in modern times moral nicety to any human being can not be a substitute for legal equality, although it has been frequently proved, wherever there has been a history of discrimination, that

legal equality cannot be secured within the society and by the state authorities except through moral commitment and sensitivity. This explains why the Quran requires from Muslims, in dealing with others, both justice and kindness.

Human Rights, particularly the Political

A well known rule about equal mutual rights and obligations between Muslims and non-Muslims in a Muslim state is that: "they have rights the same as ours, and have obligations as well the same as ours." Al-Kasani, the distinguished Hanafi jurist [d.587 H./1190], mentioned in his voluminous work *al-Bada'i'* a Prophet's tradition that reads: "and if they accept the agreement of '*dhimma*', let them know that they have the same rights as the Muslims, and the same obligations as them", but such a tradition can not be traced in known collections of the Prophet's traditions. However, its meaning is judiciarily accepted. A statement attributed to Caliph Ali ibn Abi Talib reads: "they only accepted the '*dhimmi*' agreement to let their property become as ours" [*Sunan al-Daraqutni*, Delhi: 1310H., vol.2: p.350]. A similar statement stresses the equality in "property and rights" [al-Sarakhsi, *Sharh al-Siyar al-Kabir*, vol.3: p.250]. In a long letter to the Abbasid governor of Syria who was himself a member of the Abbasid family, deploring some of his decisions against an entire dhimmi community instead of dealing with identified individuals proven guilty, the prominent jurist al-Awza'i stressed that non-Muslim *dhimmis* in a Muslim state are not slaves but free human beings whose rights are secured and protected by the Muslim honored promise "*dhimma*" [Abu 'Ubayd al-Qasim ibn Sallam, *al-Amwal*, Cairo: 1975, p.222].

Such verses as 5:51,57-8 which warn Muslims against taking Jews and Christians as "*awliya'* " does not mean taking them as "friends" as some translations and commentaries have rendered the term, but as "patrons" in the faith or behavior who would impose on them by threat or temptation what is against Islam or the common interest of the Muslims. This is obvious in the commentary of the distinguished commentator al-Tabari (d.310H./922), as opposed to such later commentators as al-Baydawi (d.791H./1389). Maintaining good relations and friendship is urged with all people who have not initiated enmity and aggression against Muslims, whether they may be Muslims or not [e.g. 9:7, 60:7-8], while refraining from such relations is urged with those who have initiated enmity and aggression against Muslims whether they may be Muslims or not [e.g. 9:13, 60:7, 49:9]. Even after clear hostility and belligerence, Muslims should always hope to establish peace and friendly relations with previous enemies [60:7]. Thus, the prohibition of taking certain People of the Book in the verses 5:51, 57-8 as "*awliya'*" is restricted to its historical and legal reasons, as is obvious in the verses 5:57-8 "*those who mock at your faith and make jest of it...and when you call to prayer, they mock at it and make jest of it*". The verse 5:52 indicates the climate of hostility and confrontation to which the prohibition is connected: "*And you can see how those in whose hearts there is disease vie with one another in having connections with them [regardless of their belligerence to Muslims], saying: 'we fear that an adversity might inflict us'. But God may well bring about a decisive achievement [for the believers] and any other event from Him, and so those will feel*

remorse for the thoughts which they secretly had within themselves". As it is well known in the fundamentals of jurisprudence "Usul al-Fiqh", the legal rule -in wordly human dealings-keeps up with its reason in existence and nonexistence [see *Tafsir al-Manar* in its commentary on the verses, vol.6: p,423-432].

Rights of Expression and Assembly

The rights of belief and practice are secured for non-Muslims according to the Quranic principle *"There is no coercion in matters of faith"* [2:256]. Rights of expression and assembly are secured for the People of the Book whose faith and teachings require them to enjoin the doing of what is right and good and forbid what is wrong and evil [e.g. 3:113-4, 5:78-9]. As for others, they have the same rights, as long as their activities openly attack the belief in God and moral values, and provoke the believers. Political rights are secured for non-Muslim individuals and groups, as long as they all share and support the moral foundation of the society as a whole.

Public Offices

As for public offices, the Prophet used non-Muslims as road guides, teachers of Arabic writing, and in military affairs. The Jews of Medina, according to the Prophet's constitutional document after his migration, had to participate in defending the City whenever it was attacked, and were almost allowed a sort of internal self-administration or autonomy under the sovereignty of the Muslim state [see the document in: Abd al-Malik ibn Hisham, *Sirat Rasul Allah*, Cairo: 1336-7, vol.2, pp.119-123; Abu 'Ubayd al-Qasim ibn Sallam, ibid, p.116-7]. Al-Mawardi, the prominent Shafi'i jurist, stated that a non Muslim *dhimmi* can be appointed in several state positions that may reach the high level of an "executive minister '*wazir tanfidh*'" of the caliph. A higher position in al-Mawardi's juristic terminology is the "minister of full delegation from the caliph, '*wazir tafwid*'", for which he stipulated all the main requirements for the position of the caliph himself including the capability of *ijtihad* in Shari'a which a non-Muslim cannot have, and which should naturally not be required from a non-Muslim who does not believe in Islam in the first place, and requiring such a capability from a non-Muslim would violate the person's religious rights. Until modern times, the rule of individuals, not bodies, was dominant in different states. Just as in modern times people have "ruling bodies," rather than ruling individuals, as do have other system principles such as "separation of power" and "checks and balances," modern Islamic jurisprudence should not be reluctant in fully applying -to Muslims and non-Muslims- human rights and equality. Limited exceptions may be made for certain positions as judges of Muslim family and religious affairs who should be Muslims, just as the judges of family and religious affairs related to a certain faith should be from among its believers who fulfill the other essential qualifications. Such a specification in limited cases may be indicated by law, or left to the custom and practice which naturally have to be controlled by the legal and moral principles of justice and nicety.

In common cases such as civil, commercial, labor, taxation, administration and similar wordly matters which have their general human character, and moral foundation of

justice, fairness, honesty, and civility which are agreed upon by all human beings, judges from different faiths can hold the positions, as long as they are qualified and know and respect the law of the country. Even in the field of penal law, judges of different faiths can follow the code which clearly indicates all needed information about the offense, the penalty, the evidence and the procedure. In such matters, Shari'a can be accepted by non-Muslims as a common law of the land, while Muslims would believe that its sources represent God's guidance. In such wordly practices, a great deal of laws in a contemporary Muslim state would observe the general goals, objectives and principles of Shari'a, but they would be articulated according to legitimate *ijtihad* which considers mainly common interest of the entire society. Legislation and enforcement of laws can be carried out by Muslims and others, since they are essentially based on principles of justice, common interest and common sense. In the military, Muslims and non-Muslims have always worked together since early Islam, as the jurisprudential heritage indicated [e.g. al-Tabari, *Ikhtilaf al-Fuqaha'*, *the Book of Ijtihad and Jizya* and *Ahkam al-Muharibin*, ed. by Joseph Schacht, Leiden:1923, p.21; al-Mawardi, *al-Ahkam*, pp. 60,140]. Muslims may feel their religious commitment to what the Muslim state stands for and so become devoted to defending it against its enemies, while others may feel their material and emotional relations to their homeland which motivate them to defend it, but both can share their common responsibilities towards the country, the people and the state whatever the conceptual and moral grounds may be different. Equal rights and obligations for any military rank, morally and materially, have to be secured according to general principles.

Al-Mawardi suggested other state offices for which non-Muslims *dhimmis* -according to the terminology of the time- such as: the military forces, the collection of zakat when the dues are determined, the collection of revenues such as land-tax from Muslim and non-Muslim land owners or holders, and the executive administration of state personnel in different departments and provinces [*al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyya*, Cairo:1973, pp. 27, 60, 116, 130, 152, 209]. If non-Muslims were considered eligible for such numerous and various positions at the time of al-Mawardi with all its psychological and cultural factors, it becomes obvious then that they were not barred from the Muslim state even in such past times, and that any unfairness in those times was due to a certain dominant psychology and culture rather than to principles of the Quran and Sunna, which have always taught Muslims to deal with others with justice and kindness. Practically speaking, non-Muslims were always employed by the Muslim state throughout history. Caliph Umar appointed some non-Muslims as clerks and accountants. The Umayyad Caliph Mu'awiya had a Christian secretary, and later, Sulayman ibn Abd al-Malik had a Christian supervisor for the constructions in his favorite Palestinian city al-Ramla. Under the Abbasids, as well as in al-Andalus, there were non-Muslim administrators of tax-collection, mayors and even ministers, [al-Baladhuri, *Futuh al-Buldan*, Cairo:1959, pp. 147,49; and see A.S.Tritton, The Caliphs and their non-Muslim Subjects, London:1970, passim; for Andalus see: Lutfi Abd al-Badi' *al-Islam fi Aspania*, Cairo:1969, pp.33-34]. The Swiss historian, Adam Mez, amazedly underlined the large number of non-Muslim public administrators and officers in the Muslim state [*al-Hadara al-Islamiyya fi al-Quran*, al-Rabi' al-Hijri, Arabic translation by Muhammad Abd-al-Hadi Abu Rida, Beirut:1967, vol.1, pp.105-97; for Andalus see Lutfi Abd al-Badi', ibid, pp.33-34].

Witnesses

The Quran states the equality of Muslims and non-Muslims as witnesses: *"two persons of probity from among your own people or two other persons from [among people] other than you"* [5:106]. This rule is not contradicted by any other Quranic verse, and thus it may be extended to be the general rule, from which certain matters related to religion can be excluded. A contemporary jurist, Muhammad Sallam Madkur, rightfully underlines the fact that some Quranic verses indicate the requirement of having witnesses in general without specifying the faith, such as the verses 2:282 and 4:6 which deal with general transactions, while the verse 65:2 requires Muslim witnesses as it deals with divorce -a family matter strongly attached to religion. Another contemporary Muslim jurist, Abd al-Karim Zaydan sees in such an extension (or generalization in my view) a logical and implicit outcome of allowing civil and commercial transactions between Muslims and non-Muslims in which the attendance of Muslims is not stipulated, allowing need for evidence may possibly emerge in a case attended only by non-Muslims. Although the prominent jurist Ibn al-Qayyim did not support such an extension or generalization as a principle, he stated in his book "*al-Turuq al-Hukmiyya,*" in his argument for the verse 5:106, what provides the grounds for a general rule unless the Quran states otherwise, He explains that the evidence is a "word meant for whatever identifies the truth and makes it clear,"and that "the non-Muslim's testimony may bear the signs of truthfulness and so it should be accepted and carried into effect"[Abd al-Karim Zaydan, *Ahkam al-Dhimmiyyin wa al-Must'minin*, Beirut:n.d., pp.468-9].

Civil rights; socio-economic state services

Non-Muslims have full civil rights in the Muslim state, and are equal to Muslims in rights and obligations, except what is specially allowed to them as dealing in pork and liquor which are prohibited to Muslims. Prophet Muhammad pawned his shield to a Jew. Muslims and non-Muslims can only be partners in any civil or commercial activity accepted by Shari'a, while non-Muslims can form partnerships on their own to deal in swine, pork or liquor which are allowed only to them but are prohibited to Muslims. The Islamic law and Muslim courts rule on such matters, but the matters related to religion can be ruled by a judge from among the non-Muslims community who is qualified for such a work. Abu Hanifa, the prominent jurist and founder of the Hanafi school of jurisprudence, considered the special circumstances of a non-Muslim to such an extent that his/her will or endowment for the benefit of a mosque or pilgrims to Mecca should be invalidated in order to observe his/her freedom of religion, since to his/her religion Islamic prayers and pilgrimage are not considered for charity, while the non-Muslim's will or endowment for the benefit of a church or anything acceptable in his/her religion is valid for Muslim jurists. In any case, what is forbidden in Islam and most religions and according to common sense cannot be a subject of a contract, a will or an endowment from non-Muslims, and naturally Muslims as well. Prostitution would be one such example [Zaydan, *Ahkam*, pp.395-409, 443-452].

The state services including public roads, irrigation, economic and social

development, public health, education, social security and other needed services should be provided for all: Muslims and non-Muslims. The Prophet's tradition states that "all people" share the common natural resources of "water, grass, and fire." Non-Muslims are protected by Shari'a and Muslim authorities and courts against any harmful deed committed against them by Muslim individuals or authorities [Abu Yusuf, *al-Kharaj*, Cairo:1397 A.H., p.107]. The Prophet offered a poor Jewish family a permanent charity [Abu 'Ubayd al-Qasim ibn Sallam, *al-Amwal*, pp.372,728-9]. The prominent co-founder of the Hanafi school, Muhammad al-Hasan, reported that the Prophet in Medina sent to the people of Mecca, who were still in a state of war with him, assistance for the poor when a famine occured [vol.1:144]. Caliph Umar decided on a permanent assistance for Christians lepers whom he saw on his visit to Syria [al-Baladhuri, *Futuh*, p.135], and did the same in another case with an old blind Jew [Abu Yusuf. ibid., p.136]. When Khalid ibn al-Walid made his agreement to a peaceful conquest of Hira, he reported to Caliph Umar about it: "And I stated for them that a man who becomes unable to work, or seriously ill, or poor after being rich and becomes supported by his community, he is exempted from tax-payment, and supported by the Muslim public treasury with his dependents as long as he lives in the Muslim lands" [Abu Yusuf, *al-Kharaj*, p.156].

Just as the non-Muslim received the state assistance when in need according to these precedents, he could provide for the resources of the public treasury through the payment of taxes. Furthermore, Caliph Umar pioneered in taking social welfare dues from the Christians of the tribe Bani Taghlib, a precedent which was historically and jurisprudentially extended [al-Baladhuri, ibid., pp.142,185-6; Abu Yusuf, *al-Kharaj*, pp.129-130; al-Mawardi, *al-Ahkam*, p.144; Ibn al-Qayyim, *Ahkam Ahl al-Dhimma*, Beirut 1981, Introd. of the editor Subhi al-Salih, vol.1, pp.9-10].

In dealing with others, the Muslim society and state are instructed by the Quran to go beyond justice to nicety and *birr* [60:8]. The prominent Maliki jurist Shihab al-Din Ahmad al-Qarafi gave examples for this required nicety and kindness: caring about the weak, the poor, and the needy; speaking nicely to them; offering sincere advice in their different needs; defending their honor when attacked in their absence; securing and protecting their properties, families, honor and all their rights and interests; supporting them against any injustice against them, and helping them achieve all their rights. These examples, obviously, combine justice with nicety and kindness. As for the essential justice and fulfillment of Muslims' obligations towards non-Muslims dhimmis, al-Qarafi stressed the meaning of the Muslim honored promise of securing the rights of these non-Muslims and protecting them "*dhimma*", so any moral or physical attack from a Muslim against a *dhimmi* constitutes a violation of this promise which has been given by God and the Conveyor of His message and the faith of Islam, even if this is only an offending word or any other harmful action in the *dhimmi*'s presence or absence. According to the prominent jurists al-Qarafi and Ibn Taymiyya, if *dhimmis* were attacked by an enemy, Muslims have to defend the honored promise towards them given by God and the Conveyor of His message, and if any of them is captured, Muslims are under the obligation of getting him back free through all means within their power [al-Qarafi, *al-Furuq*, Beirut:n.d., vol.3, pp.14-15; see also: Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Risala al-Qubrusiyya*, Riyad: n.d., pp. 26,31].

Shafi'i and Hanafi schools have been in general of the opinion that any non-Muslim *dhimmi* who commits a felony would be tried and sentenced as an individual according to the Islamic law which has sovereignty over all people in the state to which the *dhimmi* is subject, but the legal status of "*dhimma*" for such a guilty *dhimmi* would by no means be affected even he/she was convicted for spying for an enemy [e.g. al-Tabari, *Ikhtilaf*, pp.24-25,59; al-Mawardi, *al-Ahkam*, pp.143,146]. This is just the likehow as a Muslim does not lose in general his/her legal status in Shari'a when he/she is convicted of a crime, and a convicted person does not in general lose his/her human rights, particularly the political and the civil, in modern secular laws. The same penal law and procedure would be applied to all the people in the Muslim state. The sanctity of the human person and the financial compensation for a murdered victim or a physical or moral damage for any wronged party would not be affected by his/her faith in general according to the Hanafi school, and in specified cases in other juristic opinions [see Zaydan, *Ahkam*, pp.208-230].

Considering the dominant culture in pre-modern times about religion as a basis for the personal status and the state-people relations, one can understand why some differentiation in dealing with persons of different faiths sometimes existed in the juristic heritage, realize that this was in certain limited cases, and appreciate that juristic differences in such cases indicate that no definite divine evidence supports such a differentiation, otherwise it would have been consensual among all jurists. Since it is a matter of human understanding of the texts in their totality, and of dominant socio-cultural circumstances, juristic differences occured, and within them views which are closer to the general principles of justice in Islam were reached by some jurists. However, since we may have our way of understanding the same texts which allowed in the past such juristic differences, and we are now influenced by a socio-political culture, we may have some different conclusions. The dynamism of *ijtihad* in understanding the texts of the Quran and Sunna and in providing rules where there is no directly relevant evidence has always been a source of continuous enrichment for the Islamic jurisprudence.

It always has been argued that the Quranic punishment for theft [5:38] and the punishment for adultery according to the Sunna are severe. Since the requirements for the existence of the crime and consequently the implementation of such punishments as indicated in the Prophet's Sunna and the juristic heritage are difficult and sometimes impossible to be established by a satisfactory physical evidence beyond any doubt, the only possible proof is the confession of the defendant without any pressure, be it physical or moral. According to the Sunna, such a confession is discouraged, as the best redemption for a crime is repentance and self-correction, not self-humiliation of confession and physical punishment [see e.g. Ibn al-Qayyim, *I'lam al-Muwaqqi'in*, Cairo:n.d., vol.4, pp.306-8]. Consequently, such a physical punishment may be difficult or even impossible to be applied to defendants, whether Muslims or non-Muslims. If the Quran indicates a variety of punishments, ranging from the death penalty to mere exile which was understood by some jurists as imprisonment for a very serious crime as "*waging war against God and the Conveyor of His message, and spreading destruction throughout the land*" [5:33], that may reach the stage of mass violence or anarchy, doesn't this indicate a divine guidance for

reconsideration of penalties in view of changing circumstances?

The main area for penal law in a contemporary Muslim state will be the discretionary punishment "*ta'zir*," in which the crime and the punishment can be decided and changed by legislation and/or a court decision according to changing circumstances. A mechanism was sometimes dynamically practiced by the rulers and discussed by the jurists under the term "*siyasa*" which means a continuous conducting of the internal state policy according to the changing needs of public order, guided by the general goals and principles of Shari'a [e.g. Ibn al-Qayyim, *I'lam*, v.4, pp.309-313]. However, it may deserve mentioning that the Maliki saw that the punishment of adultery indicated in Sunna would not be applied to non-Muslims probably for the strong religious character in this case. While Maliki's view that the convicted adulterer has to be turned to his/her community to apply the punishment according to their religion, Abu Hanifa's view, supported by others, was to inflict the punishment of fornication, which was flogging [see e.g. Ibn Rushd, *Bidayat al-Mujtahid*, Beirut:n.d., vol.2, p.326; al-Shawkani, *Nayl al-Awtar*, Beirut:1973, vol.7, pp.257-8; Zaydan, *Ahkam*, pp.251-2]. The concept of considering the penal law as related to the public law and the sovereignty and authority of the state did not seem to be taken on by the Muslim jurists, and the religious character provided the grounds for dealing with those crimes.

Narratives about dress, riding and houses, etc.

There is a document attributed to Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab which made certain identifying rules for the *dhimmis* in clothing, riding and housing to differentiate them from Muslims in these aspects. No grounds can be provided for such rules in the Quran and Sunna; on the contrary they sharply contradicted the basis of justice and kindness, and Ibn al-Qayyim argued for them on the grounds of the interest of the Muslims "*al-maslaha*" at a particular time. In his book "*Ahkam Ahl al-Dhimma*," Ibn al-Qayyim seemed highly influenced by the climate of religious hostilities in his time [d.751A.H./1350 C.E.] as a result of the recurring attacks and invasion of the Crusaders and the collaboration of some *dhimmis* with them. This might explain the argument of a scrutinizing scholar as Ibn al-Qayyim for the authenticity of such a strange document; but such an understanding may help us understand the author's psychology and thinking, but by no means support the authenticity of the document itself. The author was sufficiently convinced for the right of the Muslim rulers, in different times and places, to decide what may suit their state.

Tittron, in his book "*The Caliphs and their non-Muslim Subjects*" has expressed his doubts about attributing the document to such an early period, mentioning that it was never reported by earlier prominent historians such as al-Baladhuri, al-Tabari, al-Ya'qubi or Ibn al-Athir. What is briefly reported by such historians in early agreements with people of Syrian Mesopotamian cities reflects tolerance, in contrast to what we find in the alleged document. Subhi al-Salih, in addition to mentioning the same observation, has criticized the document in its unproved attribute to Umar according to the methodology and criteria of scholars of Hadith "*muhaddithin*" and according to contradictions gaps and lack of reasonability and accuracy in the content of the different reports of the document. The claimed restrictive document did not appear before the late second century of Hijra,

and seemed more in harmony with the spirit of such a late period. Muhammad Hamidullah, the prominent historian of the development of the Muslim state and its laws in universal relations, has considered such rules about dress as more of a temporary social or political character, rather than a part of Shari'a rooted in the Quran or Sunna [Subhi al-Salih, *Introd. to Ibn al-Qayyim*, Ahkam Ahl al-Dhimma, vol.1, pp.13,15-16,29-35,41-6,71-2; Muhammad Hamidullah al-Hayderabadi, *Introd. to Ibn al-Qayyim*, Ahkam Ahl al-Dhimma, p.94].

PAYMENT OF A TRIBUTE "*JIZYA*"

And fight against those who -despite having the Book [aforetime] - do not [truly] believe either in God or in the Last Day, nor consider forbidden that which God and the Conveyor of His Message have forbidden, nor follow the religion of truth [which God has enjoined upon them] until they agree to the payment of the exemption tax [of defence obligations, jizya] by those who afford it, and acknowledge their subjection [to the Islamic state]. [9:29]

قَٰتِلُواْ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤۡمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَلَا
بِٱلۡيَوۡمِ ٱلۡأٓخِرِ وَلَا يُحَرِّمُونَ مَا حَرَّمَ
ٱللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُۥ وَلَا يَدِينُونَ دِينَ ٱلۡحَقِّ
مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُواْ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ حَتَّىٰ يُعۡطُواْ
ٱلۡجِزۡيَةَ عَن يَدٖ وَهُمۡ صَٰغِرُونَ ٢٩

And fight in the way of God against those who have [initially] waged war against you, but do not commit aggression; surely, God loves not the aggressors. [2:190]

وَقَٰتِلُواْ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّذِينَ
يُقَٰتِلُونَكُمۡ وَلَا تَعۡتَدُوٓاْۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا
يُحِبُّ ٱلۡمُعۡتَدِينَ ١٩٠

The tribute "*jizya*" is mentioned only once in the Quran, in the verse 29 of Sura no.9 "al-Tawba," which was the last long sura (128 verses) revealed to the Prophet, and was only followed by the short one "al-Nasr" (sura n.110), the last revealed sura. Al-Tawba" was revealed at a time contemporary to the prophet's campaign to Tabuk in the year 9 A.H./630 C.E., two years before the Prophet's death in 11A. H./632 C.E.

The verse 9:29 should be understood within the context of the Quranic totality. fighting cannot be initiated against any one, but it is legitimate only to respond to others' initial aggression for defending the believers and their human rights and freedom of faith [e.g. 22:39-40; 2:190-194; 4:75; 8:61-2]. Besides, no fighting can be initiated against people who are peaceful to Muslims merely because they have a different faith; relations to others who are peaceful to Muslims should be conducted with justice and kindness, and war is only legitimate to meet aggression [60:8-9]. No pressure in any form should be made on others in order that they may leave what they believe in and embrace Islam, since there should never be coercion in matters of faith [e.g. 2:256; 10:99; 11:28; 50:45; 88:21-2]. Conveyors of God's messages were sent to extend the message and exhort not to impose and force, and judgement of people is only to God who knows all their situations and

judges each within the limits of his/her abilities [e.g. 3:20; 5:92,99; 13:40; 14:52; 16:35,82; 24:54; 29:18; 36:17; 42:48; 64:12].

An abrogation cannot be claimed unless there is no way to let these verses be applied together, or to consider the case of only a specification of a certain situation which should not shake the general rule. It has been established in Quranic exegesis and in jurisprudence that the Arabs of the peninsula, at the time of the Prophet, had special rules which cannot be generalized. The People of the Book in Arabia had possibly to accept the authority of the rising centralized Islamic state and the payment of *jizya* as an indication of accepting the authority of the state. What was imposed in such a case, as is obvious in the verse 9:29, was not the faith but the tribute, and thus pursues a mere political requirement, and coercion should by no means be practiced in matters of faith in any case, with regard to the People of the Book or others, in Arabia or elsewhere. The verse deals with the payment of the tribute, not with the embracement of the faith, and this is clearly understood -even if not explicitly formulated- to be historical and limited to the case of the rising central state in Arabia under the Prophet, and not to be a general rule. This can be supported by the required "subjection, *saghar*," which is connected with the payment of *jizya* in the verse and has been interpreted to mean "the subjection to the authority of Islam and its law" [e.g. al-Mawardi, ibid., p.143; Ibn al-Qayyim, *Ahkam Ahl al-Dhimma*, vol.1, pp.23-4]. The imposition of a tribute as a sign of subjection to a certain political power was known in different monarchies before Islam throughout history, and the Arabs who lived near Persian, Roman-Byzantine or Abyssinian empires most likely knew about -if not directly exposed to- such practice in any of these empires. However, according to the well-argued view that no abrogation has occured in the Quran, the verse 9:29 has to be understood within the Quranic totality, and then "fighting the People of the Book" would be only allowed against those who may initiate war.

Furthermore, the verse 9:29 requires certain conditions regarding those to whom the Book was given before and against whom Muslims would fight. They "*do not believe in God nor the Last Day, and do not consider forbidden [in their practice] that which God and the Conveyor of His message has forbidden, and do not follow the religion of truth...*" It only makes sense that they are required to observe what had been forbidden by God through the conveyors of His messages who had been sent to those communities and the books which had been revealed to them, not what had been revealed to Prophet Muhammad and the Quran, for in this case they would be Muslims and no more related to earlier books. Therefore, for Muslims, fighting against such people should be based on their practical rejection of God's message, and so they combine their transgression of their own religion -and the messages of God in general- with the aggression against the Muslims.

Although this verse deals with "those to whom the book was given before," prominent commentators on the Quran and jurists (i.e. Malik, al-Awza'i) have generalized it to non-Muslims in general, on the grounds that using the Quranic term for only the Jews and Christians was because they were known to the Arabs at that time. Furthermore, the Quran does also mention the Sabians and the Magians [2:62; 5:69; 22:17] and the Prophet himself dealt with the Magians [al-Qurtubi in his commentary on the verse 9:29, vol.8, p.110; *Tafsir al-Manar*, vol.10, pp.332,340,359-60 (quoting Ibn Qudama in *al-Mughni*).

Jizya is taken -as some Hanafi jurists have stated- to substitute the obligation of defense and *jihad* [al-Qurtubi, vol.8, p.114; also *Tafsir al-Manar* vol.10, pp.346-7], since non-Muslims might find that such obligations contradict their faith and freedom of it. Muhammad Asad has correctly written: "In the Islamic state, every able-bodied Muslim is obliged to take up arms in jihad (i.e. in a just war in God's cause) whenever the freedom of his faith or the political safety of his community is imperilled: in other words, every able-bodied Muslim is liable to compulsory military service. Since this is, primarily, a religious obligation, non-Muslim citizens who do not subscribe to the ideology of Islam, cannot in fairness be expected to assume a similar burden. On the other hand, they must be accorded full protection of all their civic rights and of their religious freedom...[and so] a special tax is levied on non-Muslims citizens (*ahl al-dhimma*, lit. 'covenanted', or 'protected people', i.e. non-Muslims whose safety is statutorily assured by the Muslim community). Thus, *jizya* is no more and no less than an exemption tax in lieu of military services and in compensation for the 'covenant of protection, *dhimma*' accorded to such citizens by the Islamic state. (The term itself is derived from the verb '*jaza*', he rendered [something] as a satisfaction or as a compensation [in lieu of something else], cf Lane II, 422). No fixed rate has been set either by the Quran or by the Prophet for this tax, but from all available traditions it is evident that it is to be considerably lower than the zakat to which Muslims are liable and which -because it is a specifically Islamic religious duty- is naturally not to be levied on non-Muslims...Accordingly, all non-Muslim citizens, where personal status or condition would automatically free them from the obligation to render military, are statutorily -that is, on the basis of clear cut ordinances promulgated by the Prophet- exempted from the payment of jizya: a) all women, b) males who have not reached full maturity, c) old men, d) all sick or crippled men, e) priests and monks. all non-Muslim citizens who volunteer for military service are obviously exempted from the payment of jizya" [*The Message of the Quran*, note n.43 on vol.9:29, p.262].

Historical sources support this fact. Al-Baladhuri, the historian of Muslim conquests, stated that whenever non-Muslims participated in defending their land, no *jizya* was required of them, as in the case of al-Samira in Palestine and al-Jarajima in Lebanon [ibid., pp.162,164]. When Muslims became unable to defend Emesa (Hums) in order to mobilize all their forces to meet a Byzantine attack in a certain area, they returned what they had collected as jizya to the people [ibid., p.143]. Al-Tabari provided similar reports about the eastern lands (i.e. Iraq, Iran, Armenia and Azerbaijan) [*Tarikh*, Leiden, e.g. pp.2658, 2662, 2665-6].

According to the Quranic verse, the payment of *jizya* should be based on financial ability [al-Mawardi, *al-Ahkam*, p.143; *Tafsir al-Manar*, vol.10, p.342]. As has been previously mentioned, the "subjection" mentioned in the verse refers to the subjection to the authority of the Islamic state and law [al-Mawardi, ibid., p.143; Ibn al-Qayyim, *Ahkam Ahl al-Dhimma*, vol.1, pp.23-4]. As *dhimmis* were given an honored promise that they would be protected and their rights would be secured, the Muslim state had to provide for them full protection against any threat or attack within the country or from outside, as has been previously indicated. As early as the time of the second Caliph Umar, it was proved that the payment of *jyzia* could be substituted by participating in military responsibilities, or by another payment such as the social welfare dues which the tribe of Bani

Taghlib paid, and dealing with both situations has preceded. All this supports the fact that *jyzia* has no place in a contemporary Muslim state whose citizens all have the obligation of military service, and the concept of a honored promise of securing human rights and protection "*dhimma*" ought to be substituted by full equality of all citizens in human rights including political and civil rights.

MUSLIM RELATIONS WITH NON-MUSLIMS IN THE WORLD

See Chapter Eight: Law "Shar'a" II: "Universal Relations"

THE FAMILY

NATURAL HUMAN INCLINATION TO HAVING A FAMILY

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ ٱتَّقُوا۟ رَبَّكُمُ ٱلَّذِى
خَلَقَكُم مِّن نَّفْسٍ وَٰحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا
زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا
وَنِسَآءً ۚ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ٱلَّذِى تَسَآءَلُونَ
بِهِۦ وَٱلْأَرْحَامَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ
رَقِيبًا ﴿١﴾

O Human beings! Be conscious of your Lord, who has created you [all] out of one living entity[that He initially created], out of which He has created its mate, and out of the two He has spread widely a multitude of men and women. And remain conscious of God, by whom you demand [your rights] from one another, and of your ties of kinship. Verily, God is Ever Watchful over you. [4:1]

The Quran does not follow the Biblical account of the creation of Adam and his mate. The above verse addresses all human beings: men and women, and indicates that they as a whole have been created from one living entity "*nafs*", which represents the origin for both mates: the male and the female. The "mating" or "spousing" of the male and female sexes is original in the human nature, and out of this instinctive relationship humankind develops, continues, and spreads in huge numbers of both sexes all over the world. However, one should never forget the origin of humankind and its Creator: God, by whose guidance about entire justice every individual knows and demands his/her rights from the other. Besides, just as the human being should be aware of the farthest human origin and the Creator, he/she has to recognize the ties of kinship with his/her nearest relatives and with the whole human family, as all of humanity has one origin and descended from one male and from one female. Consciousness of the origin and of the Creator would make the individual so conscientious in his/her behavior, so that he/she is always concerned to be honest and righteous, and would make human relations more considerate and cooperative.

وَلَقَدْ
أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلًا مِّن قَبْلِكَ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُمْ
أَزْوَٰجًا وَذُرِّيَّةً ۚ وَمَا كَانَ لِرَسُولٍ أَن
يَأْتِىَ بِـَٔايَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ لِكُلِّ أَجَلٍ
كِتَابٌ ﴿٣٨﴾

And We have sent forth conveyors of Our messages before you, and We caused them to have wives and offspring... [13:38]

وَمِنْ ءَايَـٰتِهِۦٓ أَنْ خَلَقَ
لَكُم مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَٰجًا لِّتَسْكُنُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهَا

And among His wonders is that He created for you mates from among yourselves that you might find restfulness [and satisfaction], and He has engendered

between you affection, and tenderness; surely, in that are signs for people who think. [30:21]

وَ جَعَلَ بَيْنَكُم مَّوَدَّةً وَ رَحْمَةً ۚ إِنَّ فِى
ذَٰلِكَ لَأَيَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

To God alone belongs the dominion over the heavens and the earth. He creates whatever He wills; He bestows the gift of female children on whomever He wills, and the gift of male children on whomever He wills, or gives both male and female [to whomever He wills], and causes to be barren whomever He wills. Surely, He is All-knowing, All-powerful. [42:49-50]

لِلَّهِ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَ ٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَآءُ ۚ يَهَبُ لِمَن
يَشَآءُ إِنَٰثًا وَ يَهَبُ لِمَن يَشَآءُ ٱلذُّكُورَ
﴿٤٩﴾ أَوْ يُزَوِّجُهُمْ ذُكْرَانًا وَ إِنَٰثًا ۖ
وَيَجْعَلُ مَن يَشَآءُ عَقِيمًا ۚ إِنَّهُۥ عَلِيمٌ قَدِيرٌ
﴿٥٠﴾

The human species has included a male and a female since its existence. Even prophets and conveyors of God's message, as human beings, have their families and children. Between the two sexes a gravitating combination of love, tenderness, and care was engendered, so that each finds in the other complementation, tranquility and support. The Quran describes the emotions between spouses in the most general, permanent and basic terms: emotion on the one hand, and tenderness, care and consideration on the other, although the sentimental culminations may be more specific. Having children and loving them represents another fulfillment of the human nature.

These sentiments would not be ignored or considered illegitimate unless they may at some point prevail over the commitment to God and His guidance *"but those who have attained to faith love God more than all else"* [2:165, see also 9:24]. When the balance is disturbed, and the spouse or children become the center of evaluation and decision-making in all matters, in place of moral values and God's guidance, a deviation from justice and fairness emerges, and family favoritism becomes another form of egoism but with a slightly wider range [e.g. 64:14-16].

It is lawful for you to have sexual unions with your wives the night preceding the [day's] fasting; they are as a garment for you and you are as a garment for them. God knows that you have been acting differently from what you think ought to be done in this respect, and so He has turned unto you in His grace and removed this hardship from you. So now, you may lie with them, and seek what God has ordained for you, and eat and drink until you can discern the white

أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ لَيْلَةَ ٱلصِّيَامِ
ٱلرَّفَثُ إِلَىٰ نِسَآئِكُمْ ۚ هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَّكُمْ
وَأَنتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَّهُنَّ ۗ عَلِمَ ٱللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ كُنتُمْ
تَخْتَانُونَ أَنفُسَكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَ عَفَا
عَنكُمْ ۖ فَٱلْـَٰٔنَ بَٰشِرُوهُنَّ وَ ٱبْتَغُوا۟ مَا
كَتَبَ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ ۚ وَ كُلُوا۟ وَ ٱشْرَبُوا۟ حَتَّىٰ
يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ ٱلْخَيْطُ ٱلْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ ٱلْخَيْطِ

[streak of dawn] from the black [end of night], and then resume fasting until [the end of the day and the beginning of] nightfall, but do not lie with them while you are abiding in worship in the mosques. These are the bounds set by God, so keep well within [what is allowed and never approach what is forbidden by] them. Thus God makes His message clear to people, so that they might always be conscious of Him. [2:187]

ٱلۡأَسۡوَدِ مِنَ ٱلۡفَجۡرِۖ ثُمَّ أَتِمُّواْ ٱلصِّيَامَ
إِلَى ٱلَّيۡلِۚ وَلَا تُبَٰشِرُوهُنَّ وَأَنتُمۡ
عَٰكِفُونَ فِي ٱلۡمَسَٰجِدِۗ تِلۡكَ حُدُودُ
ٱللَّهِ فَلَا تَقۡرَبُوهَاۗ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ
ءَايَٰتِهِۦ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمۡ يَتَّقُونَ ١٨٧

Fasting during the whole month of Ramadan forbids a Muslim from eating, drinking and having sex (with his/her spouse) from dawn to dusk. Since sex is a natural physical need, the same as eating and drinking, the above verse makes it clear that all these essentials are equally allowed between dusk and the subsequent dawn. Sex is essential for the individual and the society, and thus it is hard to ignore or suppress it for a whole month, and legitimate sex does not contradict the essence of fasting, since fasting does not entail the oppression of the body, but is merely training for self-control. The *"bounds of God"* aim to secure the personal and social balance, and all God's teachings are in harmony with the human nature in its healthy state [30:30]. Accordingly, sex is a clean instinctive motive that leads to the formation of a family and the procreation of children. It is a constructive power, if it is conducted in a healthy way to fulfill the individual and social needs, the same as food and drink when they are not taken excessively. Fasting is meant to strengthen the human will and develop self-control, not to kill the human being or his/her legitimate instinctive desires. Spousal relations and having children are human needs that are as essential for the human life. Worship maintains the balance of the spiritual and physical needs, without oppressing the body or condemning it. Such a balance in the individual and the society would bring forth *"the people of the middle way"* [2:143], who would admit to and develop their physical powers while letting them be directed and controlled by the human intellect and spirituality.

It is He who has created you [all] out of one living entity, and out of it brought into being its mate, so that one might find restfulness [and satisfaction] with the other. And so, when he has closely approached her, she conceives [what at first is] a light burden and passes by with it; then when she grows heavy, they [the couple] both call unto God their Lord, "If you give us a sound child, we shall assuredly be among the grateful." [7:189]

هُوَ ٱلَّذِي خَلَقَكُم
مِّن نَّفۡسٖ وَٰحِدَةٖ وَجَعَلَ مِنۡهَا زَوۡجَهَا
لِيَسۡكُنَ إِلَيۡهَاۖ فَلَمَّا تَغَشَّىٰهَا حَمَلَتۡ
حَمۡلًا خَفِيفٗا فَمَرَّتۡ بِهِۦۖ فَلَمَّآ أَثۡقَلَت
دَّعَوَا ٱللَّهَ رَبَّهُمَا لَئِنۡ ءَاتَيۡتَنَا صَٰلِحٗا
لَّنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلشَّٰكِرِينَ ١٨٩

And God has given you mates from among yourselves, and given you through your mates children and children's children, and has provided for your sustenance out of the good things of life. Do they believe in what is false and vain, while they deny God's favors and blessings? [16:72]

وَ ٱللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُم
مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَٰجًا وَ جَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنْ
أَزْوَٰجِكُم بَنِينَ وَ حَفَدَةً وَ رَزَقَكُم مِّنَ
ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ ۚ أَفَبِٱلْبَٰطِلِ يُؤْمِنُونَ وَ بِنِعْمَتِ
ٱللَّهِ هُمْ يَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾

Both males and females have the same origin and are created from one living entity. They complement and complete one another, and through the spousal relationship this complementation and completion are achieved, and accordingly each of the spouses feels restful and comfortable and enjoys peace of mind, satisfaction, and fulfillment. The spousal relationship is expressed in the verse [7:189] as a total and flowing embracement or spreading of each party against the other [*taghashshaha*], which may not only be limited to the physical sexual contacts, but may also be extended to the psychological spiritual relations.

The blessings and pleasures of such complementation and completion are not ended by their accomplishment, but they continue and develop through bringing forth children that are healthy and meritable in all aspects, raising them, and providing the whole family with its material, emotional, and moral needs from the good things in life out of God's sustenance and guidance. These pleasures of completion and procreation may be extended and multiplied when one is granted grandchildren, who do not only represent genealogical continuation, but a revitalization and flowing of the human liveliness. Along with the pleasures of having children and grandchildren, the parents - possibly with the help and constructive cooperation of the grandparents - have the responsibility of raising the children and nurturing in them the values presented in God's guidance. This by no means denotes preaching and constant lecturing, since values can be inspiringly and impressively presented through interesting story-telling, active playing, and constructive fun.

Such a physical-psychological-spiritual development through sexual completion followed by procreation that may continue for more than one generation, ought to lead every sensible human being to be grateful to God for His successive and multiplying favors within his/her own family throughout his/her lifetime, and such persons and their happy meritable families would be models for the whole society [25:74]. However, there are those who *"as soon as He has granted them sound offspring, they assign to Him associates in that He has granted them, but God is high exalted above any that they associate. Do they associate with that which creates nothing, and they themselves are created, and that which has no power to help them, and neither can they even help themselves"* [7:190-192].

Truly, to success shall attain the believers: who in their prayers are humble...
... and who guard their private parts [as they

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ
فِى صَلَاتِهِمْ خَٰشِعُونَ ﴿٢﴾ وَ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ
عَنِ ٱللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ ﴿٣﴾ وَ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ
لِلزَّكَوٰةِ فَٰعِلُونَ ﴿٤﴾ وَ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ

are mindful of their chastity, not giving way to their desires] with any but their spouses and whom they rightfully possess [in wedlock], as they are not then to be blamed. But whoever seeks to go beyond that, those are truly the transgressors. [23: 1-2, 5-7]

لِفُرُوجِهِمْ حَٰفِظُونَ ۙ ﴿٥﴾ إِلَّا عَلَىٰٓ
أَزْوَٰجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَٰنُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ
غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ ﴿٦﴾ فَمَنِ ٱبْتَغَىٰ وَرَآءَ
ذَٰلِكَ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْعَادُونَ ﴿٧﴾

Chastity has to be observed by all believers, male or female. Spouses may have sex with one another, but outside the legitimate marriage, everyone - married or unmarried- has to abstain from sexual contact. Islam forbids all that may tempt and stir up the libido, such as unreasonable exposure of the body and immodesty, close concentration of the eyes on the body attractions of the other, and full seclusion of one male and one female who are adults and legally marriageable to one another.

When slavery existed in early Islam and the master had sexual rights over his slaves, Islam, as part of its plan to gradually end slavery, commanded that a sexual relation with a slave was lawful only through marriage: "... *marry them [the believing maidens from among those whom you rightfully possess] then, with their people's leave, and give them their dowries fairly [and honorably], being women who give themselves in honest wedlock, not taken in fornication nor as secret love-companions"* [4:25, also 4:3; 24:32]. Contrary to the popular view that sexual relations with a female slave are allowed for the man who has rights over her according to these rights themselves and without a marriage with its legal requirements, the Quranic teachings clearly indicate that marriage requirements have to be fulfilled in marrying a slave.

Apart from the sexual relations in wedlock, any other sexual relation is prohibited in Islam. Fornication and adultery are both forbidden and punished by law if legally proven. Until marriage occurs, chastity is the general rule for every Muslim: male or female, and in the past, free or slave. Slaves had to be treated as equal human beings, and their liberation was encouraged through individual and governmental actions, and thus slavery had to come gradually to an end.

Marry the single from among you, as well as those from among your male and female slaves who are fit [physically and morally for marriage]; if these may be poor, God may enrich them of His bounty, and God is Infinite and All-embracing [in His mercy], All knowing. [24:32]

وَأَنكِحُوا۟ ٱلْأَيَـٰمَىٰ مِنكُمْ وَٱلصَّـٰلِحِينَ مِنْ
عِبَادِكُمْ وَإِمَآئِكُمْ ۚ إِن يَكُونُوا۟ فُقَرَآءَ
يُغْنِهِمُ ٱللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ
عَلِيمٌ ﴿٣٢﴾

This verse addresses the whole society to provide the necessary means for the marriage of all the single individuals in it, whether they may be free or slave men and women. This states first that marriage is an essential need for the individual which the whole society is responsible to fulfill by providing all necessary means, whether material or moral and

educational, for making it possible and successful. Secondly, the verse indicates that a sexual relationship with a slave man or woman has to be through marriage, as it has been repeatedly stressed before.

And those [true servants of the Most Gracious] who pray: "O our Lord! Grant that our spouses and our offspring be of joy to our eyes, and cause us to be foremost among those who are conscious of You." [25:74]

وَٱلَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا هَبْ
لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَٰجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّٰتِنَا قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ
وَٱجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا ﴿٧٤﴾

The family is the nucleus of human society, and it is the first field in which the message of Islam and its reform can work. A family with good members and healthy interrelations, which represents human fulfillment in all its dimensions, is an attractive model for the whole society, and a significant representation of the beliefs and moral values to which the individuals of such a family are committed. The above verse points out to the importance of the family for the individual as it represents the closest human society to him/her, and how the physical, intellectual, psychological and spiritual- moral harmony in the family relations is a real joy for each individual within it. Besides, such a strong and happy family will provide a model of behavior that attracts others in the society to follow. In this way, the family is an essential and indispensable source of power, as it inspires and strengthens the individual as well as the society.

Gardens of perpetual bliss, which they shall enter, together with the righteous from among their forebears, their spouses and their offspring; and the angels will come unto them form every gate [saying]: "Peace be upon you, because you have persevered." How excellent is the ultimate abode and fulfillment. [13:23-24, see also 40:7-9]

جَنَّٰتُ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا وَمَن صَلَحَ مِنْ
ءَابَآئِهِمْ وَأَزْوَٰجِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّٰتِهِمْ ۖ
وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ يَدْخُلُونَ عَلَيْهِم مِّن كُلِّ بَابٍ
﴿٢٣﴾ سَلَٰمٌ عَلَيْكُم بِمَا صَبَرْتُمْ ۚ فَنِعْمَ
عُقْبَى ٱلدَّارِ ﴿٢٤﴾

"And, O our Lord," [the angels pray] "bring them [those who have responded and followed God's way] into the gardens of perpetual bliss which You have promised them, together with the righteous from among their forebearers and their spouses and their offspring; verily you are the All- mighty, the All-wise." [40:8]

رَبَّنَا وَأَدْخِلْهُمْ جَنَّٰتِ عَدْنٍ ٱلَّتِى
وَعَدتَّهُمْ وَمَن صَلَحَ مِنْ ءَابَآئِهِمْ
وَأَزْوَٰجِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّٰتِهِمْ ۚ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ
ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٨﴾

And as for those who have attained to faith and whose offspring follow

وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَٱتَّبَعَتْهُمْ ذُرِّيَّتُهُم بِإِيمَٰنٍ

them in faith, We shall unite them with their own offspring, and We shall not let any of their deeds go to waste; [but] every human being will be held in pledge for whatever he [/she] has earned. [52:21]

أَلْحَقْنَا بِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَمَآ أَلَتْنَٰهُم مِّنْ
عَمَلِهِم مِّن شَىْءٍ ۚ كُلُّ ٱمْرِئٍۭ بِمَا كَسَبَ
رَهِينٌ ﴿٢١﴾

The above verses stress how natural, strong and permanent the family feelings are, and how their power continues to exist in the eternal life to come. The angels pray to God that those who followed God's way would be joined by the righteous from among their forebears, their spouses and their offspring; and this has been decided by God. Certainly, every individual would be keen only to be saved personally on the Day of Judgement "*on a Day when everyone shall flee from his [/her] brother [/sister], and from his [/her] mother and father, and from his [/her] spouse and children; on that Day, every one of them will have his [/her] own sufficient concern*" [80:34-37, see also 70:11-14]. But as soon as the judgement of eternal happiness comes to someone, the natural and permanent family feelings rise up and continue to prove that they are alive and strong, and the Lord in His grace and compassion would respond to them without the slightest deviation from justice; and thus only the righteous among the family members will be re-united in eternity. It will be a reward for the parents who have been an effective factor in raising their children in truthfulness, righteousness and morality, but the children also deserve their reward in full, since they have chosen, by their free will, to follow the good values of righteousness presented to them by their parents.

On the other hand, in cases of opposite directions of the parents and children in this life, when the prophets themselves may have been inclined to pray to God to forgive their deviated parents and/or children, God's justice did not allow such illegitimate emotionalism and favoritism: "*And Noah called unto his Lord and said, 'O my Lord! My son is of my family, and what you determine is surely the truth. You are the most just of all those that judge.' Said He, ' O Noah, he is not of your family; his work was unrighteous [and that has alienated him from you]. Do not ask of Me that whereof you have no knowledge; I admonish you not to be among the ignorant. He [Noah] said, 'My Lord, I take refuge with you lest I should ask of you that whereof I have no knowledge; and unless You forgive me and have mercy on me, I shall be among the lost'*" [11:45-47], "*It is not for the Prophet and those who have attained to faith to ask pardon for those who associated others with God - even if they might be near of kin, after it has become clear to them that they are destined for hell. Ibrahim [/Abraham] asked no pardon for his father except because of a promise he had made to him; and when it became clear to him that he was an enemy of God, he declared himself quit of him; behold, Abraham was extremely tender-hearted, clement.*" [9:113- 114; see also 19:47] As for the spouses, "*the wife of [the prophet] Noah and the wife of [the prophet] Lot were wedded to two of Our righteous worshippers, but they betrayed them, so they availed them nothing whatsoever against God; and it was said [to them], "Enter, you two, the fire with those who enter'*" [66:10]. According to the Quranic guidance, a person should not resist such natural and strong family feelings to unite his family and lead them to the right path unless "it becomes clear" to him/her that his/her near kin has chosen with free and full will, not out of ignorance or deception, to

reject stubbornly the truth and to fight against it and thus can be described as an "enemy of God" [see also about what can be considered as clear rejection of the faith, not mere doubt or puzzlement 6:33; 27:14].

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا
ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ قُوٓاْ أَنفُسَكُمۡ وَأَهۡلِيكُمۡ
نَارٗا وَقُودُهَا ٱلنَّاسُ وَٱلۡحِجَارَةُ عَلَيۡهَا
مَلَٰٓئِكَةٌ غِلَاظٞ شِدَادٞ لَّا يَعۡصُونَ ٱللَّهَ مَآ
أَمَرَهُمۡ وَيَفۡعَلُونَ مَا يُؤۡمَرُونَ ٦

"O you who have attained to faith! Guard yourselves and your families, against a fire whose fuel is human beings and stones... ." [66:6]

As family feelings are instinctive for every human being, such deep feelings should urge every one to care about his/her family members and their conception of this life and the power behind it and what may follow this life and this world, and about their basic beliefs and moral values. The first social responsibility of the individual has to be fulfilled through this family society that is the closest to him/her, and which is the nucleus for the whole society. The Prophet Muhammad conveyed his message first to his wife Khadija, and then to his cousin Ali who lived with him at home. It was after some time that he was addressed to extend the message to his clan: *"And warn your nearest kinfolk"* [26:214].

MARRIAGE

ESTABLISHING MARRIAGE: CHOOSING THE SPOUSE, THE CONTRACT, THE DOWRY

And do not marry women who associate others with God until they believe [in the One God], since any believing female worshipper [of God, or any believing slave-girl] is certainly better than a woman who associates others with God, though she may be admired by you.
And do not give your women in marriage to men who associate others with God until they believe [in the One God], since any believing male worshipper [of God, or a slave- man] is certainly better than a man who associates others with God, though he may be admired by you. Those call unto the fire, whereas God calls unto paradise and [unto the achievement of] forgiveness by His leave; and He makes clear His messages to people, so that they might bear them in mind. [2:221]

وَلَا تَنكِحُواْ ٱلۡمُشۡرِكَٰتِ حَتَّىٰ
يُؤۡمِنَّۚ وَلَأَمَةٞ مُّؤۡمِنَةٌ خَيۡرٞ مِّن مُّشۡرِكَةٖ
وَلَوۡ أَعۡجَبَتۡكُمۡۗ وَلَا تُنكِحُواْ ٱلۡمُشۡرِكِينَ
حَتَّىٰ يُؤۡمِنُواْۚ وَلَعَبۡدٞ مُّؤۡمِنٌ خَيۡرٞ مِّن
مُّشۡرِكٖ وَلَوۡ أَعۡجَبَكُمۡۗ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ يَدۡعُونَ
إِلَى ٱلنَّارِۖ وَٱللَّهُ يَدۡعُوٓاْ إِلَى ٱلۡجَنَّةِ
وَٱلۡمَغۡفِرَةِ بِإِذۡنِهِۦۖ وَيُبَيِّنُ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ
لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمۡ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ٢٢١

The harmony in family life requires solid intellectual, spiritual and behavioral common grounds between the spouses, which are essential for the relationship between the spouses themselves and for the children who will be raised by them. Sharp contradictions between the spouses may at first be covered by the heat of love, but they will gradually come to the surface through the family life, after the spouses become used to one another and to their joint life, and this may disturb the children when they grow up and realize the contrasting differences between their parents whom they hold as models and ideals for themselves. Thus, requiring the belief in the One God as basic common ground for a lasting and successful marriage underlies the seriousness of the union and the importance of the family's long-term harmony and unity, without which the marriage becomes meaningless. The above verse stresses that the lasting conceptual common grounds should prevail over the momentary attraction to a woman or a man, for through the process of time the deep contrast of belief would destroy such a shortsighted physical or emotional allurement. Thus, a spouse who shares the same beliefs as his/hers will be a better partner in the family life in the long term than he/she who lacks such a base for the new social unit, even if he/she may be less attractive, or lower in the social rank.

According to the prominent linguist and commentator al-Zamakhshari, the verse prefers the marriages to any suitable *"worshipper of God,"* female or male, because of the common faith grounds, while other commentators understand the verse as preferring even the marriage of *"believing slaves"*, female or male, if any shares the same belief in the One God. The difference in interpretation emerges from the fact that the Arabic word that is used for *"the slave"* and for the *"servant of God"* in the Quran is the same. The latter interpretation would open a channel of legitimate inter-marriage between the free and slave men and women [see also 4:25], which may have mixed consequences with regard to the situation of slavery which has to be considered transitional, according to the principles of Islam and its strategy in this matter. Besides, such an inter-marriage may have undesirable effects on the children born into it [see 4:25].

Today the good things have been made lawful to you, and the food of those who were given the Book is lawful to you, and your food is lawful to them. And [lawful to you] in wedlock are believing women and women from among those who were given the Book before you, provided that you give them their dowries, taking them in honest wedlock, not in fornication, nor as secret love-companions. As for one who [stubbornly] rejects belief [in God], his[/her] work is a failure, and in the life to come he[/she] shall be among the losers. [5:5]

ٱلْيَوْمَ
أُحِلَّ لَكُمُ ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتُ ۖ وَطَعَامُ ٱلَّذِينَ
أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ حِلٌّ لَّكُمْ وَطَعَامُكُمْ حِلٌّ
لَّهُمْ ۖ وَٱلْمُحْصَنَٰتُ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ
وَٱلْمُحْصَنَٰتُ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ مِن
قَبْلِكُمْ إِذَآ ءَاتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ
مُحْصِنِينَ غَيْرَ مُسَٰفِحِينَ وَلَا مُتَّخِذِىٓ
أَخْدَانٍ ۗ وَمَن يَكْفُرْ بِٱلْإِيمَٰنِ فَقَدْ
حَبِطَ عَمَلُهُۥ وَهُوَ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ مِنَ
ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ ﴿٥﴾

The verse underlines the common grounds between the believers in the message of Muhammad and God's book: the Quran, and those who received the divine message and a book before his time. The common grounds are so solid that each can eat the food of the other, unless it is something unarguably forbidden in Islam such as pork [2:173; 5:3]. According to the Maliki juristic school and some other jurists, meat can be eaten by Muslims if the animal from which it comes was slaughtered by the People of the Book, whatever their way of slaughtering it may have been [see Abduh and Rida, *Tafsir al-Manar*, vol. 6, pp196-219]. The formation of one family and the raising of children together is more evidence to indicate the common grounds between the Muslims and the People of the Book, since marrying a woman from the People of the Book is lawful for a Muslim man, and all the legal and moral requirements for a legitimate marriage with a Muslim woman should be observed in the marriage with the woman from the People of the Book *"provided that you give them their dowries, taking them in honest wedlock not in fornication, nor as secret love-companions."* The situation of the People of the Book is clearly different from those who associate others with God whom Muslims are forbidden to marry, and who *"invite unto the fire, whereas God calls unto paradise and unto [the achievement of] forgiveness by His leave"* [2:221]. Although the Quran rejects the belief in Jesus as God or as the son of God or as one in a divine trinity [4:171; 5:17; 72-73; 9:30-31], it has never included the people of the Book in the category of those who associate others with God, *"al-mushrikin"*, or considered them to be the same as those who stubbornly reject the truth of the oneness of God and the Day of Judgment and the eternal life to come, *"al-kuffar"*. The Quran always indicates clearly that the People of the Book represent a distinctive category in itself "sui generis", and points out the theological and moral common grounds that they have with Muslims which many of them adhere to and which cannot be missed in their behavior [e.g. 3:113-115].

Therefore, a woman from the People of the Book who marries a Muslim can be sure that, despite doctrinal differences between her and her husband, the prophets of her faith, as well as other beliefs, will be mentioned with utmost respect in her Muslim environment. However, a Muslim who marries a woman from the People of the Book, has to be sure that he would be able to handle the theological and the practical differences between himself and his wife wisely and fairly, and deal properly with the effect of these differences on the children who should not be split between contradictory ideals and practices. One day, the romantic heat between the spouses would be cooled down, and what should remain during the whole family life, especially when the couple becomes older, is mutual appreciation, sincerity, caring and respect. It is essential to try to anticipate how close to one another the spouses would be in time, and how they would be able to tolerate their differences in older age, and how their children would be able to understand their differences and accept them while respecting both parents with their differences, as well as their similarities.

With regard to the marriage between Muslim men and women who are not Jews or Christians, but who may have books of a claimed divine origin, and are not mentioned in the Quran, *"Tafsir al-Manar"* by Muhammad Abduh and Muhammad Rashid Rida considers such a marriage as lawful, on the grounds of the general lawfulness mentioned after the Quranic numeration of the women whom Muslim men are prohibited to marry "... *this*

is God's ordinance, binding upon you. But lawful to you are all [women] beyond these ..." [4:24]. Besides, it is their opinion that the prohibition of the marriage of women who associate others with God 2:221, was meant specifically for Arab polytheistic women [*Tafsir al-Manar* vol. 6: pp 185-196].

And give to women their dowries willingly as a[n irrevocable and mandatory] gift, but if they, with free will, give up any of it, then enjoy such pleasantness and agreeability. [4:4]

وَءَاتُوا۟
ٱلنِّسَآءَ صَدُقَٰتِهِنَّ نِحْلَةً ۚ فَإِن طِبْنَ لَكُمْ
عَن شَىْءٍ مِّنْهُ نَفْسًا فَكُلُوهُ هَنِيٓـًٔا مَّرِيٓـًٔا ﴿٤﴾

In the Islamic law, a dowry is given by the bridegroom to the bride as a sign of true willingness from him to marry her, and as an early assurance of securing the bride's moral and material rights by the bridegroom. This dowry, which should be offered willingly by the bridegroom, is a legal requirement for a legitimate marriage, and it becomes an irrevocable property of the wife. The amount of the dowry is left to the agreement of the two parties, and the Quran does not provide any estimation or a ceiling for it [4:20]. However, the traditions of the Prophet teach that a dowry could be "even an iron ring" or a teaching of the Quran if this is accepted by the bride. The bride can release, out of her own accord, the bridegroom of any part of the dowry, or agree to receive anything symbolic for the marriage. Besides, she can return later, out of her own free will, any of the dowry that she has got as compensation if she wants to initiate a divorce, the grounds of which are merely emotional, and not related by any means to mistreatment, injustice or negligence on the part of the husband [4:128].

O you have attained to faith! It is not lawful for you to inherit women [or to deal with them as part of your inheritance from the deceased husband, keeping them] against their will, nor to keep them under restrictions [and pressures] to hinder them from remarrying so that you may go off with something of what you have given them, unless they become guilty of conduct that is flagrant [and, thus, making their stay unsuitable]. And consort with them [your wives] in a goodly manner; and if you feel averse to them, it may well be that you feel averse to something in which God may yet set much good. And if you desire to give up a wife and to take another instead, and you have given to [the first] one however much it may have been, take of it nothing. Would you [like to] take it groundlessly and as an evident evil- doing?

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَن تَرِثُوا۟ ٱلنِّسَآءَ
كَرْهًا ۖ وَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ لِتَذْهَبُوا۟ بِبَعْضِ
مَآ ءَاتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ إِلَّآ أَن يَأْتِينَ بِفَٰحِشَةٍ
مُّبَيِّنَةٍ ۚ وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ فَإِن
كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَىٰٓ أَن تَكْرَهُوا۟ شَيْـًٔا
وَيَجْعَلَ ٱللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ﴿١٩﴾ وَإِنْ
أَرَدتُّمُ ٱسْتِبْدَالَ زَوْجٍ مَّكَانَ زَوْجٍ
وَءَاتَيْتُمْ إِحْدَىٰهُنَّ قِنطَارًا فَلَا تَأْخُذُوا۟
مِنْهُ شَيْـًٔا ۚ أَتَأْخُذُونَهُۥ بُهْتَٰنًا وَإِثْمًا
مُّبِينًا ﴿٢٠﴾ وَكَيْفَ تَأْخُذُونَهُۥ وَقَدْ

And how can you take it, after you have given yourselves to one another, and they [the wives] have taken from you [the husbands] a firm bond? [4:19-21]

أَفْضَىٰ بَعْضُكُمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ وَأَخَذْنَ مِنكُم
مِّيثَٰقًا غَلِيظًا ﴿٢١﴾

Keeping women against their will to inherit them after their death or to get back some of the dowries given to them, or forcing them to marry a certain person after they have become widows, and all such kinds of harm and injustice are against the essence of family life which is based on love and equity from both partners. The wife can take the husband to court and secure her rights in full, but the husbands are warned against committing injustice on their part, so that the family private life may not be exposed in public as much as possible. The wife has full rights to the dowry given to her by her husband as soon as the wedding occurs, whether the marriage continues successfully or ends by a divorce. The Quran reminds the husband, who wishes to divorce his wife, of his previous intimate relationship with her and the firm bond of marriage, to dissuade him from any inclination towards injustice. The description of marriage with all its moral, physical and legal rapports as *"a firm bond"* is both significant and impressive.

Some commentators referred to a pre-Islamic Arab custom that gave the nearest of kin of the dead person the right to also inherit the dead person's widow. If a husband is not allowed to put restrictions and pressures in order to inherit his wife's property, then a physical seizure of her body by any person however close his relationship to the deceased husband may be, after the husband's death is absolutely prohibited. A widow can marry a relative of her dead husband by her consent if he is eligible for such a marriage, and his relationship to the previous husband does not forbid such a marriage, as in the case of the son from another wife or the father of the dead husband, which will be indicated with other forbidden marriages in the following verses.

And marry not women whom your fathers married, unless it be a matter of the past; surely, that is shameful and hateful, and an evil way. [Those] forbidden to you [for marriage] are: your mothers and daughters, your sisters, your aunts paternal and maternal, your brother's daughters, your sister's daughters, your [quasi-] mothers who have suckled you, your suckling sisters, your wives' mothers, your step-daughters who are your foster-children with whose mothers you have consummated your marriage, but if you have not consummated your marriage there will be nothing held against you [in marrying their daughters]; [and also among the forbidden to you are] the

وَلَا تَنكِحُوا۟ مَا
نَكَحَ ءَابَآؤُكُم مِّنَ ٱلنِّسَآءِ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ
سَلَفَ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ فَٰحِشَةً وَمَقْتًا وَسَآءَ
سَبِيلًا ﴿٢٢﴾ حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ أُمَّهَٰتُكُمْ
وَبَنَاتُكُمْ وَأَخَوَٰتُكُمْ وَعَمَّٰتُكُمْ وَخَٰلَٰتُكُمْ
وَبَنَاتُ ٱلْأَخِ وَبَنَاتُ ٱلْأُخْتِ وَأُمَّهَٰتُكُمُ
ٱلَّٰتِىٓ أَرْضَعْنَكُمْ وَأَخَوَٰتُكُم مِّنَ ٱلرَّضَٰعَةِ
وَأُمَّهَٰتُ نِسَآئِكُمْ وَرَبَٰٓئِبُكُمُ ٱلَّٰتِى فِى
حُجُورِكُم مِّن نِّسَآئِكُمُ ٱلَّٰتِى دَخَلْتُم بِهِنَّ
فَإِن لَّمْ تَكُونُوا۟ دَخَلْتُم بِهِنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ

spouses of your sons who come out of your loins; and that you have together two sisters [as your wives] at the same time, unless it be a matter of the past; God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious.
Also [among the forbidden to you are] all married women other than whom you rightfully possess [whom you want to marry]: this is God's ordinance, binding upon you. But lawful to you are all other [women] beyond all these, [from among whom] you may seek [marriage], offering them of your possessions, and taking them in wedlock, not in fornication. [Such wives] as you enjoy marrying them, give them the dowries due to them; but you do no wrong if you freely agree with one another about something beyond what is legally due; surely, God is All-knowing, All-wise. [4:22-24]

عَلَيْكُمْ وَحَلَٰٓئِلُ أَبْنَآئِكُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ مِنْ
أَصْلَٰبِكُمْ وَأَن تَجْمَعُوا۟ بَيْنَ ٱلْأُخْتَيْنِ
إِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا
رَّحِيمًا ﴿٢٣﴾ ۞ وَٱلْمُحْصَنَٰتُ مِنَ
ٱلنِّسَآءِ إِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَٰنُكُمْ ۖ كِتَٰبَ
ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ ۚ وَأُحِلَّ لَكُم مَّا وَرَآءَ ذَٰلِكُمْ
أَن تَبْتَغُوا۟ بِأَمْوَٰلِكُم مُّحْصِنِينَ غَيْرَ
مُسَٰفِحِينَ ۚ فَمَا ٱسْتَمْتَعْتُم بِهِۦ مِنْهُنَّ
فَـَٔاتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً ۚ وَلَا جُنَاحَ
عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا تَرَٰضَيْتُم بِهِۦ مِنۢ بَعْدِ
ٱلْفَرِيضَةِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا
﴿٢٤﴾

The prohibition of marriage with the previously indicated relatives is compatible with human nature and common sense, as well as being accepted, with some minor differences, by various social traditions. It is often healthier, psychologically and physically, if marriage occurs between those who are not closely related to one another. The forbidden marriages are indicated on the assumption that the person who proposes marriage often is the man as a gesture of respect and dignification for the woman; the reverse process is not religiously forbidden although it is rarely practiced. The listed prohibitions in the verse 4:23 apply with their relevant changes if it happens that a woman proposes and would thus be: "your fathers, sons, brothers, uncles, brother's son, sister's son .... etc.," or they may apply without change from the view of the man to whom the woman proposes.

The word "mother" in the verses is used to also include the grandmother, great grandmother etc., and the word "daughter" includes grand daughter, great grand daughter etc. The word "sister" covers the full sister and the half sister. A "father's sister" can also imply a grandfather's sister etc., and a "mother's sister" can mean a grandmother's sister. "Milk" or "suckling" relationship, through women who have suckled or nursed children of others, makes the marriage of a man to his quasi-mother, a "milk-" or "suckling-mother," prohibited. It also makes any of the children that she has suckled as one of her own children, and thus a marriage between the suckled child and one of her natural children, or between the suckled siblings themselves, is forbidden. It is also forbidden in cases of polygyny, which may occur in certain difficult circumstances, to have two sisters together as wives at the same time, and the same prohibition applies to having a paternal or maternal aunt and niece together.

The verses about prohibited women for marriage are concluded by stressing the general principle of Islamic justice: that the effect of these prohibitions is only subsequent

to the revelation of the rule, and marriages that took place before revelation are exempt from the implementation of the verses, and from any penalty in this life or in the life to come, according to the principle of the non-retroactivity of laws. The benefit of the principles in the verses has been supported by experience and modern scientific research, however; it has been realized that marrying close relatives may extend any hereditary deficiency within a family. A tradition attributed to Caliph `Umar warns against this threat, and advised people not to marry from their family.

وَمَن لَّمْ يَسْتَطِعْ مِنكُمْ طَوْلًا أَن
يَنكِحَ ٱلْمُحْصَنَٰتِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ فَمِن مَّا
مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَٰنُكُم مِّن فَتَيَٰتِكُمُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ ۚ
وَٱللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِإِيمَٰنِكُم ۚ بَعْضُكُم مِّنۢ
بَعْضٍ ۚ فَٱنكِحُوهُنَّ بِإِذْنِ أَهْلِهِنَّ
وَءَاتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ مُحْصَنَٰتٍ ۚ
غَيْرَ مُسَٰفِحَٰتٍ وَلَا مُتَّخِذَٰتِ أَخْدَانٍ
فَإِذَآ أُحْصِنَّ فَإِنْ أَتَيْنَ بِفَٰحِشَةٍ فَعَلَيْهِنَّ
نِصْفُ مَا عَلَى ٱلْمُحْصَنَٰتِ مِنَ ٱلْعَذَابِ ۚ
ذَٰلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِىَ ٱلْعَنَتَ مِنكُمْ ۚ وَأَن
تَصْبِرُوا۟ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ
﴿٢٥﴾ يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ وَيَهْدِيَكُمْ
سُنَنَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ وَيَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ ۗ
وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٦﴾ وَٱللَّهُ يُرِيدُ أَن
يَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَيُرِيدُ ٱلَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ
ٱلشَّهَوَٰتِ أَن تَمِيلُوا۟ مَيْلًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٢٧﴾
يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ أَن يُخَفِّفَ عَنكُمْ ۚ وَخُلِقَ
ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ ضَعِيفًا ﴿٢٨﴾

And as for those of you who, owing to circumstances, are not in a position to marry believing free women, let them marry believing maidens from among those whom you rightfully possess, God knows very well all about your faith; each one of you is [equally] a part of the same wholeness. Marry them, then, with their people's leave, and give them their dowries fairly [and honorably] - being women whom you have in honest wedlock, not in fornication, nor as secret love-companions. And when they are married, and thereafter become guilty of shameful conduct, they shall be liable to half the penalty to which free women are liable [in such cases]. Such a provision [allowing to marry slave girls] is for those of you who fear a burdensome pressure, but it is much better to persevere in patience [and to abstain from such marriages]; and God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious. God wants to make [all this] clear to you, and to guide you to the [righteous] ways of life of those who preceded you, and to turn towards you in His mercy, and God is All-knowing, All-wise. And God wants to turn to you in His mercy, whereas those who follow [only] their own lusts want you to deviate tremendously from the right path. God wants to lighten your burdens, for the human being has been created with certain weaknesses. [4:25-28]

The first of the above verses states several essential principles of Islam as a divine message in its totality, in addition to its particular indication with regard to family affairs. First is the full equality of slaves and free people as human beings, a principle which is

basic for the whole Islamic stand that opposes slavery in principle and sets a comprehensive plan to terminate it gradually through a set of serious transitional changes. Second, is the clear principle and rule that a sexual relation with a female slave is allowed only on the basis of a legitimate marriage and according to its legal requirements: *"Marry them, then, with their people's leave, and give them their dowries fairly [and honorably] - being women whom you have in honest wedlock, not in fornication, nor as secret love-companions."* Such slave women have to be consequently included in the maximum number of wives permitted for cases of qualified -but discouraged- polygyny [see the previously mentioned verse 4:3, and the commentary on it.]This conception of the Quran, that can be supported by the life of the Prophet, may be contrary to a dominant view and historical practices, but it is obvious from the above mentioned Quranic verses, as well as from others.

However, as the Islamic principles and comprehensive plan aim to bring slavery gradually to an end, the above verse states thirdly that one who may marry a slave girl to get relieved from a burdensome pressure of a biological need has to expect other problems, since the man in such a case may not know of the environment in which the slave girl was raised. Slavery - especially in early Islam when the comprehensive plan to abolish it was not yet implemented - had had unfavorable psychological and behavioral effects on the female slaves, and thus they could become more liable to temptation and failure. The Islamic justice considers their difficulties, and states that only half of the penalty of a free woman for a shameful conduct has to be inflicted in the case of a slave woman who commits the same conduct. As such moral weaknesses have to be kept in mind, and slavery as a whole is against the principles of Islam, *"it is much better to persevere in patience"* rather than to run the risk of marrying a woman about whose background there is no sufficient information. Male and female slaves can naturally marry among themselves during the transitional period, until slavery is abolished and all slaves are liberated.

Such a consideration of the short-term and the long-term, of the principles and the comprehensive plan to make the principles gradually effective, of the goals and the transition, are made clear to people by the divine guidance which represents the culmination and termination of God's messages to humanity. They are essential to secure an implementation which becomes compatible with the human individual and social circumstances, avoiding the traps of hastiness, ambiguity, formality, crudeness and short-sightedness which can lead to fatal errors and completely defeats the purpose, especially since there will not be another divine message to put the followers of the earlier one on the right track. The last message of God clarifies how His guidance is harmonious with human nature, since He is the One who has created the human being and has sent down the message and the Book: *"God wants to make [His message] clear to you, and to guide you to the [righteous] ways of life of those before you, and to turn towards you in His mercy, for God is All-knowing, All-wise. And God does want to turn to you in His mercy, whereas those who follow [only] their own lusts want you to deviate tremendously from the right path. God wants to lighten your burdens, since a human being is created with certain weaknesses"* [4:26-28], *"And so set your face [and direct your whole-self] steadfastly towards the [one ever-true] faith, in all its purity, that comes in accordance with the human nature originated by God [the Creator]; nothing can [contradictorily] change God's creation; this is the [one] ever-true faith; but most people know not"* [30:30].

...and consort with them [your wives] in a goodly manner; and if you feel averse to them, it may well be that you feel averse to something in which God may yet set much good. [4:19]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُواْ لَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمۡ أَن تَرِثُواْ ٱلنِّسَآءَ
كَرۡهٗاۖ وَلَا تَعۡضُلُوهُنَّ لِتَذۡهَبُواْ بِبَعۡضِ
مَآ ءَاتَيۡتُمُوهُنَّ إِلَّآ أَن يَأۡتِينَ بِفَٰحِشَةٖ
مُّبَيِّنَةٖۚ وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِٱلۡمَعۡرُوفِۚ فَإِن
كَرِهۡتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَىٰٓ أَن تَكۡرَهُواْ شَيۡـٔٗا
وَيَجۡعَلَ ٱللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيۡرٗا كَثِيرٗا ١٩

And [you ought to] marry the single from among you and [this includes] your male and female slaves who are righteous and fit [for marriage]. If they are poor, God will grant them sufficiently out of His bounty; and God is Boundless [in His Grace], All-knowing.
And as for those who are unable to marry, let them live in continence until God enriches them out of His bounty. And if any of those whom you rightfully possess seeks a deed of manumission, write it out for them if you are aware of any good in them, and offer [to help them in obtaining their freedom] of that which belongs [initially] to God which He has granted you. And do not force your [slave] girls into prostitution while they desire to live in chastity, seeking the fleeting pleasures of this wordly life. And whosoever forces them [in this way] then surely, after being forced to do so, God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious. [24:32-33]

وَأَنكِحُواْ ٱلۡأَيَـٰمَىٰ مِنكُمۡ وَٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ مِنۡ
عِبَادِكُمۡ وَإِمَآئِكُمۡۚ إِن يَكُونُواْ فُقَرَآءَ
يُغۡنِهِمُ ٱللَّهُ مِن فَضۡلِهِۦۗ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ
عَلِيمٞ ٣٢ وَلۡيَسۡتَعۡفِفِ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَجِدُونَ
نِكَاحًا حَتَّىٰ يُغۡنِيَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ مِن فَضۡلِهِۦۗ
وَٱلَّذِينَ يَبۡتَغُونَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ مِمَّا مَلَكَتۡ
أَيۡمَٰنُكُمۡ فَكَاتِبُوهُمۡ إِنۡ عَلِمۡتُمۡ فِيهِمۡ
خَيۡرٗاۖ وَءَاتُوهُم مِّن مَّالِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّذِيٓ
ءَاتَىٰكُمۡۚ وَلَا تُكۡرِهُواْ فَتَيَٰتِكُمۡ عَلَى
ٱلۡبِغَآءِ إِنۡ أَرَدۡنَ تَحَصُّنٗا لِّتَبۡتَغُواْ عَرَضَ
ٱلۡحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنۡيَاۚ وَمَن يُكۡرِههُّنَّ فَإِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ مِنۢ بَعۡدِ إِكۡرَٰهِهِنَّ غَفُورٞ رَّحِيمٞ ٣٣

The above verse urges the holder of (a) male or female slave(s) who seek(s) a legal deed of manumission or emancipation in return for a certain payment, to write out for him/her/them such an agreement and help him/her/them by all means, practically and financially, to become free, especially when one knows of some good in the slave. According to the Quran, and the juristic inference from it, helping the slave to become free is an individual and social obligation, and the slave ought to be allowed to work and earn money legitimately to pay for his/her freedom. Besides, not only the one who rightfully holds the slave, but also the whole society represented in the state authority and the public treasury, have to fulfill this obligation, and the one who rightfully holds the slave can

renounce some of this obligation in such a case. The Quran here reminds the individual and the society that the wealth they have belongs initially to God who has created the whole universe and its resources, and any individual or society is only entrusted by God with the wealth and has to deal in it through investment, exchange or consumption according to God's guidance. Resources and assets granted by God to human individuals and societies represent a collective responsibility, and do not allow absolute and indefinite rights of the holder.

If the early part of the second verse urges that a slave who desires emancipation in return for a payment has to be helped by all means, the latter part warns against tempting or pressuring a slave girl to get money for the holder through prostitution, whether this is merely intended to supplement the wealth of the holder or aims to provide the necessary payment for her manumission. This explicitly indicates that slavery does not allow the holder to have sexual rights or authority over the slave girl by any means; also the previous verse [6:32] clearly mentions that marriage is the only legitimate sexual relation for slaves and free persons as well. In addition to all this, the warning against forcing girls to earn money through unchastity may be relevant to free girls as well, since exaggerated dowries, required homes and furniture and other marriage expenses become rigid conditions for marriage and may push the girl *"to gain some of the fleeting pleasures of this world life"* whether in preparation for any future marriage or as a substitute for it.

Men have to support, sustain and take full care of women, according to what God has given of advantages [and consequently responsibilities] one over the other, and what they have to spend [on the family] out of their possessions. Righteous women are the truly devout ones, who guard their unseen private behavior as God has [required to be and only watched over by him]. And as for those women whose recalcitrance and offensiveness you have reason to fear, admonish them, and refrain from any contact with them, and beat them [if this becomes unavoidable and fair to prevent very serious harm caused by them against themselves or others]; but if they want to keep you company, do not try in any way to be unfair or harmful to them; God is All-high, All-great. And if you fear a breach between a [married] couple, bring forth an arbiter from his people and an arbiter from her people; if they want to set things right, God may bring about their reconciliation; surely God is All-knowing, All-aware. [4:34-35]

ٱلرِّجَالُ قَوَّٰمُونَ
عَلَى ٱلنِّسَآءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ ٱللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ
بَعْضٍ وَبِمَآ أَنفَقُوا۟ مِنْ أَمْوَٰلِهِمْ ۚ
فَٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتُ قَٰنِتَٰتٌ حَٰفِظَٰتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا
حَفِظَ ٱللَّهُ ۚ وَٱلَّٰتِى تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ
فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَٱهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِى ٱلْمَضَاجِعِ
وَٱضْرِبُوهُنَّ ۖ فَإِنْ أَطَعْنَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا۟
عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيًّا كَبِيرًا
(٣٤) وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ شِقَاقَ بَيْنِهِمَا فَٱبْعَثُوا۟
حَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهِۦ وَحَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهَآ ۚ إِن
يُرِيدَآ إِصْلَٰحًا يُوَفِّقِ ٱللَّهُ بَيْنَهُمَآ ۗ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا خَبِيرًا (٣٥)

The first of the above verses makes it clear that the man's relation to his wife and his family is one of responsibility, not superiority. God has disposed on women the physical burden of carrying a child for nine months, delivering it, nursing it and at most times raising it until that child can fulfill his/her needs independently *"... his mother bore him going through strain after strain, and his [/her] weaning [or going beyond the stage of utter dependence on the mother] lasts two years"* [31:14], *"In pain did his mother bear him[/her the human being], and in pain did she give birth to him[/her]"* [46:15]. As the man is physically released from this burden, he has to be the person who is responsible for supporting, sustaining and taking full care of the wife and the family. This is thus the man's legal obligation, but only because of this mere physical advantage, and not due to any gender privilege. As long as a man is fulfilling his legal and moral responsibilities towards his wife and his family, he deserves love and respect, not superiority and authoritativeness. Also, since the Quran distributes the rights and responsibilities *"according to what God has given of advantages [and consequently responsibilities] one over the other, and what they have to spend [on the family] out of their possessions,"* when the wife has more advantages over the husband in certain given circumstances [e.g. chronic disease....etc.], and she has the financial responsibility towards the family needs, she is the one who should support, sustain and take full care of the family. When both spouses share the financial responsibility, they both have a joint- situation in relation to the fulfillment of the family needs.

The Quran also states *"and the rights of the wives [in relation to their husbands] are equal to their obligations [towards their husbands], but men [in their obligations towards their wives] stand a step further"* [2:228]. Once more, the step further is not superiority but more responsibility. A wife's shortcoming in her responsibility towards her husband cannot provide an excuse for him to fail in or neglect his responsibility in supporting, sustaining and caring for his wife and family. Ibn Abbas, the gifted and brilliant interpreter of the Quran, reportedly interpreted "the step further" as more obligations on the man "so that he may put pressure on himself and deal with women materially and morally with generosity." The prominent commentator on the Quran Ibn 'Atiyya, as quoted by al-Qurtubi, described this interpretation of Ibn Abbas as excellent and outstanding. In any case, as previously stated, such a responsibility by no means justify authoritativeness in conducting the family life, since this has to be conducted by the husband and wife both "*through mutual consent and counsel*" [2:233].

Although there are men and women who are truly devout and guard their unseen private behavior as it should be guarded according to God's guidance, there are others whose surliness, recalcitrance and offensiveness become obvious and the consequences of their behavior are reasonably feared. The verse indicates three ways to deal with three different degrees of surliness, recalcitrance and offensiveness from women: advising them, refraining from any contact with them in bed and beating them. These are the three measures that are to be determined according to the degree of the act, not for mere repetition or continuation of the same kind of it. No beating or physical reaction can be justified merely for a repetition of what deserves only advising or avoiding contact in bed. The only situation when a physical intervention by the husband can be justified is when the wife's surliness and offensiveness takes the physical form of causing harm to herself, the husband or the children (i.e. by using a weapon, setting fire, etc). In such a suddenly-emerging case

no advice or avoidance in bed can work, and a physical intervention has to be practiced to stop the action. The Prophet in his sermon during his "Farewell Pilgrimage" indicated that only "a flagrant shameful conduct" of a wife may allow a physical reaction from the husband, and the commentators on that tradition and the jurists restricted this form of punishment to a very light and symbolic action such as beating with a "*siwak,*" a small instrument like a toothpick used for cleaning the teeth. The shameful deeds referred to here are naturally different from adultery or any other offense which should be inquired into, tried and punished by the state authorities.

Since the Quran and the Prophet during all his life have repeatedly emphasized men's obligation to treat women justly and kindly and warned against any moral or physical offense against them, even in cases of war, it may be understandable from the mere legal point of view to allow such a physical reaction from the husband in order to meet a serious discord that may emerge and put the physical safety of the whole family at risk. If the husband fails to prove such obliging circumstances as a response to the wife's complaint to the concerned authorities or in court about the husband's use of physical force against her, she can ask for compensation of any moral or physical damages caused by the husband's offense, and can also ask for a divorce. The wife is allowed to act in the same way to meet any threat for the safety of the family that emerges from an act of violence on the part of the husband.

To deal with such a wife's recalcitrance or any breach of family relations in an early stage, the Quran advises that an arbiter from each spouse's side ought to be brought forth to try to set things right, and their efforts for reconciliation would be supported by God's help since He is "All-knowing, All-aware" of sincere and fair efforts, and reward them with success. One should also keep in mind, however, that the general principles of Islamic justice do not allow a person to be a party in a dispute and to take the law into his/her hands, unless it is a case of proper self-defense. It is the state authorities that enforce the law, not any parties involved in the conflict even the one against which injustice has been committed [e.g. see verse about penalties of theft, adultery 5:38; 24:2]. No initiation of the use of force is allowed, and force can only be used to defend Muslims against initiated use of force [e.g. 2:190, 194].

And if you fear that you may not act justly towards the orphans, marry such women as are lawful and good to you, two or three or four; but if you fear that you may not be able to treat them with equal fairness, then only one, or from those whom you rightfully possess; it will then be more likely that you will not deviate from what is affordable and fair. [4:3]

وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تُقْسِطُوا۟ فِى ٱلْيَتَـٰمَىٰ
فَٱنكِحُوا۟ مَا طَابَ لَكُم مِّنَ ٱلنِّسَآءِ
مَثْنَىٰ وَثُلَـٰثَ وَرُبَـٰعَ ۖ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا
تَعْدِلُوا۟ فَوَٰحِدَةً أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَـٰنُكُمْ ۚ
ذَٰلِكَ أَدْنَىٰٓ أَلَّا تَعُولُوا۟ ﴿٣﴾

The logical relation between *"fear of not acting justly towards the orphans"* and *"allowing marrying women as are lawful and good to you: two or three or four"* has led

to different attempts for explanation among the earlier and later commentators. Al-Tabari approved of what Sa'id ibn Jubayr and Qatadah and other successors of the Companions of the Prophet had reportedly understood about this relation, which is in Muhammad Asad's words: "Just as you are, rightly, fearful of offending against the interests of orphans, you must [feel the same and] apply the same careful consideration to the interests and rights of the woman whom you intend to marry."

Another interpretation related to the Prophet' wife 'A'isha saw the verse as referring to a guardian of an orphan girl who may like to marry her, but who fears that he may not observe justice and honesty in dealing with her as a wife or with her property because of his initial privileged situation as her guardian, and advice is given to such a man to look for other women to marry, rather than such an orphan girl [see also the verse 4:127]. One may add here that the verse may be referring to a case of exceptional increase of orphan girls - probably as a result of war or any other reason, especially when we bear in mind that it was revealed after the battle of Uhud. In such a case marrying more than one wife may have been a temporary situation for this emerging problem, and thus it is a conditional permission, not a general principle. The verse sharply states: *"but if you have reason to fear that you may not be able to treat them with equal fairness, then only one.....; this will more likely let you avoid what is overburdening and unfair"*. A later verse in the same sura emphasizes the impossibility of absolute equal fairness: *"And it will not be within your power to treat your wives [when they are more than one] with equal fairness, however keen you may be to do so; yet do not allow yourselves to be altogether partial and to incline towards one, leaving the other [or others] in a state close to suspension [between having and not having a husband]. But if you set things right, and are conscious of Him, God is indeed All-forgiving, Most Gracious"* [4:129]. Although the verse may be understood on the one hand as opening a door for a "possible and workable" equal fairness in the treatment of more than one wife and thus going a step further in allowing polygamy, one should not ignore on the other hand that the verse underlines the psychological basis of human nature: an expected unfairness which cannot be put aside in many times and practices. Accordingly, it is wise to save oneself such an insecure risk, unless it becomes socially necessary in order to deal with a more serious injustice when the number of marriageable women without marriage considerably exceeds the number of marriageable men. Practically no woman would accept being a second wife in a healthy and fair society, unless the chance for her to be the only wife cannot be secured.

Besides the above points, the verse includes in the status of legal marriage with its conditions and consequences those whom one "rightfully possesses", or the slave-girls whose existence was accepted by the Islamic law transitionally providing rules that restrict sources of slavery, liberate existing slaves, and secure a humane treatment for those who may not be liberated. Such a policy meant to gradually achieve the goal of fulfilling the Islamic principles of complete freedom and equality in the Muslim society. This can be supported by the verse 25 of the same sura that deals with *"marrying believing maidens from among those whom you rightfully possess"* and teaches: *"Marry them, then, with their people's leave, and give them their dowries fairly [and honorably], being women who give themselves in honest wedlock, not in fornication, nor as secret love-companions"* [4:25]. This clearly indicates that sexual relations with female slaves are allowed only in

a legitimate marriage that fulfills the legal requirements of Shari'a. This may be supported by a quick unelaborated, but logically sound hint attributed to Muhammad Abduh by Rashid Rida from memory: that one should also not exceed marrying four slaves [*Tafsir al-Manar:* IV:350]. However, sexual relations with female slaves of unlimited number just on the grounds of slavery without a legitimate marriage cannot be explicitly and strongly supported by the texts of the Quran and Sunna. Accordingly, "concubinage is ruled out ... contrary to [what may be] the popular view and the practice of many Muslims in the past centuries" - as Muhammad Asad has stated rightfully in "*The Message of the Quran,*" notes on verses 4:3, 25.

DIVORCE

For those who take an oath that they will not approach their wives, there shall be a wait of four months; if they revert God is All- forgiving, Most Gracious. But if they resolve on divorce, surely God is All-hearing, All- knowing. [2:226-227]

لِّلَّذِينَ يُؤْلُونَ مِن نِّسَآئِهِمْ تَرَبُّصُ أَرْبَعَةِ
أَشْهُرٍ ۖ فَإِن فَآءُو فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ
رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٢٢٦﴾ وَإِنْ عَزَمُوا۟ ٱلطَّلَٰقَ فَإِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٢٧﴾

Before Islam, the Arabs were used to some humiliating and harmful practices with their wives, such as taking the oath to abstain from approaching them, or saying to them: *"You are as unlawful to me as my mother"* [58:2], and thus the poor wives became suspended indefinitely; since they were neither fully married nor formally divorced. The Quran discouraged and restricted taking such an oath of abstention from approaching the wife in two ways: on the one hand, forbidding taking *"oaths in the name of God [frequently and hastily pronounced to thus] become an obstacle to acts of virtue and righteousness and reconciliation of people,"* stating that *"God will not hold against you a slip in your oaths, but He will hold you responsible [only] for what your hearts have earned"* [2:224-225, also 5:89], and on the other hand, appointing a maximum period of four months for one who takes an oath of abstinence from sexual contact with his wife, after which he must either revert on and abandon the oath, or go through with divorce, so that the wife may not be kept indefinitely suspended. In the more serious case when the husband says to the wife; "You are as unlawful to me as my mother", a severe penalty is decided for reversion as a deterrence from such behavior that is humiliating and harmful for the wife: *"they have to set free a slave before the two of them touch one another .... But whosever finds not the means[to do this], then let him fast two successive months before the two of them touch one another. And if any man is not able to [do this], then let him feed sixty poor persons..."* [58:3-4]. The whole practice is condemned by the Quran: *"Those who say to their wives, 'You are as unlawful to me as my mother' [should bear in mind that] they are not truly their mothers; their mothers are only those who gave them birth, and they but utter a saying that runs counter to reason and is false"* [58:2, also 33:4].

وَ ٱلْمُطَلَّقَٰتُ
يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنفُسِهِنَّ ثَلَٰثَةَ قُرُوٓءٍ ۚ وَ لَا
يَحِلُّ لَهُنَّ أَن يَكْتُمْنَ مَا خَلَقَ ٱللَّهُ فِىٓ
أَرْحَامِهِنَّ إِن كُنَّ يُؤْمِنَّ بِٱللَّهِ وَ ٱلْيَوْمِ
ٱلْءَاخِرِ ۚ وَ بُعُولَتُهُنَّ أَحَقُّ بِرَدِّهِنَّ فِى
ذَٰلِكَ إِنْ أَرَادُوٓا۟ إِصْلَٰحًا ۚ وَ لَهُنَّ مِثْلُ
ٱلَّذِى عَلَيْهِنَّ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ وَ لِلرِّجَالِ
عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرَجَةٌ ۗ وَ ٱللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ
(٢٢٨) ٱلطَّلَٰقُ مَرَّتَانِ ۖ فَإِمْسَاكٌۢ
بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ تَسْرِيحٌۢ بِإِحْسَٰنٍ ۗ وَ لَا
يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَن تَأْخُذُوا۟ مِمَّآ ءَاتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ
شَيْـًٔا إِلَّآ أَن يَخَافَآ أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ
ٱللَّهِ ۖ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ ٱللَّهِ
فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا فِيمَا ٱفْتَدَتْ بِهِۦ ۗ
تِلْكَ حُدُودُ ٱللَّهِ فَلَا تَعْتَدُوهَا ۚ وَ مَن
يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ ٱللَّهِ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ
(٢٢٩) فَإِن طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا تَحِلُّ لَهُۥ مِنۢ بَعْدُ
حَتَّىٰ تَنكِحَ زَوْجًا غَيْرَهُۥ ۗ فَإِن طَلَّقَهَا
فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَآ أَن يَتَرَاجَعَآ إِن ظَنَّآ
أَن يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ

And divorced women shall undergo, without remarrying, a waiting term of three menstrual periods [or three inter-menstrual periods]; and it is not lawful for them to conceal what God may have created in their wombs, if they believe in God and the Last Day. And during this period, their ex-husbands have a precedence to resume the marriage over others [who may want to propose to the ex-wife] if they desire reconciliation [and the ex- wife agrees]. And the rights of the wives [in relation to their husbands] are equal to their obligations [towards the husbands], in accordance with fairness; but men stand a step further [than such a mere equality of rights and obligations, since they ought to be more considerate], and God is All-mighty, All- wise.

A divorce [of the same wife] can be decided twice, and then the marriage must either be resumed in fairness or dissolved in a goodly manner. And it is not lawful for you, [men], to take back anything that you have ever given to your wives, unless the couple has reason to fear that they would be unable to keep within the bounds set by God [when the marriage continues], so if you do indeed have reason to fear that the couple would be unable to keep [their marriage and family life] within the bounds set by God, there is no blame on either of them for what the wife may give up [to her husband] in order to get herself out of the marriage. These are the bounds set by God; do not, then, transgress them, and those who transgress the bounds set by God are the evil-doers.

And if he [a husband] divorces her [his wife for the third time, and thus the divorce becomes irrevocable] she shall thereafter not be lawful to him [for marriage], until she marries another husband and if it happens that the latter divorces her, in such a case, there is no blame on either of them if they reunite, provided that they both feel that they will be able to keep

within the bounds set by God. These are the bounds of God, which He makes clear to people that have knowledge.
And when you divorce women, and they have reached the end of their waiting-term, then either retain them in a fair manner, or release them in a fair manner. But do not keep them against their will in order to hurt [them], and whosoever does so merely wrongs his own self. And do not take [these] messages of God frivolously, and remember God's blessings upon you, and the Book and the wisdom He has sent down to you in order to admonish you thereby; and remain conscious of God, and know that God has full knowledge of everything.
And when you divorce women, and they have reached the end of their waiting-term, do not hinder them from marrying other men, if they have agreed together in a fair manner. This is an admonition for every one of you who believes in God and the Last Day; that is the most virtuous and righteous [way] for you [in dealing with your divorcees], and God knows whereas you know not. [2:228-232]

اللَّهِ يُبَيِّنُهَا لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٣٠﴾ وَ إِذَا
طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَبَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ
فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ سَرِّحُوهُنَّ
بِمَعْرُوفٍ ۚ وَ لَا تُمْسِكُوهُنَّ ضِرَارًا
لِّتَعْتَدُوا ۚ وَ مَن يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ
نَفْسَهُ ۚ وَ لَا تَتَّخِذُوا آيَاتِ اللَّهِ
هُزُوًا ۚ وَ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ
وَمَا أَنزَلَ عَلَيْكُم مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ وَ الْحِكْمَةِ
يَعِظُكُم بِهِ ۚ وَ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَ اعْلَمُوا أَنَّ
اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٣١﴾ وَ إِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ
النِّسَاءَ فَبَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ أَن
يَنكِحْنَ أَزْوَاجَهُنَّ إِذَا تَرَاضَوْا بَيْنَهُم
بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ يُوعَظُ بِهِ مَن كَانَ
مِنكُمْ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَ الْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۗ
ذَٰلِكُمْ أَزْكَىٰ لَكُمْ وَ أَطْهَرُ ۗ وَ اللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ
وَ أَنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٣٢﴾

Divorce may be sometimes unavoidable when a couple proves to be incompatible, and thus the essence of family life is missing, even though each one of the couple individually may be a good person. While Islam accepts this human fact in principle and does not force the continuation of a marriage that has failed to produce a harmonious togetherness, it restricts any hastiness in deciding divorce. However, when a divorce is realized to be inevitable, then Islam secures its fairness and smoothness.

Attempts to maintain the marriage are achieved through several steps, beginning by urging all the concerned parties to refrain from reaching the serious decision of divorce for just a casual situation of disharmony; *"And consort with them [your wives] in a goodly manner, and if you feel averse to them, it may well be that you may feel averse to something in which God may yet set much good"* [4:19], *"But if they keep well your company, do not try in any way to be unfair or harmful to them"* [4:34]. The Prophet teaches that divorce is the most hated to God among that He has permitted [reported by Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah and al-Hakim]. Attempts for reconciliation and arbitration from the couple, their families and their close friends as well as a certain specialist agency of local government should precede any thinking about divorce [4:35], and this may be considered a mandatory prerequisite for divorce according to some jurists.

When divorce is thought to be unavoidable in spite of all efforts for reconciliation, it has to be decided, according to a Prophet's tradition reported by Ibn Hanbal, when the

wife is free from her menstrual period with all its physical and psychological pressures and discomforts for both the wife and the husband. Another tradition of the Prophet indicates that a divorce should not be decided at a time of overwhelming fury or lack of sound thinking and stability [reported by Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, and al-Hakim], and two witnesses are required to validate it according to some juristic understanding of the verse 65:2.

When a legitimate divorce is decided, there is a waiting period that the divorced woman has to undergo before remarrying, so as to allow another chance for reconciliation with the ex-husband and resuming the marriage, and to determine whether the ex-wife is pregnant from the marriage which was terminated. If the divorcee's pregnancy is known at the time of the divorce, or becomes known during the waiting period, then she cannot remarry before she delivers her baby. For a divorcee who is not pregnant, this waiting-term is determined by the Quran as three menstrual periods according to some jurists, and as three inter-menstrual periods according to others, because the word used in the verse may mean both. As the waiting term may be prolonged if the divorcee feels the early signs of her pregnancy just after the divorce and has to wait several months before remarrying and she may feel this to be disadvantageous for her, she is still urged to reveal the fact as she is the first person who would know it, *"for it is not lawful for them to conceal what God may have created in their wombs, if they [truly] believe in God and the Last Day"*. The child may, after all, be a new factor that lets the marriage survive.

In any case, both ex-spouses are urged to seriously reconsider the divorce decision during the waiting term. Ex-husbands are persuaded to take the initiative of resuming the marriage and family life: *"and during this [waiting term], their husbands are entitled to resume the marriage"* since it is the man who usually proposes to the woman initially. However, the divorced woman can always decide whether to agree or refuse to re-unite with her ex-husband, even if he expresses his will in resuming the marital relations during the waiting term, or after its expiry when the divorced woman is still single.

If a marriage is resumed after a divorce, it cannot survive an unlimited number of divorces if other insoluble differences emerge. Therefore, another restriction for divorce is that it is allowed only for the same couple three times. After two divorces, either the family life proves to be improving and progressing more fairly and conveniently for both spouses, or a third divorce would be irrevocable. A new marriage between the former couple is only possible if the divorced woman marries another man after the end of her waiting term, and it happens that she becomes divorced from this husband. These three permitted divorces have to fulfill the legal requirements of being decided separately with some suitable time in between, not in one statement, since exhausting the three chances in one moment contradicts all the safeguards against haste and the purpose of allowing one chance after another for resuming the marriage and allowing the family to survive. Furthermore, the divorcee's marriage to another man after an irrevocable divorce from the ex-husband should be a real and serious one, not just a formal trick to allow her to go back to the same ex-husband. As the previous marriage would have been tested twice before and proved to be unworkable, it may be better for both parties if the woman, and probably also the man, undergoes a different experience to know more precisely in the light of comparison whether the common grounds of the marriage are more solid and strong than the differences or not.

While the husband is allowed to terminate the marriage by his personal statement, the woman has to go to court to get her divorce. This is because the ex-husband's personal statement of divorce implies his admission of all his responsibilities to support his ex-wife and their children and his readiness to fulfill them. On the other hand, when the wife seeks divorce, the legal and financial consequences of alimony, custody of the children and any other of the ex-husband's obligations needs to be enforced by a court-decision, since the ex-husband has not accepted implicitly or explicitly such obligations for he has not been the one who has initiated the divorce. He naturally has the right, and should be entitled to argue that his ex-wife has her failures and violations and consequently she ought to be deprived from some financial rights or from the custody of the children. In such circumstances, which are not rarely expected when the woman initiates a divorce, a court decision is needed to settle the dispute and the post-divorce matters.

However, it would not be against the Islamic legal principles if it is stated by a procedural law of a contemporary Muslim state, that a divorce and its legal consequences are only officially binding for all parties when decided by a court or approved by it. However, both parties can always agree on all the details out of court, and hence the approval of the court in such a case would be merely a formality. A woman may release her ex-husband of his obligations fully or partially if she wants to initiate a divorce on the grounds of lack of emotional or behavioral harmony without complaining of any unfairness or mistreatment on his side: *"and so if you do indeed have cause to fear that they [both spouses] would be unable to keep [their marriage and family life] within the bounds set by God, there is no blame on both of them for what the wife may give up [to her husband] in order to get herself out of the marriage"*. The Prophet had such a ruling when a wife admitted to him that she had nothing against her husband morally or legally, but she could not feel attracted to him. She always felt a sense of guilt about the matter as she considered such feelings on her side to be unfair and ungrateful, and she could not enjoy a permanent family life under such emotional pressure.

If divorce is restricted morally, legally and procedurally to avoid any hastiness on the one hand, it should be secured to go fairly and smoothly without injustice if it becomes unavoidable on the other hand. Hindering a divorcee, by any means from being on her own or remarrying after the end of her waiting term is harmful and transgressive *"since whosoever does so merely wrongs his own self. And do not take [these] messages of God frivolously ... and hinder them not from marrying other men, if they have agreed together in a fair manner."* Men are educated to observe and secure the rights of divorced women morally and spiritually; a level which is highly above and deeply beyond any legal provisions and safeguards *"and remember God's blessings upon you, and the Book and the wisdom He has sent down to you in order to admonish you thereby, and remain conscious of God, and know that God has full knowledge of everything.... This is an admonition for every one of you who believes in God and the Last Day; that is the most virtuous and righteous [way] for you [in dealing with your divorcees], and God knows, whereas you know not."*

And the mothers may nurse their children for two whole years, for such as desire to complete the period of nursing, and this who has begotten the child must provide in a fair manner for [their] sustenance and clothing. No human being shall be burdened with more than he [/she] is well able to bear; neither a mother shall be made to suffer because of her child, nor - because of his child- he who has begotten it shall be made to suffer. And the same obligation is upon the [father's] heir. And if both [parents] decide, by mutual consent and consultation, upon weaning the child, nothing is to be held against either. And if you want to find a wet nurse for your children, nothing is held against you, provided you [both parties in such a case] hand over fairly whatever [obligation] you have [committed yourselves] towards one another; and remain conscious of God, and know that God sees all that you do. [2:233]

وَ ٱلْوَٰلِدَٰتُ
يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَٰدَهُنَّ حَوْلَيْنِ كَامِلَيْنِ ۖ لِمَنْ
أَرَادَ أَن يُتِمَّ ٱلرَّضَاعَةَ ۚ وَ عَلَى ٱلْمَوْلُودِ
لَهُۥ رِزْقُهُنَّ وَ كِسْوَتُهُنَّ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ لَا
تُكَلَّفُ نَفْسٌ إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ۚ لَا تُضَآرَّ وَٰلِدَةٌۢ
بِوَلَدِهَا وَ لَا مَوْلُودٌ لَّهُۥ بِوَلَدِهِۦ ۚ وَ عَلَى
ٱلْوَارِثِ مِثْلُ ذَٰلِكَ ۗ فَإِنْ أَرَادَا فِصَالًا
عَن تَرَاضٍ مِّنْهُمَا وَ تَشَاوُرٍ فَلَا جُنَاحَ
عَلَيْهِمَا ۗ وَ إِنْ أَرَدتُّمْ أَن تَسْتَرْضِعُوٓا۟
أَوْلَٰدَكُمْ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا سَلَّمْتُم مَّآ
ءَاتَيْتُم بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ وَ ٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ
وَ ٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٢٣٣﴾

Just as the Quran cares about the divorced women, without sacrificing the rights of the divorced men, it cares about the weak and helpless outcome of the marriage: the children. Children may face negligence or injustice from either or both of the ex-spouses who may wish to put their past of failure behind their backs to look forward to a future of success and happiness. The verses explain that a baby should be nursed for the period of time that he/she needs with a maximum time to secure the different interests of the baby and the parents, whose views and interests may be contradictory and may lead to disputes in cases of divorce. The mother may try to hasten the baby's weaning in order to release herself from nursing and to get more money for feeding the child from the father, while he may like to delay the weaning so as to escape some costs. The Quran here protects the interests and rights of the baby who is not able to defend him/herself. The mother has no obligation to nurse the child, and she should get a fair maintenance for herself and her child, whether she is a wife or a divorcee [see also 65:5-6].

Although the above verse is related specifically to the estimation of the alimony and the needs of the divorced woman and the child that ought to be secured, it states significant principles of justice as it defines the obligation and the rights of different parties: "*No human being must be burdened with more than he [/she] is well able to bear: neither should a mother be made to suffer because of her child, nor he who has begotten it should suffer because of his child*". If the ex-husband dies, the alimony for the divorcee and the child has to be maintained in his bequest and provided by his heir.

Another principle is stated in the verse about weaning the child which applies to the whole family life: "*But if both [parents] decide, by mutual consent and counsel, upon*

weaning [the baby], nothing is to be held against either." Mutual consent and counsel together provide the basis for conducting the family affairs. Assuming the consent without discussing the matter together, or discussing a matter without reaching an agreement on it, are both unfair and cannot provide the requirements for a stable harmonious and happy family life. With regard to the specific case of weaning a baby in our times, it has to be based on the advice of a child health specialist or a pediatrician. Since nursing the baby is not legally the mother's obligation, another woman can nurse the baby and should be paid fairly for this by the father, and she is responsible for the child who has to be kept by her, and returned to the mother, safe and healthy.

لَّا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِن طَلَّقْتُمُ
ٱلنِّسَآءَ مَا لَمْ تَمَسُّوهُنَّ أَوْ تَفْرِضُوا۟ لَهُنَّ
فَرِيضَةً ۚ وَمَتِّعُوهُنَّ عَلَى ٱلْمُوسِعِ قَدَرُهُۥ
وَعَلَى ٱلْمُقْتِرِ قَدَرُهُۥ مَتَٰعًۢا
بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۖ حَقًّا عَلَى ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ
﴿٢٣٦﴾ وَإِن طَلَّقْتُمُوهُنَّ مِن قَبْلِ أَن
تَمَسُّوهُنَّ وَقَدْ فَرَضْتُمْ لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً فَنِصْفُ
مَا فَرَضْتُمْ إِلَّآ أَن يَعْفُونَ أَوْ يَعْفُوَا۟ ٱلَّذِى
بِيَدِهِۦ عُقْدَةُ ٱلنِّكَاحِ ۚ وَأَن تَعْفُوٓا۟ أَقْرَبُ
لِلتَّقْوَىٰ ۚ وَلَا تَنسَوُا۟ ٱلْفَضْلَ بَيْنَكُمْ ۚ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٢٣٧﴾

There is nothing held against you if you divorce women while as yet you have not touched them nor appointed a dowry for them; but [even in such a case] make provisions for them: the affluent according to his means, and the straitened according to his means; a fair [and affordable] provision; this is an obligation on the good-doers.
And if you divorce them before you have touched them, but after having already appointed a dowry for them, then half of this dowry [is due to them] unless they forgo their right or he, in whose hand is the marriage, forgoes his claim [to half of the dowry]; and to forgo what is due to you is nearer to God-consciousness. And forget not [to act with] grace towards one another. Surely, God sees all that you do. [2:236-237]

A marriage may have been contracted legally, without having existed physically, and for certain reasons the couple may then become divorced. The Quran allows such a divorce, because it may be better than continuing an unhappy marriage. The untouched divorcee has the legal right to half of her dowry if its amount has been agreed upon, as a compensation for the moral damage and distress which the failed marriage has caused her. However, the Quran urges the husband, or the man who has represented him in the marriage contract, to forgo his right to the other half of the dowry if the divorce is initiated by him. In the same way, the untouched wife is urged to forgo her right if she can do without it, and this would be particularly sensible and fair if she initiates the divorce. The Quran stresses here what it repeatedly teaches: that morality and God-consciousness go beyond legality, and that it should not only be fairness, but also grace that ought to conduct human relations, *"and to forgo what is due to you is nearer to God- consciousness. And forget not [to act with] grace towards one another ..."* If the amount of the dowry

had not been set when the marriage was agreed upon, then maintenance has to be provided to the untouched divorcee by fair discretion: *"the affluent according to his means and the straitened according to his means; a fair [and affordable] maintenance; this is an obligation on the good-doers."*

And there shall be for the divorced women a fair [and decent] provision; this is an obligation for all who are conscious of God. In this way, God makes clear unto you His messages, so that you might use your reason. [2:241-242]

وَلِلْمُطَلَّقَٰتِ
مَتَٰعٌۢ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۖ حَقًّا عَلَى ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ
﴿٢٤١﴾ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٢٤٢﴾

In addition to the obligation of providing a fair provision for the divorced woman during her waiting term, to meet her needs and the needs of her child or children as long as she is the custodian, the above verse indicates a general right for the divorcee: to be provided with a fair and comfortable provision without indicating a certain fixed period of time for such a right, nor a certain required cost; *"the affluent according to his means, and the straitened according to his means."* Some jurists (e.g al-Shafi'i, Abu Thawr, and al-Tabari) viewed this verse as an additional obligation on ex-husbands for all divorced women, whether they were touched or untouched, whether they had a fixed dowry or not, and whether they are free women or slaves. State authorities or courts can indicate more details such as the maximum period of time for this additional right, whether it should stop when the divorcee remarries, the needs which ought to be covered etc.

And if they [husband and wife] do separate, God shall provide for each of them what suffices out of His abundance, and God is indeed All-embracing, [Infinite, Boundless,] All-wise. [4:130]

وَإِن
يَتَفَرَّقَا يُغْنِ ٱللَّهُ كُلًّا مِّن سَعَتِهِۦ ۚ وَكَانَ
ٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٣٠﴾

O you who have attained to faith! If you marry believing women and then divorce them before you have touched, you have no waiting period whatsoever to reckon for them [so as to allow them a new marriage]; so make provisions for them and release them with kindliness. [33:49]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِذَا نَكَحْتُمُ
ٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ ثُمَّ طَلَّقْتُمُوهُنَّ مِن قَبْلِ أَن
تَمَسُّوهُنَّ فَمَا لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ عِدَّةٍ
تَعْتَدُّونَهَا ۖ فَمَتِّعُوهُنَّ وَسَرِّحُوهُنَّ
سَرَاحًا جَمِيلًا ﴿٤٩﴾

O Prophet! When you divorce women, divorce them with a view to the waiting term appointed for them, and count [accurately] this term, and

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِىُّ إِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ ٱلنِّسَآءَ
فَطَلِّقُوهُنَّ لِعِدَّتِهِنَّ وَأَحْصُوا۟ ٱلْعِدَّةَ ۖ

be conscious of God your Lord. Do not get them out of their homes, nor let them go forth [under pressure from others or misjudgement on their part], unless they commit a shameful conduct that is flagrant [or making her stay unworkable]. These are the bounds set by God, and any who transgresses the bounds set by God, does verily wrong his [/her] own self; you know not, perchance [after such a breach] God may well cause something new to come about.

Then, when they have reached the end of their waiting term, retain them in a fair manner, or do part from them in a fair manner, and let two persons of [known] probity from among you witness [the retaining of the marriage, and the divorce before in some views, and [always be aware that you] bear witness before God; thus are admonished all who believe in God and Last Day. And for whosoever is conscious of God, He [always] grants a way out [of a difficulty and distress], and He provides for him [/her] in a manner beyond all expectation. And whosoever places his [/her] trust in God, sufficient is He for him [/her]. Surely, God attains His purpose [or the purpose of the one who places his/her trust only in Him], and for everything God has appointed a due [term and] measure.

As for your women who are beyond the age of menstruation, if you are in doubt, and for women who have not menstruated as yet, their waiting term is three months. And those who are pregnant, their term is until they deliver their load. And whosoever is conscious of God, He will appoint for him [/her] of His command easiness. That is God's command, which He has sent down to you, and whosoever is conscious of God, He will acquit him [/her] of his [/her] wrong deeds, and will grant him [/her] a mighty reward.

Let the [divorced] women be accomodated living in the same manner as you are accomodated and live, in accordance to your means;

وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ رَبَّكُمْ ۖ لَا تُخْرِجُوهُنَّ مِنۢ
بُيُوتِهِنَّ وَلَا يَخْرُجْنَ إِلَّآ أَن يَأْتِينَ
بِفَٰحِشَةٍ مُّبَيِّنَةٍ ۚ وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ ٱللَّهِ ۚ
وَمَن يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ ٱللَّهِ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُۥ ۚ لَا
تَدْرِى لَعَلَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحْدِثُ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ أَمْرًا
﴿١﴾ فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ
بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ فَارِقُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ ۖ
وَأَشْهِدُواْ ذَوَىْ عَدْلٍ مِّنكُمْ وَأَقِيمُواْ
ٱلشَّهَٰدَةَ لِلَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ يُوعَظُ بِهِۦ مَن كَانَ
يُؤْمِنُ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ ۚ وَمَن يَتَّقِ
ٱللَّهَ يَجْعَل لَّهُۥ مَخْرَجًا ﴿٢﴾ وَيَرْزُقْهُ
مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ ۚ وَمَن يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى
ٱللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُۥ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بَٰلِغُ أَمْرِهِۦ ۚ
قَدْ جَعَلَ ٱللَّهُ لِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدْرًا ﴿٣﴾
وَٱلَّٰٓـِٔى يَئِسْنَ مِنَ ٱلْمَحِيضِ مِن نِّسَآئِكُمْ
إِنِ ٱرْتَبْتُمْ فَعِدَّتُهُنَّ ثَلَٰثَةُ أَشْهُرٍ وَٱلَّٰٓـِٔى
لَمْ يَحِضْنَ ۚ وَأُوْلَٰتُ ٱلْأَحْمَالِ أَجَلُهُنَّ
أَن يَضَعْنَ حَمْلَهُنَّ ۚ وَمَن يَتَّقِ ٱللَّهَ
يَجْعَل لَّهُۥ مِنْ أَمْرِهِۦ يُسْرًا ﴿٤﴾ ذَٰلِكَ أَمْرُ
ٱللَّهِ أَنزَلَهُۥٓ إِلَيْكُمْ ۚ وَمَن يَتَّقِ ٱللَّهَ
يُكَفِّرْ عَنْهُ سَيِّـَٔاتِهِۦ وَيُعْظِمْ لَهُۥٓ أَجْرًا
﴿٥﴾ أَسْكِنُوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ سَكَنتُم مِّن

and do not cause them harm so as to make pressures on them. And if it happens that they are with child, spend on them [to fulfill their needs] until they deliver their load, and if they suckle your [offspring], give them their [due] recompense, and discuss together your common matters to reach a settlement in a fair manner. And if you yourselves find it difficult [that the mother suckles her child], another woman may [suckle the child] for the father. Let the man of plenty spend out of his plenty, and let the man whose resources are restricted, spend according to what God has given him. God does not burden any human being with more than He has given him[/her]; and after a difficulty, God will assuredly bring out ease. [65:1-7]

وُجْدِكُمْ وَلَا تُضَآرُّوهُنَّ لِتُضَيِّقُوا۟ عَلَيْهِنَّ ۚ
وَإِن كُنَّ أُو۟لَٰتِ حَمْلٍ فَأَنفِقُوا۟ عَلَيْهِنَّ
حَتَّىٰ يَضَعْنَ حَمْلَهُنَّ ۚ فَإِنْ أَرْضَعْنَ لَكُمْ
فَـَٔاتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ ۖ وَأْتَمِرُوا۟ بَيْنَكُم
بِمَعْرُوفٍ ۖ وَإِن تَعَاسَرْتُمْ فَسَتُرْضِعُ لَهُۥٓ
أُخْرَىٰ ﴿٦﴾ لِيُنفِقْ ذُو سَعَةٍ مِّن سَعَتِهِۦ ۖ
وَمَن قُدِرَ عَلَيْهِ رِزْقُهُۥ فَلْيُنفِقْ مِمَّآ ءَاتَىٰهُ
ٱللَّهُ ۚ لَا يُكَلِّفُ ٱللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا مَآ
ءَاتَىٰهَا ۚ سَيَجْعَلُ ٱللَّهُ بَعْدَ عُسْرٍ يُسْرًا
﴿٧﴾

The above verses indicate more legal and procedural safeguards for undergoing a divorce. The previous verses 2:229-230 indicate that divorce cannot be decided between the same spouses more than three times, i.e. the first two divorces are revocable during an appointed waiting term, while the third is irrevocable. Many prominent jurists have stated that each divorce should be made singly in an inter-menstrual period which has not witnessed sexual contact between the spouses. The Prophet's traditions indicate that divorce cannot be made during menstrual periods, since these cause physical and psychological pressures on both spouses, nor during an inter-menstrual period in which the couple have sex, since such an intimate relation brings closeness between the couple and signals that perhaps the marriage can survive, and more time ought to be allowed for thinking the matter over. The spouses have to notice the appointed time for deciding the first or second divorce, and to reckon the waiting-term accurately since either of these two divorces can be revoked before the end of the period without a new contract. As has been mentioned before, this waiting-term can be counted as three menstrual periods or three inter-menstrual periods, according to different juristic interpretations of the Arabic word that is used in the Quranic verse 2:228 and which means both.

The above verses add that divorced women should not be expelled from the family home which is described significantly in the Quranic verse as "their homes", nor should they be pressured to leave by any means unless they become openly guilty of flagrant shameful conduct. It is stressed in the second of the above verses, as it has been stressed before in the verse 2:229 that the separation should be carried out in a fair manner, and if the marriage is resumed during the waiting-term, it should be maintained in a fair manner, in order to secure a genuine family life, not a superficial or unliveable one. The above verses require that a retaining of marriage, as well as the preceding divorce according to some jurists, should be witnessed by *"two persons of known probity from among you"*. This procedure, which may also be required in our times to be registered by state authorities,

secures the seriousness and soundness of the decision. The previous verses indicate that the waiting-term should be counted according to the menstrual cycle of the divorced woman. As for the women who are beyond the age of menstruation, or those whose menstruation may be stopped temporarily for any reason, the waiting-term is counted as three calendar months, instead of three menstrual or inter-menstrual periods. The waiting term for a pregnant woman ends with the delivery of the child. As for a pregnant widow, jurists are of the opinion that her waiting-term is four months and ten days, the term appointed by the Quran as a general rule for every widow [2:234], while others believe the waiting term for a pregnant widow should be the delivery of the baby following what the Quran appointed as a general rule for a pregnant divorcee. The second mentions a tradition of the Prophet that states that a delivery of the baby should end the waiting-term for a pregnant widow even if the four months and ten days have not yet passed [see the commentary of Ibn Kathir on 2:235].

Some details are given in the last of the above verses about the due alimony of the divorced woman, or the additional provision of fair and comfortable maintenance for her [2:241], and what ought to be covered by these dues. This verse states that accommodation has to be secured for the divorcee if she leaves the family home. The accommodation ought to be similar to what the husband lives in but in accordance with his means, and the divorcee should not be exposed to any harm or pressure through providing the accomodation or other needs of life, or in any other way. Nursing the children who come out of the marriage is not an obligation for the mother; she has to be paid for it, and if she does not agree to do it another woman may nurse these children until they reach the weaning stage. Every husband is urged to spend on his divorcee and maintain as comfortable a life for her as he can afford, and the general Islamic principle of justice applies also to the case of alimony *"God does not burden any human being with more than He has given him [/her]"* [see also 2:233, 286; 6:152; 7:42; 23:62].

Throughout the above verses, as well as other Quranic verses related to legal matters, one significantly finds that law is based on, and always connected with, the consciousness of God and moral conscience *"thus are admonished all who believe in God and the Last Day. And for whosoever is conscious of God, He grants a way out [of a difficulty and distress] .... And whosoever places his [/her] trust in God, sufficient is He for him [/her]. Surely, God attains to His purpose, and for everything God has appointed a due [term and] measure ... And whosoever is conscious of God, He will acquit him [/her] of his [/her] wrong deeds, and He will grant him [/her] a mighty reward ... and after a difficulty, God will assuredly bring out ease."* The essence of the Islamic "Shari'a" is that legality can never succeed without morality and faith, and all should be interacting with one another in the behavior of the individual and the society. Many well-formulated laws in the contemporary world are undermined by the very corruption of those who have to enforce them, and even sometimes those who are the beneficiaries of the enacted laws. Besides, the human being should have a purpose in life, which should be more penetrating for his/her mind and heart than legal norms, and which would allow him/her to have the stamina to fulfill his/her legal responsibilities despite all their pressures and inconveniences. Philosophical abstracts of patriotism or altruism may not convince all the people and may not be effective all the time. An efficient and effective enforcement of the law requires solid

moral foundations provided by individual and mass education in order to fulfill the legal responsibility despite all pressures or inconveniences. In this respect, nothing can reach the depth and the width of the faith in God.

SETTLEMENTS TO MAINTAIN OR TERMINATE THE MARRIAGE

And if a woman has reason to fear lack of compatibility or aversion on the part of her husband, there is no wrong for them both to set things right between themselves, since a reconciliation is [always] good. And selfishness and miserliness are ever- present in the human inner-selves, but if you do good and are conscious of Him, surely God is aware of all that you do. [4:128]

وَإِنِ ٱمْرَأَةٌ خَافَتْ مِنۢ بَعْلِهَا نُشُوزًا أَوْ
إِعْرَاضًا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَآ أَن يُصْلِحَا
بَيْنَهُمَا صُلْحًا ۚ وَٱلصُّلْحُ خَيْرٌ ۗ
وَأُحْضِرَتِ ٱلْأَنفُسُ ٱلشُّحَّ ۚ وَإِن
تُحْسِنُوا۟ وَتَتَّقُوا۟ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا
تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ﴿١٢٨﴾

...and if you do indeed have cause to fear that the couple would be able to keep [their marriage and family life] within the bounds set by God, there is no blame on both of them for what the wife may give up [to her husband] in order to get herself out of the marriage. These are the bounds set by God; do not, then, transgress them, and those who transgress the bounds set by God are the evil-doers. [2:229]

ٱلطَّلَٰقُ مَرَّتَانِ ۖ فَإِمْسَاكٌۢ
بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ تَسْرِيحٌۢ بِإِحْسَٰنٍ ۗ وَلَا
يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَن تَأْخُذُوا۟ مِمَّآ ءَاتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ
شَيْـًٔا إِلَّآ أَن يَخَافَآ أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ
ٱللَّهِ ۖ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ ٱللَّهِ
فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا فِيمَا ٱفْتَدَتْ بِهِۦ ۗ
تِلْكَ حُدُودُ ٱللَّهِ فَلَا تَعْتَدُوهَا ۚ وَمَن
يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ ٱللَّهِ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ
﴿٢٢٩﴾

Just as the wife can forgo some of her rights or offer her husband something to get divorced for mere emotional reasons when she has no complaints about mistreatment or injustice against him [2:229], she can forgo some rights also to reach a settlement to maintain the marriage [4:128]. When the incompatibility or aversion are on the husband's side, the wife may wish to maintain the family at the expense of some concessions as giving up sexual relations or allowing the husband to have a second wife when all legal requirements are fulfilled and when social circumstances make this possible, or allowing the husband to give the second wife more time. Whatever the settlement may be, it is better than divorce according to the Quran, especially when the wife cannot live on her own for any reason, or when the spouses have lived together for a considerable amount of time, or when there are children who are not yet independent and would suffer from a separation of their parents etc.

WIDOWS

And those of you who die leaving wives behind; they shall undergo without marrying again a waiting term of four months and ten days; and when they have reached the end of their waiting-term, there is no blame on you in whatever they may do with themselves decently and lawfully; and God is aware of all that you do. And there is no blame on you whether you give a hint of your intended proposal to [any of] these women, or you hide such an intention in your hearts; God knows your intention to propose to them, but do not - however - plight your troth with them secretly, but [either way] speak [regarding your intention] only in decent manner; and do not proceed with tying the marriage-knot till the ordained [waiting term for widows] comes to its end. And know that God knows what is in your own selves, so remain conscious of Him, and know that God is All-forgiving, All-clement. [2:234-235]

وَٱلَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ
أَزْوَٰجًا يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنفُسِهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ
وَعَشْرًا ۖ فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ
عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا فَعَلْنَ فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِنَّ
بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ
﴿٢٣٤﴾ وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا عَرَّضْتُم
بِهِۦ مِنْ خِطْبَةِ ٱلنِّسَآءِ أَوْ أَكْنَنتُمْ فِىٓ
أَنفُسِكُمْ ۚ عَلِمَ ٱللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ سَتَذْكُرُونَهُنَّ
وَلَٰكِن لَّا تُوَاعِدُوهُنَّ سِرًّا إِلَّآ أَن تَقُولُوا۟
قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا ۖ وَلَا تَعْزِمُوا۟ عُقْدَةَ
ٱلنِّكَاحِ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ ٱلْكِتَٰبُ أَجَلَهُۥ ۚ
وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِىٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ
فَٱحْذَرُوهُ ۗ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ
حَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٣٥﴾

A widow may be oppressed in the absence of the man who was supporting her, or she may take for herself from the bequest of the dead husband what other legal inheritors may not know, or conceal certain financial obligations which only she knows. Hence, the rights and obligations ought to be indicated, so that justice is secured for all parties. A widow has to observe a waiting term of four months and ten days before remarrying; a period which is longer than that which the divorced woman has to go through, because of differing circumstances. While divorce hurts the woman and the waiting period in such cases should be reduced as much as possible for the interest of the divorcee, a dead husband has left his widow without his own will, and it is reasonable to require a longer waiting-term from her before remarrying as a sign of faithfulness and courtesy towards the dead husband. However, she is free to do what she likes with herself, decently and lawfully, as soon as she reaches the end of her waiting term. If the widow is pregnant, her waiting-term will be the delivery of the baby - even this may take more than four months and ten days, according to one juristic opinion - and will be just the delivery of the baby according to another view based on a Prophet's tradition [see the comment of Ibn Kathir on the verse 2:235].

A man who wants to propose to a widow cannot do this explicitly until her waiting-term comes to an end. However, he can talk implicitly or give merely a hint of his intended proposal during the waiting-period, as the widow may find in this some

consolation or the man may like to let her know of his intentions before she receives other suggestions. In any case, the circumstances of a woman who has just lost her husband should always be kept in mind, and any gesture from a man or a response of a widow have to be within morality and decency *"and do not - however - proceed with tying the marriage knot till the ordained [waiting term for widows] comes to its end. And know that God knows what is in your own selves, so remain conscious of Him...."*

And those of you who die leaving wives behind, let them bequeath thereby to their widows provision for one year without being obliged to leave [the dead husband's home]. But if, however, they [willingly] leave, there is nothing held against them about whatever they may do with themselves decently and lawfully, and God is All-mighty, All-wise. [2:240]

وَٱلَّذِينَ
يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَٰجًا وَصِيَّةً
لِّأَزْوَٰجِهِم مَّتَٰعًا إِلَى ٱلْحَوْلِ غَيْرَ
إِخْرَاجٍ ۚ فَإِنْ خَرَجْنَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ
فِى مَا فَعَلْنَ فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِنَّ مِن مَّعْرُوفٍ ۗ
وَٱللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٤٠﴾

A husband is required to include in his will a term that secures a fair and comfortable life for his widow in the family home for his widow for a whole year after the husband's death, unless she wishes to leave it by her own will without any pressure. This is in addition to the widow's share in her husband's inheritance, and to any other rights indicated in the husband's will, as there is no contradiction between what the above verse states and the verse about the mandatory inheritance of a widow [4:12].

PARENTS' RELATIONS WITH THEIR CHILDREN

Wealth and children are the adornment of this world's life, but good deeds are everlasting and far more rewarding in your Lord's sight, and are [thus] a far better source of hope. [18:46]

ٱلْمَالُ وَٱلْبَنُونَ زِينَةُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ
ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَٱلْبَٰقِيَٰتُ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتُ خَيْرٌ
عِندَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ أَمَلًا ﴿٤٦﴾

Alluring to human beings is the enjoyment of worldly desires through women and children and amassed treasures of gold and silver, and horses of distinguished mark and livestock and tillage. That is the enjoyment of this world's life, but with God is the best resort. [3:14]

زُيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ حُبُّ
ٱلشَّهَوَٰتِ مِنَ ٱلنِّسَآءِ وَٱلْبَنِينَ
وَٱلْقَنَٰطِيرِ ٱلْمُقَنطَرَةِ مِنَ ٱلذَّهَبِ وَٱلْفِضَّةِ
وَٱلْخَيْلِ ٱلْمُسَوَّمَةِ وَٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ
وَٱلْحَرْثِ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ مَتَٰعُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ
وَٱللَّهُ عِندَهُۥ حُسْنُ ٱلْمَـَٔابِ ﴿١٤﴾

Human beings, like other animals, are instinctively inclined to reproduce and secure a continuation of life. In the same way, there is a human instinctive inclination for ownership and accumulation of wealth. The Quran, being the guidance of God who has created the human being, does not oppose such human instincts in principle [see how the human desire for children or good things of life out of God's bounty is legitimate in the Quran and the Prophet's traditions; see also the desire for God's sustenance and good life and children, e.g. Quranic verses 2:126, 201, 280; 3:37-38; 5:114; 7:32; 11:71-73; 13:38; 14:37; 19:2-15; 21:89; 29:17; 51:28-30; 65:7; 67:15], but guides the human being to make them balanced and guarded against different kinds of egotism and materialism such as chauvinism [towards the family, the clan, the people ...] or greed. The belief in God and the eternal life to come provides the conceptual basis for such a balance, since it assures that this life and its pleasures are not the end of the human journey, and everyone shall be accountable and shall be requited for his/her deeds in this life and in the eternal life to come. The moral values and legal norms in the messages of Islam provide the practical and behavioral part to secure this balance.

Parents have the legal responsibility to raise their children and secure their growth in its various aspects: physical, intellectual, psychological, spiritual and moral, from the time that these children are in their mother's wombs [e.g. 2:233]. The Quran strictly prohibits that a child be killed, directly or indirectly through physical or moral negligence [6:137, 140, 151; 16:58-59; 17:131; 60:12; 81:8-9]. The rights of children include that the parents call him/her a beautiful name, and avoid a distasteful name [Prophet's traditions by Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi, and al-Darami]. A child's name has to be related to that of his/her father: *"call them after their father's names; this is more equitable in the sight of God"* [33:4-5] and that when a parent dies, his/her children have the largest share in the inheritance [4:7, 10].

And Abraham charged his children with this, and [so did] Jacob: "O my children! God has chosen for you the [purest] faith, so die not save in submission to Him."
Were you witnesses when death approached Jacob, and when he said to his children, "Whom will you be worshipping after I am gone?" They said: "We will be worshipping your God, the God of your forefathers Abraham, Ishmael, and Isaac, the One God; and to Him do we submit ourselves." [2:132-133]

وَوَصَّىٰ بِهَآ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ
بَنِيهِ وَيَعْقُوبُ ۙ يَٰبَنِىَّ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱصْطَفَىٰ
لَكُمُ ٱلدِّينَ فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُم
مُّسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٣٢﴾ أَمْ كُنتُمْ شُهَدَآءَ إِذْ حَضَرَ
يَعْقُوبَ ٱلْمَوْتُ إِذْ قَالَ لِبَنِيهِ مَا
تَعْبُدُونَ مِنۢ بَعْدِى قَالُوا۟ نَعْبُدُ إِلَٰهَكَ
وَإِلَٰهَ ءَابَآئِكَ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ وَإِسْمَٰعِيلَ
وَإِسْحَٰقَ إِلَٰهًا وَٰحِدًا وَنَحْنُ لَهُۥ
مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٣٣﴾

It is the parent's responsibility to give the child the best of his/her experiences, and to guide, urge and guard him/her without imposing or forcing in a repelling way: *"Guard yourselves and your families against fire [and the hereafter]"* [66:6]. This was represented impressively in the lives of the Conveyors of God's message, who tried to fulfill their

responsibility of conveying it to those who were closest to them: the members of their families, starting with their wives and children. The Quran reported a persisting appeal of Noah to his son to be among the believers on board of his ark and be safe from the flood, and also reported a humble prayer, after the doom was carried out, to God to forgive his son who rejected the message: *"And it [the Ark] was with them [the believing passengers] amid waves like mountains; and Noah called to his son who had kept himself aloof [from the others], 'Embark with us, my son, and be not with those who have stubbornly denied the truth?' He said, 'I will take refuge in a mountain that shall keep me safe from the water.' Said he [Noah], 'Today nothing would protect from God's command except for one who has earned His mercy.' And the waves rose up between them, and he was among the drowned....*
And Noah called unto his Lord praying, 'O my Lord! My son is of my family, and what you determine is surely the truth, and you are the most just of all those that judge." Said He, 'O Noah, he is not of your family, for, surely, his work was unrighteous [and thus it has alienated him from you]. Do not ask of me whereof you have no knowledge. I admonish you, not to be among the ignorant.' He [Noah] said, 'My Lord! I seek refuge with You, lest I should ask of You that whereof I have no knowledge; and unless You forgive me and have mercy on me, I shall be among the lost. [Thereupon] the word [of God] was spoken, 'O Noah! Disembark in peace from Us, and with [Our] blessings upon you and upon the people who are with you and [the righteous of] the generations that will spring from you all ..." [11:42-43, 45- 48 see also 46:17].

Prophet Ibrahim [Abraham] exhorted to his children, till the last moment of his life, to always hold fast to the belief in the One God and the submission to His will and guidance, and his grandson Jacob did the same with his children. Abraham and his son Ishmael [Isma'il], humbly prayed to God when they established the House of Worship for the One God: *"O our Lord! Make us submissive to You, and make out of our offspring a people submissive to You"* [2:128]. However, when Abraham asked God to make of his offspring leaders as he was, the divine answer was sharp that leadership is given according to individual merits not as a clan inheritance: *"[God] answered, 'My promise does not include the wrongdoers'"* [2:124].

And indeed, We granted Luqman wisdom [represented in these values:] "Be grateful to God, and [know well that] one who is grateful [to Him] is but grateful for the good of his [/her] own self, whereas one who may be ungrateful [ought to know that] surely God is All-sufficient, Ever to Be Praised".
And Luqman said to his son, admonishing him, "O my dear son! Do not associate others with God; to associate others with God is indeed an awesome wrong. [31:12-13]

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَآ
لُقْمَٰنَ ٱلْحِكْمَةَ أَنِ ٱشْكُرْ لِلَّهِ ۚ وَمَن
يَشْكُرْ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِۦ ۖ وَمَن كَفَرَ
فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَنِىٌّ حَمِيدٌ ﴿١٢﴾ وَإِذْ قَالَ
لُقْمَٰنُ لِٱبْنِهِۦ وَهُوَ يَعِظُهُۥ يَٰبُنَىَّ لَا
تُشْرِكْ بِٱللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّ ٱلشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ
﴿١٣﴾

"O my dear son! If it should be but the weight of one grain of mustard-seed, and if it might be [hidden] in a rock, or in the skies, or in the earth, God can bring it forth; surely God is All-subtle, [and Unfathomable in His Being, Wisdom, and Grace], All-aware.
"O my dear son! Keep up the prayer, and enjoin the doing of what is right and forbid the doing of what is wrong, and bear patiently whatever may befall you; this is a matter of determination and [proves a] strong will.
"And turn not your cheek away from people in arrogance, and walk not haughtily on earth; God loves not one who is arrogant and boastful.
And be modest in your walk, and lower your voice; the most hideous of all voices is that of donkeys." [31:16-19]

يَٰبُنَيَّ إِنَّهَآ إِن تَكُ مِثۡقَالَ
حَبَّةٖ مِّنۡ خَرۡدَلٖ فَتَكُن فِي صَخۡرَةٍ أَوۡ فِي
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ أَوۡ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ يَأۡتِ بِهَا
ٱللَّهُۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَطِيفٌ خَبِيرٞ ﴿١٦﴾ يَٰبُنَيَّ
أَقِمِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَأۡمُرۡ بِٱلۡمَعۡرُوفِ وَٱنۡهَ
عَنِ ٱلۡمُنكَرِ وَٱصۡبِرۡ عَلَىٰ مَآ أَصَابَكَۖ
إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ مِنۡ عَزۡمِ ٱلۡأُمُورِ ﴿١٧﴾ وَلَا
تُصَعِّرۡ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَمۡشِ فِي
ٱلۡأَرۡضِ مَرَحًاۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ
مُخۡتَالٖ فَخُورٖ ﴿١٨﴾ وَٱقۡصِدۡ فِي مَشۡيِكَ
وَٱغۡضُضۡ مِن صَوۡتِكَۚ إِنَّ أَنكَرَ
ٱلۡأَصۡوَٰتِ لَصَوۡتُ ٱلۡحَمِيرِ ﴿١٩﴾

The parents have to take care of the development and education of their children in its various dimensions - intellectual, psychological and spiritual-moral - just as they have to take care of their physical growth and maintenance of material needs. Luqman was known in Ancient Arabian tradition as "the sage". In the above verses, his advice to his son represents a permanent example of spiritual-moral education that ought to be persuasive and convincing, not imposing and authoritarian. The belief in the One God and the practice of due worship to Him are directly followed by the active morality that both should develop in the human-self, and thus the believer in God and worshipper of Him alone stands always for righteousness and against wrongdoing. Consequently, troubles are expected to emerge from time to time and this ought not to dissuade from enjoining the doing of what is right and forbidding the doing of what is wrong; the person who calls for righteousness should bear people patiently and go on with that to which he/she committed to steadfastly. However, such active morality may be undermined by an arrogance on the part of the person who takes it upon himself/herself, since he/she looks upon himself/herself as a protector of the good and fighter against the evil. The verses thus call the attention of such an active moralist to the fact, that arrogance is not less evil than passivity and a docile acceptance of negatives. Luqman's advice to his son as reported in the Quran stresses how self-confidence and healthy individuality should be developed as early as possible in the child by the family, in order to raise him/her as a constructive and active element in the society.

And those [true servants of the Most Gracious] who pray: "O our Lord! Grant that our spouses and our

وَٱلَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا هَبۡ
لَنَا مِنۡ أَزۡوَٰجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّٰتِنَا قُرَّةَ أَعۡيُنٖ

offspring be of joy to our eyes, and cause us to be a model among those who are conscious of You." [25:74, see also 46:15]

وَٱجۡعَلۡنَا لِلۡمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا ﴿٧٤﴾

Parents' love and care for their children make them pray to see these children, within the entire family, as a model of physical wholeness and psychological-intellectual and moral maturity and an inspiring experience in this life [see also 14:40; 46:15] In the eternal life to come, the parents also look forward to see their whole family, especially their children, enjoying together the goodly acceptance and rewards of God [13:23; 40:8; 52:21].

To the men a share of what parents and kinsfolk leave behind, and to the women a share of what parents and kinsfolk leave behind, whether it be little or much, a share ordained and appointed [by God]. [4:7, see also 4:11]

لِّلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ
ٱلۡوَٰلِدَانِ وَٱلۡأَقۡرَبُونَ وَلِلنِّسَآءِ نَصِيبٌ
مِّمَّا تَرَكَ ٱلۡوَٰلِدَانِ وَٱلۡأَقۡرَبُونَ مِمَّا
قَلَّ مِنۡهُ أَوۡ كَثُرَ نَصِيبًا مَّفۡرُوضًا ﴿٧﴾

Parents' responsibilities towards their children on the material side go beyond their life-time, and so the Quran appoints to the children their share in their parents' inheritance when he/she dies. Sons and daughters have their apportioned shares, ordained by God, as is later indicated in the Quranic rules about inheritance that will follow later.

O you who have attained to faith! Let not your possessions nor your children distract you from being mindful of God, and whosoever do that, they are the lost. [63:9]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا تُلۡهِكُمۡ
أَمۡوَٰلُكُمۡ وَلَآ أَوۡلَٰدُكُمۡ عَن ذِكۡرِ ٱللَّهِ
وَمَن يَفۡعَلۡ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلۡخَٰسِرُونَ ﴿٩﴾

O you who have attained to faith! Among your spouses and your children there may be those who are enemies [in a sense or another] to you; so beware of them. But if you excuse [their faults] and forbear and forgive, surely God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious. Your wealth and your children are but a trial and a temptation, and with God is a mighty reward. Remain, then, conscious of God as best as you can, and listen [to His guidance] and abide, and spend [on those who are in need] for the good of your own selves. And whoever is guarded against the miserliness of his [/her] own self, is among those who shall attain to success. [64:14-16]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِنَّ مِنۡ أَزۡوَٰجِكُمۡ
وَأَوۡلَٰدِكُمۡ عَدُوّٗا لَّكُمۡ فَٱحۡذَرُوهُمۡ وَإِن
تَعۡفُواْ وَتَصۡفَحُواْ وَتَغۡفِرُواْ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
غَفُورٞ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٤﴾ إِنَّمَآ أَمۡوَٰلُكُمۡ
وَأَوۡلَٰدُكُمۡ فِتۡنَةٞۚ وَٱللَّهُ عِندَهُۥٓ أَجۡرٌ عَظِيمٞ
﴿١٥﴾ فَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ مَا ٱسۡتَطَعۡتُمۡ
وَٱسۡمَعُواْ وَأَطِيعُواْ وَأَنفِقُواْ خَيۡرٗا
لِّأَنفُسِكُمۡۗ وَمَن يُوقَ شُحَّ نَفۡسِهِۦ
فَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلۡمُفۡلِحُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

Although family emotions and relations may be traced in the whole human race as far back as the creation of Adam and his mate, they should not lead the individual to family favoritism or clan chauvinism. One has to be aware that among the closest human beings to him/her, his/her spouse and children, there may be a person who may stand opposite to his/her values or interests, as well as perhaps the values and interests of the other spouse, since God has created every human being with his/her own free will and choice. Accordingly, a spouse or a parent cannot force his/her spouse or child to follow his/her convictions, values or interests. One just has to present that in which he/she believes to his/her spouse and children, and to try only to convince and exhort, not to impose or force.

The basis of one's judgements and behavior ought to be based on his/her own thinking and evaluation of the matter. Spouses and children represent a human weakness in a person's judgement which may divert him/her from the course of right judgement, justice and righteousness, and in this way they can become, probably unintentionally, an enemy of this person and his/her morality. Moreover, they may intentionally stand against the values and interest of the person to whom they are closely related. While the Quran stresses family unity, it warns the human being that such relations which are instinctive should not contradict the conceptual and behavioral values of the believer [see also 8:28]. The Quran indicates how the center of human judgement has to be God's guidance which should prevail over any temporary or selfish inclination. *"Say: 'If your fathers, your children, your brothers, your spouses, your clan, your possessions that you have gained, the commerce that you fear may decline and the dwellings in which you feel comfortable - if these are dearer to you than God and the Conveyor of His message and the struggle in His cause, then wait until God makes manifest His will; and God does not grace an iniquitous folk with His mercy"* [9:24].

The Quran also teaches the believer to resist the arrogance that may be developed through having wealth or children: *"Know [O people] that the life of this world is but a play and a passing delight and an adornment and a cause of boasting among you, and of greed and rivalry for more and more wealth and children. It is as a rain whose vegetation delights the tillers of the soil; but then it withers and you see it turning yellow, and in the end it crumbles away. In the [eternal] life to come it is [either] suffering severe, or being blessed by God's forgiveness and His goodly acceptance, and the life of this world is nothing but a joy of self-delusion"* [57:20]. Since boasting about children was deeply rooted in the Arabian tribal society, it is repeatedly warned against in the Quran which calls the human attention to the fact that it is really God who provides children and wealth, [e.g. 3:10; 9:55, 85; 17:6; 23:55-6; 26:132-134; 34:35-37; 58:17; 68:10-14; 71:10-12; 74:11-16].

CHILDREN's RELATIONS WITH THEIR PARENTS

And your Lord has ordained that you worship none but Him, and that you be good to [your] parents; should one or both attain to old age in your life, never say to them "fie" or any word that

وَقَضَىٰ
رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ إِيَّاهُ وَبِٱلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ
إِحْسَٰنًا ۚ إِمَّا يَبْلُغَنَّ عِندَكَ ٱلْكِبَرَ

implies your weariness of them, nor chide them, but [always] speak to them respectfully. And extend to them a wing of humbleness out of compassion, and say: "My Lord, bestow Your grace upon them, as they raised me and cherished me when I was little." Your Lord knows best what is in your hearts; if you are righteous [He will forgive you your errors]; surely, , He is All-forgiving to those who turn to Him again and again [in true repentance]. [17:23-25]

أَحَدُهُمَآ أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُل لَّهُمَآ أُفٍّ
وَلَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُل لَّهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا
﴿٢٣﴾ وَٱخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ ٱلذُّلِّ مِنَ
ٱلرَّحْمَةِ وَقُل رَّبِّ ٱرْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا
رَبَّيَانِى صَغِيرًا ﴿٢٤﴾ رَّبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا فِى
نُفُوسِكُمْ ۚ إِن تَكُونُوا۟ صَٰلِحِينَ فَإِنَّهُۥ
كَانَ لِلْأَوَّٰبِينَ غَفُورًا ﴿٢٥﴾

And We have enjoined upon the human being [goodness] towards his [/her] parents: his [/her] mother bore him [/her] through strain over strain, and [devoted her time to the baby until] his weaning [going beyond full dependence on the mother that] may take two years; [hence, O human being] be grateful towards Me and towards your parents, [and remember that] with Me is all journeys' end. Yet should they pressure you to make you associate with Me what you do not know [or what your mind can not accept as divine], obey them not; but [even then] keep their company in this world's life with kindness, and follow the path of those who turn towards Me. In the end, unto Me you shall return, and thereupon I shall make you [truly] understand all that you were doing [in your previous life]. [31:14-15; see also 29:8, 2:83, 4:36, 6:151]

وَوَصَّيْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ بِوَٰلِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ
أُمُّهُۥ وَهْنًا عَلَىٰ وَهْنٍ وَفِصَٰلُهُۥ فِى
عَامَيْنِ أَنِ ٱشْكُرْ لِى وَلِوَٰلِدَيْكَ إِلَىَّ
ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٤﴾ وَإِن جَٰهَدَاكَ عَلَىٰٓ أَن
تُشْرِكَ بِى مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ فَلَا
تُطِعْهُمَا ۖ وَصَاحِبْهُمَا فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا
مَعْرُوفًا ۖ وَٱتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ إِلَىَّ ۚ
ثُمَّ إِلَىَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ
تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

And We have enjoined upon the human being goodness towards his [/her] parents. In pain did his [/her] mother bear him [/her], and in pain did she give him [/her] birth, and the period of his [/her] bearing and until his [/her] weaning [and being beyond full dependence on the mother] is thirty months. And when he [/she] attains full maturity and reaches forty years, he [/she] prays: "O my Lord! Inspire me to be always grateful for those blessings of You with which

وَوَصَّيْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ بِوَٰلِدَيْهِ
إِحْسَٰنًا ۖ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُۥ كُرْهًا وَوَضَعَتْهُ
كُرْهًا ۖ وَحَمْلُهُۥ وَفِصَٰلُهُۥ ثَلَٰثُونَ
شَهْرًا ۚ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُۥ وَبَلَغَ
أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً قَالَ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِىٓ أَنْ أَشْكُرَ
نِعْمَتَكَ ٱلَّتِىٓ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَىَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَٰلِدَىَّ

you have graced me and my parents, and that I may do righteousness that receives Your goodly acceptance, and grant me in my offspring wholesomeness and righteousness. Unto You I have turned in repentance, and I am among those who submit themselves unto You." [46:15]

وَ أَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَٰلِحًا تَرْضَىٰهُ وَ أَصْلِحْ لِى
فِى ذُرِّيَّتِىٓ ۖ إِنِّى تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَ إِنَّنِى مِنَ
ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿١٥﴾

When children become independent adults, they have material and moral responsibilities towards their parents, especially when the latter become old and in need of help or support. Enjoining goodness to parents, comes next to worshipping the One God in several verses in the Quran [e.g. 2:83; 4:36; 6:151; 31:13-14]. Taking care of the mother is specifically stressed in the Quran and the Prophet's traditions, as she *"bore him [/her, the child] through strain over strain, and [devotes all her time to the baby until] his [/her] weaning [that may take two years]"*. Even when the parents do not believe in the One God, and urge their child who believes in the One God to adhere to their beliefs, the child should disagree with them, but he/she should still *"keep their company in this world's life with kindness"* [31:15].

Children ought to follow the advice and behavior of their parents when they realize their rightfulness, and to be proud of that [e.g. 2:133; 12:38]. The conveyors of God's message gave the example in this respect. Parallel to Nuh's (Noah's) keenness about the spiritual and physical deliverance of his son, Ibrahim (Abraham) tried persistently to convince his father to worship the One God, and both prophets initially and instructively prayed to God to forgive those unbelievers who were very close to them, but they desisted when they realized that such favoritism is inconsistent with God's justice: *"And call to mind in [this] Book Ibrahim (Abraham); surely he was a man of truth, a prophet. When he said to his father, 'O father! Why do you worship that which neither hears nor sees, nor avails you anything? Father, there has come to me knowledge such as came not to you; so follow me and I will guide you on a level path. O my father, do not worship Satan, who is surely a rebel against the All-merciful. O my father! I fear lest a chastisement should befall you from the All-merciful, and then you will become a partisan of Satan. Said he, 'What, are you shrinking from my gods, Abraham? If you give not over, I shall stone you; so forsake me now for some while'. He said, 'Peace be upon you! I will ask my Lord to forgive you; surely He has been ever gracious to me. Now, I will go apart from you and that you call upon apart from God; I will call upon my Lord [alone], and I hope that by praying for His support, I shall not be wretched'"* [19:41-48; see also 6:74-83; 26:69-89], *"Ibrahim (Abraham) asked not pardon for his father except because of a promise he had made to him; and when it became clear to him that he was an enemy of God, he declared himself quit of him; Abraham was tender-hearted, clement"* [9:114, see also 60:4]. Yahya (John) and 'Isa (Jesus) both emphasized their compassionate care of both their parents: care of the mother and father in the case the former and of the mother in case of the latter [19:14, 32].

To protect the special relationship between the parents and their children from any sensitivity or disharmony, neither of them can marry the divorced spouse of the other

[4:22-23]. A parent has his/her share in a child's inheritance if he/she dies before him/her [4:11], just as a child has his/her share in his/her parent's inheritance: "*Your parents and your children, you know not which of them is of benefit to you*" [4:11]. The goodness of parents should urge their children to pray for their happiness in this world's life and in the eternal life to come [e.g. 14:41; 27:19; 46:15; 71:28], and enjoying the pleasures of Paradise together would add to the happiness of both [e.g. 13:23; 40:8]. But just as the parents are warned by the Quran that their children may be a temptation to deviate from the truth and righteousness, the children are warned against a deviation that may be caused by their parents: "O *you who have attained to faith! Do not take your fathers and your brothers as your patrons and supporters if they favor a stubborn denial of the truth rather than the faith [in the One God], and whosoever of you takes them as their patrons and supporters, those are the evildoers. Say: 'If your fathers, your children, your brothers, your spouses, your clan ... are dearer to you than God and the Conveyor of His message and the struggle in His cause, then wait until God makes manifest His will ....*" [9:23-24; see also 58:22]. There are those who rejected stubbornly the truth, supporting their stand by saying that they are following their forefathers' beliefs, and in addition boasting to having many children and a mighty clan. Such a blind following of the forefathers and a flock mentality cannot be a virtue for a human being who has intellect and should use it. Such a blind imitation is repeatedly condemned in the Quran, since it was dominant in the Arabian tribal society [e.g. 2:170; 5:104; 7:28, 70; 10:78; 11:87, 109; 14:10; 21:53-54; 26:74; 31:21; 34:43; ;37:69; 43:22-23].

BROTHERS AND SISTERS

And convey to them, setting forth the truth, the story of the two sons of Adam - how each offered a sacrifice, and it was accepted from one of them whereas it was not accepted from the other. The latter said [to the former], "I will surely kill you!". "God accepts only from those who are conscious of Him," [the former said]. "Even if you stretch out your hand against me to kill me, I will not stretch out my hand against you to kill you; I fear God, the Lord of all Beings. I choose that you may bear [the burden of] my wrongs and yours, and so you would be destined for the fire, and this is the requital of the evildoers".
But the other's [offensive] self prompted him to kill his brother, and he killed him and became one of the lost. Then God sent forth a raven, scratching into the earth, to show him how he might conceal the dead body of his brother

وَٱتْلُ
عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ ٱبْنَىْ ءَادَمَ بِٱلْحَقِّ إِذْ قَرَّبَا
قُرْبَانًا فَتُقُبِّلَ مِنْ أَحَدِهِمَا وَلَمْ يُتَقَبَّلْ
مِنَ ٱلْأَخَرِ قَالَ لَأَقْتُلَنَّكَ ۖ قَالَ إِنَّمَا
يَتَقَبَّلُ ٱللَّهُ مِنَ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾ لَئِنۢ
بَسَطتَ إِلَىَّ يَدَكَ لِتَقْتُلَنِى مَآ أَنَا۠ بِبَاسِطٍ
يَدِىَ إِلَيْكَ لِأَقْتُلَكَ ۖ إِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ ٱللَّهَ
رَبَّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٢٨﴾ إِنِّىٓ أُرِيدُ أَن تَبُوٓأَ
بِإِثْمِى وَإِثْمِكَ فَتَكُونَ مِنْ أَصْحَٰبِ
ٱلنَّارِ ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ جَزَٰٓؤُا۟ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾
فَطَوَّعَتْ لَهُۥ نَفْسُهُۥ قَتْلَ أَخِيهِ فَقَتَلَهُۥ
فَأَصْبَحَ مِنَ ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾ فَبَعَثَ ٱللَّهُ
غُرَابًا يَبْحَثُ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ لِيُرِيَهُۥ كَيْفَ
يُوَٰرِى سَوْءَةَ أَخِيهِ ۚ قَالَ يَٰوَيْلَتَىٰٓ

[which reminds him of his crime]. He said "Woe is me! Am I unable to be as this raven, and so conceal my brother's dead body?" And thus he became full of remorse.
Therefore, We ordained unto the children of Israel, that if whoever [intentionally] kills a human being, unless it be [in punishment] for murder or for spreading corruption on earth, shall be as if he [/she] had killed all human beings, and whoso saves a life, shall be as if he [/she] had saved the lives of all human beings. And, indeed, there came unto them Conveyors of Our messages with all evidence of the truth; and then many of them thereafter commit excesses on earth. [5:27- 32]

أَعَجَزْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِثْلَ هَٰذَا ٱلْغُرَابِ
فَأُوَٰرِيَ سَوْءَةَ أَخِي ۖ فَأَصْبَحَ مِنَ
ٱلنَّٰدِمِينَ ﴿٣١﴾ مِنْ أَجْلِ ذَٰلِكَ كَتَبْنَا
عَلَىٰ بَنِيٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ أَنَّهُۥ مَن قَتَلَ نَفْسًۢا
بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا
قَتَلَ ٱلنَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا
فَكَأَنَّمَآ أَحْيَا ٱلنَّاسَ جَمِيعًا ۚ وَلَقَدْ
جَآءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُنَا بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ ثُمَّ إِنَّ كَثِيرًا
مِّنْهُم بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ لَمُسْرِفُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

Brothers and sisters may feel jealous of one another and the above verses display how the two sons of Adam, who had enormous space and resources, felt such jealousy which led to the earliest murder in human history. One's egotism drove him to this evil crime, just because he knew by a certain sign that his sacrifice to God had not been accepted while that offered by his brother was. He threatened his brother, but the latter chose to follow and assure the good side of the human nature [90:10; 91:7-10], and refrained from meeting the violence with violence, thus giving an example of self-denial and commitment to limit bloodshed. The arrogant murderer did not know how to bury the dead body of his murdered brother, until he was enlightened by an instinctive action of a raven that came scratching into the earth looking for food or water.

Besides the illuminating psychological and sociological information contained in the story, there is a moral message too. There is always one who chooses to do what is righteous, and to develop and assure the best of the human nature, while on the opposite side there is always one who chooses aggression and violence. The Quran addresses both human patterns: *"whoever kills [intentionally] a human being, unless it be [in punishment] for murder or for spreading corruption on earth, shall be as if he [/she] killed all human beings, and whoever saves a life shall be as if he [/she] had saved all human beings"*. The subsequent verse [5:33] indicates the legal penalty in this life for those who spread corruption and bloodshed on earth.

The Quranic story of Prophet Yusuf (Joseph), the son of Prophet Ya'qub (Jacob), and Joseph's brothers, displays also how jealousy among brothers can prompt a person to commit a crime without seriously thinking about the consequences *"Verily, in [the story of] Joseph and his brothers, there are messages for all who search [for the truth of what happened and about the human self]. When they said, 'Surely Joseph and his brother are dearer to our father than we, even though we are a band. Surely, our father is in obvious error. Kill you Joseph, or cast him forth into some land [faraway], so that your father's regard may be for you alone; and thereafter you may be by all means good' [in gaining what you actually desire, and then repenting to feel morally better]. Another of them said,*

'No, kill not Joseph, but rather cast him into the bottom of the well, [from which] some travellers may pick him up'" [12:7-10]. However, the story of Joseph assures the positive human side in the end after an exciting development of events: *"[The brothers] said [to Joseph], 'By God! God has certainly raised you high above us, and we were indeed wrong-doers'. He said, 'No reproach this day shall be on you; May God forgive you; He is the Most Merciful of all the merciful' "* [12:91-92].

In another story, the sister of Musa [Moses] played an important role in tracing her baby brother cautiously until he reached safety: *"And she [Moses' mother] said to his sister, 'Follow him', and [the girl] watched him from afar, even while they were not aware. Now We caused him to refuse the breast of nurses, and therefore she [Moses' sister seized the chance and] said, 'Shall I guide you to a family that will take care of him for you and sincerely look after him?' So We returned him to his mother, that she might be comforted and not grieve, and that she might know that God's promise always comes true, even though most of them know not"* [28:11-13].

Moses and his brother Harun [Aaron] also presented an outstanding example in their co-operation for carrying out the responsibilities of God's message [e.g. 7:142; 19:53; 20:29-36; 21:48; 23:45-48; 25:35-36; 26:10-17, 46-48; 28:34-35]. However, Moses was harsh on his brother when he put him in charge of the Israelites in Sinai before going to his appointed communication with God, and after returning to them he was shocked by their deviation and worshipping the gold calf. Aaron assured Moses that he had done his best to prevent the Israelites from such a grave deviation but he was not successful, and Moses realized that his brother could not be blamed for what had happened, and he prayed to God to bestow His forgiveness on both of them [7:148-151; 20:83-98]. Here it must be pointed out that just as the parents of children may stand against the beliefs, the values, or the interests of a person, that person's siblings may have the same stand, and one has to be equally aware and observant about this [9:23-24].

Brothers and sisters, both full and half, have their due shares in the inheritance of each other [4:12, 176]. The Quran further initiated the case of "milk" - or "suckling-brothers and sisters" who suckle together from the same woman. These cannot marry one another, regardless of whether any of them is actually biologically related to the wet nurse or to each other.

ORPHANS

...And they will ask you about [how to deal with] orphans. Say: "To set their affairs aright is the best, and if you share life with them, they are your brethren, and God knows the one who causes damage and the other who sets matters aright. And had God so willed, He would indeed have imposed on you burdensome pressures. Surely, God is All- mighty, All-wise. [2:220]

فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا وَ ٱلْأَخِرَةِ ۗ
وَيَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰ ۖ قُلْ إِصْلَاحٌ لَّهُمْ
خَيْرٌ ۖ وَ إِن تُخَالِطُوهُمْ فَإِخْوَٰنُكُمْ ۚ
وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ ٱلْمُفْسِدَ مِنَ ٱلْمُصْلِحِ ۚ وَ لَوْ
شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ لَأَعْنَتَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٢٠﴾

The Quran repeatedly stresses the moral and legal responsibility of care, help, and compassion for the orphans, especially those under one's guardianship, and indicates that this has been an essential teaching of the successive divine messages [e.g. 2:83, 177, 215; 4:36; 6:152; 17:34; 18:82; 76:8; 89:17; 90:14-15; 93:6, 9; 107:2]. In the above verse, the Quran allows the guardian of an orphan to participate with him/her in any joint business or investment, as long as the goal is the benefit of the orphan, since some guardians believed that righteousness and piety require a strict separation between the orphan's property and business affairs on one side and those of his/her guardian on the other. The Quran states that any legitimate way that is beneficial for the orphan can be practiced, whether it may be in the course of joint or separate business affairs; *"And had God so willed, He would indeed have imposed on you burdensome pressures. Surely, God is All-mighty, All-wise."*

And render to the orphans their possessions, and do not substitute what is bad for what is good, and consume not their possessions together with your own; surely this is an immense wrongdoing. And if you fear that you may not act justly towards the orphans, marry such women as are lawful and good to you, two or three or four; but if you fear that you will not be able to treat them with equal justice, then only one, or from whom you rightfully possess; it will then be more likely that you will not deviate from what is affordable and fair. [4:2-3]

وَءَاتُوا۟ ٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰٓ
أَمْوَٰلَهُمْ ۖ وَلَا تَتَبَدَّلُوا۟ ٱلْخَبِيثَ
بِٱلطَّيِّبِ ۖ وَلَا تَأْكُلُوٓا۟ أَمْوَٰلَهُمْ إِلَىٰٓ
أَمْوَٰلِكُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ حُوبًا كَبِيرًا ﴿٢﴾
وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تُقْسِطُوا۟ فِى ٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰ
فَٱنكِحُوا۟ مَا طَابَ لَكُم مِّنَ ٱلنِّسَآءِ
مَثْنَىٰ وَثُلَٰثَ وَرُبَٰعَ ۖ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا
تَعْدِلُوا۟ فَوَٰحِدَةً أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَٰنُكُمْ ۚ
ذَٰلِكَ أَدْنَىٰٓ أَلَّا تَعُولُوا۟ ﴿٣﴾

The first of the above verses addresses those who are in charge of the orphans, and the society as a whole, to prevent the possessions of the orphans from any exploitation, emphasizing in general that one should not take bad illegitimate gains instead of good and legitimate earnings, and in particular that a guardian should refrain from substituting some of his/her own bad possessions for the good possessions of the orphan who is under his/her guardianship.

To take better care of the orphans, in situations such as post-war circumstances where there are more female orphans than males to marry them, a man can marry more than one woman - but not more than four - on the condition that they all be treated equitably. If there is a mere "fear" about treating one wife more justly and fairly than the others, a man should have just one wife or whom one rightfully possess in wedlock, as this would save him from over-burdening responsibilities towards more than one wife and several children, and from hurting others as well. It is obvious that mentioning the fear of injustice towards orphans as a pressing situation that may allow more than one wife means that there is a relation of causality between them, and that such permission is given exceptionally for the benefit of the orphans, provided that they - as wives - be treated equitably.

And test the orphans [in your charge] and when they reach the age of marriage, if you perceive them to be mentally mature, hand over to them their possessions; and do not consume them wastefully and hastily, ere they grow up. And let the one who is rich abstain entirely [from what the orphan possesses], but the one who is poor should earn [for managing the orphan's affairs] in a fair manner. And when you hand over to them their possessions, let there be witnesses over them [that they have received their possessions rightfully], and God as a reckoner is sufficient [and unmatchable]. [4:6]

وَ ٱبۡتَلُواْ ٱلۡيَتَٰمَىٰ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا بَلَغُواْ
ٱلنِّكَاحَ فَإِنۡ ءَانَسۡتُم مِّنۡهُمۡ رُشۡدٗا
فَٱدۡفَعُوٓاْ إِلَيۡهِمۡ أَمۡوَٰلَهُمۡۖ وَلَا تَأۡكُلُوهَآ
إِسۡرَافٗا وَبِدَارًا أَن يَكۡبَرُواْۚ وَمَن كَانَ
غَنِيّٗا فَلۡيَسۡتَعۡفِفۡۖ وَمَن كَانَ فَقِيرٗا
فَلۡيَأۡكُلۡ بِٱلۡمَعۡرُوفِۚ فَإِذَا دَفَعۡتُمۡ إِلَيۡهِمۡ
أَمۡوَٰلَهُمۡ فَأَشۡهِدُواْ عَلَيۡهِمۡۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ
حَسِيبٗا ٦

The above verse requires that an orphan be trained and tested while there is some other person in charge of his/her possessions, and that he/she should prove to have maturity and sound judgement before his/her possessions are handed over to him/her when he/she reaches the age of marriage. This is a valuable principle that can have a wider use, such as in determining the personal merits of a candidate for a public position, in addition to the formal documentary requirements. However, those who are in charge of an orphan's possessions are warned against abusing their position and exploiting the orphan by consuming his/her possessions for their own benefit, and neglecting the orphan's interests while he/she is under their charge for the regular period or an extended one.

Making sure of the orphan's maturity before rendering his/her possessions to him/her has to be carried into effect through the necessary procedure and supervision arranged by the state authorities, so that any abuse is prevented in the first place and can be easily discovered if it happens in spite of the legal and supervisory safeguards. A guardian is urged to volunteer to manage the orphan's affairs if he/she is rich, and to take only a fair payment for such management if he/she is poor. To secure the rights of the orphan who becomes eligible for receiving his/her possessions, and the rights of the guardian who was in charge of them, witnesses for this handing over are required, in addition to necessary recording. As usual, the Quran does not indicate a legal responsibility without stressing the spiritual - moral one *"and God as a reckoner is sufficient [and unmatchable]."*

And when the distribution [of inheritance] is attended by near of kin and orphans and needy persons [who are not included in the will or the mandatory division of inheritance], make provision for them out of it, and speak to [and deal with] them kindly. And let those who if they [themselves] may leave behind them weak offspring, would feel worried about their future, feel [the same about any injustice they may cause now for the

وَإِذَا حَضَرَ ٱلۡقِسۡمَةَ أُوْلُواْ ٱلۡقُرۡبَىٰ
وَٱلۡيَتَٰمَىٰ وَٱلۡمَسَٰكِينُ فَٱرۡزُقُوهُم مِّنۡهُ
وَقُولُواْ لَهُمۡ قَوۡلٗا مَّعۡرُوفٗا ٨ وَلۡيَخۡشَ
ٱلَّذِينَ لَوۡ تَرَكُواْ مِنۡ خَلۡفِهِمۡ ذُرِّيَّةٗ ضِعَٰفًا
خَافُواْ عَلَيۡهِمۡۖ فَلۡيَتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ

weak orphans of whose affairs they are in charge], and let them be always conscious of God, and speak [and act] rightfully. Those who devour the possessions of orphans without any rights, are merely filling their bellies with fire, and [in the life to come] they will assuredly endure a blaze. [4:8-10]

وَلْيَقُولُوا۟ قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ﴿٩﴾ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ
يَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَٰلَ ٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰ ظُلْمًا إِنَّمَا
يَأْكُلُونَ فِى بُطُونِهِمْ نَارًا ۖ وَسَيَصْلَوْنَ
سَعِيرًا ﴿١٠﴾

The legal heirs of a deceased person are urged to care for the orphans who have no legal rights in the inheritance of this deceased person, and to give them something voluntarily. Another warning is also addressed here to those who are in charge of the orphan's affairs. They have to consider how they would like their weak and helpless offspring to be treated in the future, and treat the orphans under their charge in the same way. One who takes for him/herself what the orphan legally possesses will assuredly endure a flaming fire in the eternal life to come.

And they ask you about [more details in dealing with] women. Say: "God tells you about them, and what is being indicated to you in this Book concerning orphan women [of whom you are in charge], to whom you do not give what is ordained for them as you desire to marry them, and concerning helpless [orphan] children [in general], and [your obligation] that you should secure justice for [all] orphans. And whatsoever good you do, God has surely full knowledge of it. [4:127]

وَيَسْتَفْتُونَكَ فِى ٱلنِّسَآءِ ۚ قُلِ ٱللَّهُ يُفْتِيكُمْ
فِيهِنَّ وَمَا يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ فِى ٱلْكِتَٰبِ فِى
يَتَٰمَى ٱلنِّسَآءِ ٱلَّٰتِى لَا تُؤْتُونَهُنَّ مَا
كُتِبَ لَهُنَّ وَتَرْغَبُونَ أَن تَنكِحُوهُنَّ
وَٱلْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ ٱلْوِلْدَٰنِ وَأَن تَقُومُوا۟
لِلْيَتَٰمَىٰ بِٱلْقِسْطِ ۚ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا۟ مِنْ
خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِهِۦ عَلِيمًا ﴿١٢٧﴾

The above verse underlines the general rule of securing the rights of all orphans and dealing with them justly, and refers specifically to the orphan women who may be deprived of their rights, their possessions or their dowries by those who are in charge of their affairs and want to marry them, or want certain other persons whom they support to marry them. It is a general obligation for the whole society to defend the interests of these exploitable orphans, and a special public prosecutor for orphans' rights, or any other form of judicial protection has to be secured by the state authorities.

And know that whatever spoils of war you acquire, one fifth of it belongs to God and the Conveyor of His message, and the near of kin, and the orphans and the needy, and the wayfarer, if you believe in God and what We sent down upon Our servant on the day when the true

وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّمَا غَنِمْتُم مِّن شَىْءٍ فَأَنَّ لِلَّهِ
خُمُسَهُۥ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ
وَٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰ وَٱلْمَسَٰكِينِ وَٱبْنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ
إِن كُنتُمْ ءَامَنتُم بِٱللَّهِ وَمَآ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَىٰ
عَبْدِنَا يَوْمَ ٱلْفُرْقَانِ يَوْمَ ٱلْتَقَى

was distinguished from the false, the day when the two hosts met in battle. And God has the power over everything. [8:41]

اَلْجَمْعَانِ ۗ وَ اَللّٰهُ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٤١﴾

What God has turned over to the Conveyor of His Message from the people of the cities, belongs to God and the Conveyor of His Message, and the near of kin [of the deceased fighters] and the orphans, and the needy and the wayfarer; in order that it may not be [merely a benefit limited to a particular group] going round and round among only those of you who [may fight and] thus would become wealthy. Hence, follow whatever the Conveyor of the Message gives you [thereof] and refrain from whatever he forbids you, and be conscious of God; surely, God is strict in retribution. [59:7]

مَّآ أَفَآءَ اَللّٰهُ عَلٰى
رَسُولِهِۦ مِنْ أَهْلِ اَلْقُرٰى فَلِلّٰهِ وَ لِلرَّسُولِ
وَ لِذِى اَلْقُرْبٰى وَ اَلْيَتٰمٰى وَ اَلْمَسٰكِينِ
وَ اَبْنِ اَلسَّبِيلِ كَىْ لَا يَكُونَ دُولَةًۢ بَيْنَ
اَلْأَغْنِيَآءِ مِنكُمْ ۚ وَ مَآ ءَاتٰىكُمُ اَلرَّسُولُ
فَخُذُوهُ وَ مَا نَهٰىكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانتَهُوا۟ ۗ
وَ اَتَّقُوا۟ اَللّٰهَ ۖ إِنَّ اَللّٰهَ شَدِيدُ اَلْعِقَابِ ﴿٧﴾

The above verses provide the rules of dealing with the gains of war. According to commentators and jurists, the first verse [8:41] deals with what the fighters seize as a result of battle, while the second [59:7] refers to what they seize without fighting: *"and you have not spurred for it a horse or a camel"* [59:6]. In both cases, and as a general principle, the public resources are used to secure social justice and balance by supporting the deprived, especially those who are unable to earn their living because of their physical or social weaknesses. Therefore, and so in both of the above cases, a share is assigned significantly for the orphans, as well as others who are in need. The last verse states sharply and remarkably one of the fundamental objectives of the Islamic economic policy, that there should not be a privilege *"going round and round only among certain rich [people] of you."*

And do not entrust those who are weak of judgement the possessions which God has placed in your charge [for the whole society]; but provide sustenance for them therefrom, and clothe them, and speak to them kindly and fairly. [4:5]

وَ لَا تُؤْتُوا۟ اَلسُّفَهَآءَ أَمْوَٰلَكُمُ اَلَّتِى
جَعَلَ اَللّٰهُ لَكُمْ قِيٰمًا وَ اُرْزُقُوهُمْ فِيهَا
وَ اُكْسُوهُمْ وَ قُولُوا۟ لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا ﴿٥﴾

This verse underlines the fact that someone who is "weak of judgement" would hurt not only his/her private interests, but also the whole society to which all individuals and their private possessions belong. Therefore, the verse addresses the whole society and its concerned individuals that when taking care of the possessions of the *"weak of judgement"*, they should deal with their possessions as if they belonged to themselves, *"your possessions."* However, the legal rights of those who are "weak of judgement" over their

possessions are indisputable, and a comfortable life has to be secured for them. Furthermore, they have to be treated fairly and kindly, and as soon as they retain a fair judgement, all their possessions should be handed over to them. It is the same principle which is stated by the Quran about making sure of the orphans' maturity of mind and right judgement, before handing over their possessions to them when they reach the age of marriage [4:6].

VOLUNTARY BEQUEST (WILL) AND MANDATORY DISTRIBUTION OF INHERITANCE

كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَكُمُ
ٱلْمَوْتُ إِن تَرَكَ خَيْرًا ٱلْوَصِيَّةُ لِلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ
وَٱلْأَقْرَبِينَ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۖ حَقًّا عَلَى
ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٨٠﴾ فَمَنۢ بَدَّلَهُۥ بَعْدَ مَا سَمِعَهُۥ
فَإِنَّمَآ إِثْمُهُۥ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ يُبَدِّلُونَهُۥٓ ۚ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٨١﴾ فَمَنْ خَافَ مِن
مُّوصٍ جَنَفًا أَوْ إِثْمًا فَأَصْلَحَ بَيْنَهُمْ فَلَآ
إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٨٢﴾

It is ordained for you, when death approaches any of you, leaving behind wealth, to make a bequest for the benefit of his [/her] parents and [other] near of kin, in accordance of what is fair; this is an obligation on all who are conscious of God. Then, if anyone changes it after hearing it, such a wrongdoing shall rest only upon those who have changed it; surely God is All-hearing, All-knowing. But if anyone has reason to fear that a testator has made any fault or wrongdoing, nothing is held against him [/her], and he [/she] settles the matter right between them [the heirs]; surely, God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious. [2:180-182]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا
ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ شَهَٰدَةُ بَيْنِكُمْ إِذَا حَضَرَ
أَحَدَكُمُ ٱلْمَوْتُ حِينَ ٱلْوَصِيَّةِ ٱثْنَانِ ذَوَا
عَدْلٍ مِّنكُمْ أَوْ ءَاخَرَانِ مِنْ غَيْرِكُمْ إِنْ
أَنتُمْ ضَرَبْتُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَأَصَٰبَتْكُم
مُّصِيبَةُ ٱلْمَوْتِ ۚ تَحْبِسُونَهُمَا مِنۢ بَعْدِ
ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ فَيُقْسِمَانِ بِٱللَّهِ إِنِ ٱرْتَبْتُمْ لَا
نَشْتَرِى بِهِۦ ثَمَنًا وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا قُرْبَىٰ ۙ
وَلَا نَكْتُمُ شَهَٰدَةَ ٱللَّهِ إِنَّآ إِذًا لَّمِنَ
ٱلْأَثِمِينَ ﴿١٠٦﴾ فَإِنْ عُثِرَ عَلَىٰٓ أَنَّهُمَا

O you who have attained to faith! Let there be witnesses between you when death approaches you and you make bequests: two persons of probity from among your own people; or two other persons from [among people] other than your own, if you are travelling in the land [and become far from home] and the visitation of death befalls you. Take hold of the two after the prayer, and each of them shall swear by God, if you are doubtful, "We will not sell it [the truth] for any price, even if it were [a change that may benefit] a near of kin, nor will we hide any of what we have witnessed in God's presence, for then we would surely be among the wrongdoers." But if it be discovered afterwards that both of them have commited a wrongdoing, then two

others - from among these [the heirs of the deceased] whose rights have been hurt by the [initial testimony of the former] two - shall take their place and shall swear by God, "Our testimony is indeed truer than the testimony of these [former] two, and we have not transgressed the bounds of what is right, for then we would assuredly be among the evildoers". Thus it will be more likely that people will offer testimony properly [in accordance with the truth], or else they will fear that their oaths may be rebutted after they pronounce them. Be then conscious of God and hearken [unto him], and God does not bestow His guidance upon those who [deliberately] contravene righteousness. [5:106-108]

ٱسْتَحَقَّآ إِثْمًا فَـَٔاخَرَانِ يَقُومَانِ
مَقَامَهُمَا مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱسْتَحَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ
ٱلْأَوْلَيَٰنِ فَيُقْسِمَانِ بِٱللَّهِ لَشَهَٰدَتُنَآ
أَحَقُّ مِن شَهَٰدَتِهِمَا وَمَا ٱعْتَدَيْنَآ إِنَّآ
إِذًا لَّمِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٠٧﴾ ذَٰلِكَ أَدْنَىٰٓ
أَن يَأْتُوا۟ بِٱلشَّهَٰدَةِ عَلَىٰ وَجْهِهَآ أَوْ
يَخَافُوٓا۟ أَن تُرَدَّ أَيْمَٰنٌۢ بَعْدَ أَيْمَٰنِهِمْ ۗ
وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱسْمَعُوا۟ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا
يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلْفَٰسِقِينَ ﴿١٠٨﴾

Every Muslim who may leave behind him/her some wealth after death is required to write a will before his/her death may occur, which indicates how he/she wants this wealth to be distributed when he/she leaves this life. This requirement, mentioned in the above verses 2:180-182 and 5:106- 108, is strongly demanded in the verse 2:180, as the used expression "*it is ordained for you ...*" shows clearly. The verses 5:106-108, significantly prove the importance of this requirement by indicating how it can be fulfilled, "*when death approaches you*" before writing the will, and even when "*you are travelling in the land [and become far from home] and the visitation of death befalls you*". Furthermore, these verses are included in the chapter of the repast, "*Surat al-Ma'ida*", which was revealed just before other two chapters "suras" that ended the whole revelation of the Quran, and its revelation occurred in the period of the Prophet's "Farewell Pilgrimage" in the year 10 A.H., shortly after which the Prophet died.

All these connotations underline the importance of the requirement of a will and its permanent binding. On the other hand, the rules that indicate the mandatory distribution of the inheritance in the verses 4:11-12, 76 [to be commented on later] were revealed earlier, as the sura that they are in, sura 4, "The Women/ *al-Nisa'* ", was revealed, according to different opinions, either after sura 3 "The House of Imran/ *Al 'Imran*" which includes verses related to the battle of Uhud that took place in the year 3 A.H, or after sura 33 "The Confederators/ *al-Ahzab*" which includes verses related to the battle of al-Ahzab that took place in the year 5 A.H. In either case, sura 5 was revealed several years later in 10 A.H., shortly before the end of the Quranic revelation and of the Prophet's life. Moreover, the Quranic rules of inheritance in sura 4, refer clearly to the permanent force of the individual will which was "ordained" earlier in 2:180-182, and even its priority in adhering to the rules of mandatory distribution mentioned in the verses 4:11-12, which read successively and repeatedly in 4 places: "*... after [the deduction of] any bequest he may have made or any debt [he may have incurred] ... after [the deduction of] any bequest they may have made or any debt [they may have incurred] ... after [the deduction of] any bequest*

you may have made or any debt [you may have incurred] ... after [the deduction of] any bequest that may have been made, or any debt [that may have been incurred]."

A tradition of the Prophet reported by al-Daraqutni in "*al-Sunan*" on the authority of the Prophet's companion Jabir, states that "There should be no bequest for an inheritor" who has a defined share according to the verses 4:11-12. Al-Suyuti in his concise collection of the Prophet's traditions graded this one as "good", a grade which stands between the "authentic", and the "weak". However, a juristic opinion validates a bequest that gives an indicated inheritor in the verses 4:11-12, 176 an additional portion of the inheritance in the will if it is within one third of the total inheritance and if this is accepted by all the other indicated inheritors in the Quranic verses and the Prophet's traditions. The Ja'fari jurists have only stipulated that such a bequest to an indicated inheritor has to be within one third of the total inheritance, but they have not required the acceptance of other indicated inheritors. In fact, the indication of one third of the total inheritance as the maximum that a bequest may deal with emerged from an authentic tradition of the Prophet reported by Ibn Hanbal, al-Bukhari, Muslim, al-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah on the authority of the Prophet's Companion and cousin Ibn 'Abbas. The purpose of indicating such a limit is explained in a more detailed form of the rule reported by Malik, Ibn Hanbal, al-Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi, al-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah and related by the Prophet's Companion Sa'ad ibn Abi Waqqas which reads: "One third may be only given [in a bequest], and one third is plenty. It is better to leave your inheritors with satisfactory resources, than leaving them in need of other people to depend on and beg from. You will get your reward [in the life to come] for any that you may spend with the purpose of achieving the goodly acceptance of God". It is obvious from the detailed form of the tradition, as well as from what was reported about the occasion on which the tradition was said, that it is addressing the case of bequeathing to needy people who are not from the family of the bequeathed, or is referring to charity in general.

The additional bequest that is meant in the Quran is for "the parents and [other] near of kin" [2:180]. Such a bequest would be made according to the special needs of each one who is a member of the family of the deceased person, and this is why it is given priority by the Quran to the distribution of the inheritance indicated in the verses 4:11-12. A certain child or close relative may be, for physical or other considerations, in greater need than the other inheritors indicated in the verses who may be prosperous in their work and may have their own enormous wealth. The only condition for the will, as for any claimed debt, is that it should not reveal an obvious intention to cause harm to other heirs [4:12], or a deviation from the facts or from righteousness [2:182], and in such cases "a fair settlement" can be made between the heirs, through mediation or arbitration or by the court.

The procedure which is mentioned for making a will "when death approaches you" especially when one is travelling and far from home, was made in light of the special pressures of inconvenience and hastiness in such sudden, painful and difficult circumstances. Instead of writing the will, stating it orally in the presence of two witnesses of probity, as was ordained in the verses concerning writing the credit [2:282-283], takes into account the need for quickness and flexibility, and the difficulties of travel during which one is not settled [2:282-283]. It is significant that no differentiation between male and female witnesses is mentioned with regard to the two witnesses required for hearing the oral

statement of a will, differently from cases of giving or taking credit [2:282-283]. Accordingly, the indicated differentiation has to be understood through reason and should be restricted only to the circumstances mentioned in the verses, that dealt with giving or taking credit and that required two female witnesses as a substitute for one male witness: "so that if one of them should make a mistake, the other could remind her" [2:282]. The witnesses of an oral bequest are required to be only "*two persons of probity*", and may be "*from [among people] other than your own*" [5:106]. This significant provision strongly indicates that in principle there is no differentiation in the legal status, rights and obligations in the Islamic law on the grounds of gender or faith.

God directs you concerning your children[’s inheritance]: to the male, a share equal to that of two females; if they be only females [two or] more than two, then their share is two-thirds of what [their parent] leaves behind; if she be only one, her share is a half. As for the parents [of the deceased person], each of them has one-sixth of what he [/she] leaves behind, if he[/she; the deceased] left a child; but if he[/she] left no child, and the parents are the [only] heirs, the mother has one-third; and if he[/she; the deceased] has brothers or sisters, then the mother has one-sixth after [the deduction of] any bequest he [/she] may have made, or any debt [he/she may have incurred]. Your parents and your children, you know not which of them is of more benefit to you; [therefore this is] an ordinance from God. Surely, God is All-knowing, All-wise.

And you inherit a half of what your wives leave behind, if they leave no child, but if they leave a child, you get one quarter of what they leave behind, after [the deduction of] any bequest you may have made or any debt [you may have incurred]. And your widows have one quarter of what you leave behind if they have no child; but if you leave a child, they get one eighth of what you leave behind, after [the deduction of] any bequest you may have made or any debt [you may have incurred]. And if a man or a woman has no heir in the direct line, but has a brother or sister, each of these gets

يُوصِيكُمُ ٱللَّهُ فِىٓ
أَوْلَٰدِكُمْ ۖ لِلذَّكَرِ مِثْلُ حَظِّ ٱلْأُنثَيَيْنِ ۚ
فَإِن كُنَّ نِسَآءً فَوْقَ ٱثْنَتَيْنِ ۚ فَلَهُنَّ ثُلُثَا
مَا تَرَكَ ۖ وَإِن كَانَتْ وَٰحِدَةً فَلَهَا
ٱلنِّصْفُ ۚ وَلِأَبَوَيْهِ لِكُلِّ وَٰحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا
ٱلسُّدُسُ مِمَّا تَرَكَ إِن كَانَ لَهُۥ وَلَدٌ ۚ فَإِن
لَّمْ يَكُن لَّهُۥ وَلَدٌ وَوَرِثَهُۥٓ أَبَوَاهُ فَلِأُمِّهِ
ٱلثُّلُثُ ۚ فَإِن كَانَ لَهُۥٓ إِخْوَةٌ فَلِأُمِّهِ
ٱلسُّدُسُ ۚ مِنۢ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصِى بِهَآ أَوْ
دَيْنٍ ۗ ءَابَآؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَآؤُكُمْ لَا تَدْرُونَ
أَيُّهُمْ أَقْرَبُ لَكُمْ نَفْعًا ۚ فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١١﴾
وَلَكُمْ نِصْفُ مَا تَرَكَ أَزْوَٰجُكُمْ إِن لَّمْ يَكُن
لَّهُنَّ وَلَدٌ ۚ فَإِن كَانَ لَهُنَّ وَلَدٌ فَلَكُمُ ٱلرُّبُعُ
مِمَّا تَرَكْنَ ۚ مِنۢ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصِينَ بِهَآ
أَوْ دَيْنٍ ۚ وَلَهُنَّ ٱلرُّبُعُ مِمَّا تَرَكْتُمْ إِن لَّمْ
يَكُن لَّكُمْ وَلَدٌ ۚ فَإِن كَانَ لَكُمْ وَلَدٌ فَلَهُنَّ
ٱلثُّمُنُ مِمَّا تَرَكْتُم ۚ مِّنۢ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ
تُوصُونَ بِهَآ أَوْ دَيْنٍ ۗ وَإِن كَانَ رَجُلٌ
يُورَثُ كَلَٰلَةً أَوِ ٱمْرَأَةٌ وَلَهُۥٓ أَخٌ أَوْ

one-sixth; but if there are more than two, they share in one-third [of the inheritance], after [the deduction of] any bequest that may have been made or any debt [that may have been incurred], which have not been intended to harm [the heirs]. This is God's direction, and God is all-knowing, most forbearing.
These are the bounds set by God and whoever obeys God and the Conveyor of His message, God will bring him [/her] to gardens underneath which rivers flow, to abide therein and this indeed is an accomplishment supreme. But whoever disobeys God and the Conveyor of His message and transgresses His bounds, God will commit him [/her] to a fire to abide therein, and for him [/her] there awaits a humiliating suffering. [4:11-14]

أُخْتٌ فَلِكُلِّ وَٰحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا ٱلسُّدُسُ ۚ فَإِن
كَانُوٓا۟ أَكْثَرَ مِن ذَٰلِكَ فَهُمْ شُرَكَآءُ فِى
ٱلثُّلُثِ ۚ مِنۢ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصَىٰ بِهَآ أَوْ
دَيْنٍ غَيْرَ مُضَآرٍّ ۚ وَصِيَّةً مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ
وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿١٢﴾ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ ٱللَّهِ ۚ
وَمَن يُطِعِ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ يُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّٰتٍ
تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ
وَذَٰلِكَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿١٣﴾ وَمَن يَعْصِ
ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ وَيَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَهُۥ يُدْخِلْهُ
نَارًا خَٰلِدًا فِيهَا وَلَهُۥ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ ﴿١٤﴾

They ask you [for a certain case of inheritance distribution], say: "God guides you about the laws concerning [inheritance from] those who leave no heir in the direct line. If a man dies childless and has a sister, she inherits a half of what he leaves, just as he inherits from her if she dies childless. But if there be two sisters, both [together] have two thirds of what he leaves; and if there are brothers and sisters, the male has the equal of two females' share. God makes this clear to you, lest you go astray; and God has knowledge of everything. [4:176]

يَسْتَفْتُونَكَ قُلِ ٱللَّهُ يُفْتِيكُمْ فِى ٱلْكَلَٰلَةِ ۚ
إِنِ ٱمْرُؤٌا۟ هَلَكَ لَيْسَ لَهُۥ وَلَدٌ وَلَهُۥٓ
أُخْتٌ فَلَهَا نِصْفُ مَا تَرَكَ ۚ وَهُوَ يَرِثُهَآ
إِن لَّمْ يَكُن لَّهَا وَلَدٌ ۚ فَإِن كَانَتَا ٱثْنَتَيْنِ
فَلَهُمَا ٱلثُّلُثَانِ مِمَّا تَرَكَ ۚ وَإِن كَانُوٓا۟
إِخْوَةً رِّجَالًا وَنِسَآءً فَلِلذَّكَرِ مِثْلُ حَظِّ
ٱلْأُنثَيَيْنِ ۗ يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ أَن تَضِلُّوا۟ ۗ
وَٱللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌۢ ﴿١٧٦﴾

In general a personal will which would be designed according to the special circumstances of the family of the deceased, is given priority to the general mandatory rules given by the Quran in the verses 4:11-12, 176. These general mandatory rules have to be applied to the whole legacy of the deceased person if he/she has not left any valid will, and they have to be applied to part of the legacy when the valid will does not encompass the whole inheritance. The rules indicated in these verses are well formulated to be general and comprehensive for the different members of the nucleus family: the parents, the children, and the brothers and sisters, and they apply to various family circumstances. The Prophet's traditions widen the range of the inheritors by including the kin through the father "*al-'asaba*" like the uncles, but the Ja'fari jurisprudence has not accepted this tradition and consequently the rule.

As for the rule in these verses about the shares of male and female children or brothers or sisters when there are no heirs in the direct line: *"the male gets the equal of two females' share"* [4:11, 176], one should keep in mind that such a rule goes with the general principle that the man has the legal responsibility to maintain the family financially, and thus every female has a man to provide all her needs, be he a father, a husband, a brother or a son, and thus her share in the inheritance will be something additional for her personal disposal while her needs are fulfilled by the nearest male of kin who is legally responsible for such maintenance. When this is not the case, and the woman has to earn her own living and fulfill her own needs, the personal will can respond specifically to different circumstances, and has to be the main and the primary way of distributing the inheritance according to the verses 2:180-182. However, it is significant that the Quran gives to the male and the female equal shares in the case of both parents (father and mother of the deceased person who has children) [4:11], and in the case of the half siblings (half brothers or half sisters) when the deceased person does not leave heirs in the direct line [4:12].

As for the distribution of the inheritance between the brothers and sisters when there are no heirs in the direct line of the deceased person (no parents or children), most of the commentators state that the shares indicated in the verse 4:12 are related to half brothers and half sisters, whereas the shares of full brothers and full sisters in the same situation are dealt with in the verse 4:176. The laws of inheritance have in general, received a careful and elaborate study from the different juristic schools, as is obvious from the voluminous heritage of Islamic jurisprudence.

WOMEN IN THE SOCIETY

The believers, both men and women, are in charge of [and responsible for] one another: they [all] enjoin the doing of what is right, and forbid the doing of what is wrong; they keep up prayers, render the purifying welfare dues (zakat) and obey God and the Conveyor of His Message. It is they upon whom God will bestow His grace; surely, God is All-mighty, All-wise. [9:71]

وَٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ
وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَآءُ بَعْضٍ ۚ
يَأْمُرُونَ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ
ٱلْمُنكَرِ وَيُقِيمُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ
ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَيُطِيعُونَ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥٓ ۚ
أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ ٱللَّهُ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ
حَكِيمٌ ﴿٧١﴾

The above verse states an essential principle of the human rights and responsibilities of women in the society, as well as their equality and mutual co-operation with men in this respect. Muslim women are responsible for and in charge of Muslim men with regard to the observance and defense of moral values in the society, just as Muslim men are responsible for and in charge of Muslim women with regard to the societal collective soundness and development. The Quran states that all Muslims have to keep up their observance of moral values together through enjoining the doing of what is right and good and forbidding the doing of what is wrong and evil, if they want to maintain their status as "*the best community that has ever been brought forth for [the good of] humanity*" [3:110], and to avoid the condemnation of some of the followers of previous messages of God when they failed to fulfill the responsibility of maintaining and defending the moral essence of God's message due to their passivity, or even their active support of the evil-doers and transgressors [5:78-81]. Public, social, educational, or political groups can be formed from among the people to observe the maintenance of the moral values of God's message [3:104], and the ruling authorities in addition to their role in public education and information about these values, have a responsibility to secure all the rights of such groups and to facilitate and support their efforts [22:41].

In the above verse [9:71] the Quran states clearly that Muslim men and women share these responsibilities equally and jointly, and it is the right and obligation of both to guard the social good and development. These social guards should as individuals and groups commit themselves to the very values and message that they want to maintain in the society as a whole, since one who lacks something cannot offer it to others [2:44; 61:2-3]. Therefore, believing men and women should initially maintain their individual obligations of prayer, rendering the purifying welfare dues (zakat), and following in general God's guidance in their behavior in order to prove their credibility for maintaining the social morality and their worthiness of God's goodly acceptance and rewards.

O Prophet! Whenever believing women come to you to pledge their

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِىُّ

allegiance [to you and commitment to Islam], [pledging] that they will not associate any with God, and will not steal, and will not commit adultery [or fornication], and will not kill their children, and will not bring out falsehood through their own deliberate efforts, and will not disobey you in the good you tell them to do, then accept their pledge of allegiance [and their commitment], and pray to God to forgive them [whatever wrong they probably did before]; surely God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious. [60:12]

إِذَا جَآءَكَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتُ يُبَايِعْنَكَ عَلَىٰٓ
أَن لَّا يُشْرِكْنَ بِٱللَّهِ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا يَسْرِقْنَ
وَلَا يَزْنِينَ وَلَا يَقْتُلْنَ أَوْلَٰدَهُنَّ وَلَا يَأْتِينَ
بِبُهْتَٰنٍ يَفْتَرِينَهُۥ بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِنَّ وَأَرْجُلِهِنَّ
وَلَا يَعْصِينَكَ فِى مَعْرُوفٍ ۙ فَبَايِعْهُنَّ
وَٱسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُنَّ ٱللَّهَ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ
رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٢﴾

The above verse represents an early implementation of the general Quranic principle that the believing man and the believing woman are equally responsible for and in charge of one another 9:71. The Quran stated that men and women ought to be dealt with equally when giving the Prophet a pledge of allegiance and commitment to Islam. Both have to pledge to be always conscious of their belief in the One God and of their accountability before Him, of the moral values that His guidance teaches them to observe, and to obey the Prophet as the Conveyor of God's message and the leader of the community in whatever good he directs them to do. When a woman gave such a pledge, which was the same as that given by men, the Prophet accepted it and prayed to God to forgive any wrong she probably did before. Then, when the legitimate struggle to defend the rights of persons, homes and beliefs was declared by Muslims, men and women both shared their responsibilities in the struggle and went together to the battle field, each doing his/her best to fulfill the pledge and obligations of defending the rights of the believers and the freedom of belief and expression.

It will not be held against you, if you [freely] enter houses not used as residence, which are of some use for you; and God knows all that you do reveal, and all that you may conceal. Tell the believing men to lower their gaze [avoiding its concentration on a person's body, or a certain part of it] and to be mindful of their chastity; in this they will be more considerate for their own well-being and purity, and surely God is fully aware of all that they do. And tell the believing women to [also] lower their gaze, avoiding its concentration of [on a person's body or a certain part of it] and to be mindful of their chastity , and not to display the charms of their bodies [in public] beyond what may [decently] be apparent

لَّيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ
أَن تَدْخُلُوا۟ بُيُوتًا غَيْرَ مَسْكُونَةٍ فِيهَا
مَتَٰعٌ لَّكُمْ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا
تَكْتُمُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾ قُل لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا۟ مِنْ
أَبْصَٰرِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا۟ فُرُوجَهُمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ
أَزْكَىٰ لَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ خَبِيرٌۢ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ
﴿٣٠﴾ وَقُل لِّلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ
أَبْصَٰرِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ
زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا ۖ وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ

thereof; and, let them draw their head-coverings over their bosoms, and let them not display [more of] their charms to any but their husbands, or their fathers, or their husbands' fathers, or their sons, or their husband's sons, or their brothers, or their brothers' sons, or or their sisters' sons, or their womenfolk, or those whom they rightfully possess, or such male attendants as are beyond all sexual desire, or children who are as yet unaware of [the physical attractions of] women's nakedness; and let them avoid stamping their feet [or other actions in their walking] that may aim to draw attention to their hidden charms. And [in all times] O you who have attained to faith, turn you all together towards God in repentance that you may attain success. [24:29-31]

بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَىٰ جُيُوبِهِنَّ ۖ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ
زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا لِبُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ ءَابَآئِهِنَّ أَوْ
ءَابَآءِ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَآئِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَآءِ
بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ إِخْوَٰنِهِنَّ أَوْ بَنِىٓ إِخْوَٰنِهِنَّ
أَوْ بَنِىٓ أَخَوَٰتِهِنَّ أَوْ نِسَآئِهِنَّ أَوْ مَا
مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَٰنُهُنَّ أَوِ ٱلتَّٰبِعِينَ غَيْرِ أُو۟لِى
ٱلْإِرْبَةِ مِنَ ٱلرِّجَالِ أَوِ ٱلطِّفْلِ ٱلَّذِينَ لَمْ
يَظْهَرُوا۟ عَلَىٰ عَوْرَٰتِ ٱلنِّسَآءِ ۖ وَلَا
يَضْرِبْنَ بِأَرْجُلِهِنَّ لِيُعْلَمَ مَا يُخْفِينَ مِن
زِينَتِهِنَّ ۚ وَتُوبُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَ
ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۚ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

As the believers, men and women, are allowed to go freely, without any required permission, to public places and enter premises not used as residences, they have to observe certain manners during such free moving and mixing. First, they have to avoid concentration of their gaze on a person's body or a certain part of it and to be mindful of their chastity. Such an avoidance of gaze concentration does not mean that one should offensively close his/her eyes or avoid looking at the person to whom he/she is talking; rather it means that one should distribute one's glances among different objects.

Secondly, in order to maintain chastity and to prevent any undesired temptation, there is a dress code for both men and women, although the dominant view may be that only women are required to observe a dress code. All the points of special attraction in the male body have to be covered, and displaying the muscles or most of the body merely for attraction is against a man's mindfulness of chastity and decency and extends the temptation for evil-doing. Women are required not to display the charms of their bodies in public beyond what may decently be apparent thereof. According to early Muslim practices and several juristic views, these charms have not been indicated in detail, and such details may not be possible or suitable for a general permanent law because of differences and changes in the social customs from time to time and from place to place. What was considered beyond the decent appearance for a free woman was in the past considered different from that of a slave. The same difference may be there between a house wife and a working woman, or between an old woman and a young one, or between a woman who is marriageable to certain males when she meets these males and another whose marriage is forbidden to them [see for example al-Shawkani: *Nayl al-Awtar*, Beirut 1973, vol. I pp. 55-66, VI pp 239-245; al-Amir al-San'ani, Subul al-Salam, Cairo 1960, vol III. p. 113; Ibn Rushd: Bedayat al-Mujtahid, Beirut, I pp 82- 84]. The prominent commentators reflected this flexibility in their commentary on the verses 24:30-31. Al-Fakhr al-Razi stated that

what should be covered is left to the prevailing custom, while al-Zamakshari left it to the custom and nature. Al-Wahidi and Ibn Atiyya allowed half of the arm to be uncovered, while al-Nisaburi allowed the uncovering of the arm to the elbow. Ibn Hayyan, in addition to considering custom and nature in what may be uncovered, considered the needs of poor women.

The head covering was known among women in Arabia customarily before Islam, but it was let down loosely over the wearer's back, while the breast might be left uncovered and thus appearing from the opening of the woman's dress [see the commentary of al-Qurtubi on the above verse 24:30, vol II. p230, Cairo]. The Quranic verse obviously stresses covering the bosom and avoiding the prevailing custom of displaying it. The main objective of the dress code of Muslim women as indicated in another verse is to make their modesty obvious to everyone "*thus it is more that they will be better recognized [as decent women] and thus not be harassed*" [33:59]. This objective does not have to be reached only by one particular pattern or fashion, but is left to changing circumstances, while modesty itself is a permanent requirement whatever the form that fulfills it may be.

Such moral and formal requirements for both believing men and women are intended to enable both to mix together for individual and social purposes comfortably, and to communicate and co-operate through the human intellect without being distracted by physical charms. It would be meaningless to require such precautions if segregation was the social rule of the Islamic society as some may think.

Although a meeting in the seclusion of any enclosed or isolated premise between one woman and one man who are not married but who are legally and physically marriageable to one another is strictly forbidden, for the convenience of both men and women, those who have a close family relationship to the woman or her husband and those who are physically lacking sexual desires, are allowed flexibility in mixing together without observing the dress requirements. In any case, God-consciousness should dominate the hearts and minds and behavior of those who have attained to faith, both males and females, as it is the essential and continuous guard of morality and the self-corrector during times of inclination towards wrong-doing.

And those who hurt [through speaking or acting in any way] believing men and believing women with [allegations] which they have never gone through, bear [on themselves] the guilt of calumny and glaring evil-doing. O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters, and all other believing women as well, that they should draw over themselves some of their outer garments [when in public]: thus it is more likely that they will be better recognized [as decent women], and thus not be annoyed. But [withal] God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious. [33:58-59]

وَٱلَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ
ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ بِغَيْرِ مَا
ٱكْتَسَبُوا۟ فَقَدِ ٱحْتَمَلُوا۟ بُهْتَٰنًا وَإِثْمًا
مُّبِينًا ﴿٥٨﴾ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِىُّ قُل لِّأَزْوَٰجِكَ
وَبَنَاتِكَ وَنِسَآءِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْنِينَ
عَلَيْهِنَّ مِن جَلَٰبِيبِهِنَّ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ أَدْنَىٰٓ أَن
يُعْرَفْنَ فَلَا يُؤْذَيْنَ ۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ غَفُورًا
رَّحِيمًا ﴿٥٩﴾

It is the right of every human being, male or female, to be protected in his/her personality, dignity and integrity. No false accusation, guessing or rumor against anyone is allowed [also 49:6, 12], and whoever is involved in such a violation of another's human right has to be responsible for such a violation morally and legally. However, believing men and believing women should not make themselves liable for such attacks through their imprudence or lack of sensitivity. The previous verses 24:30-31 have indicated the dress code that secures the chastity and modesty of men and women, and the above verse also underlines the main requirement for women's dresses, and furthermore it indicates the objective of the precautions of not displaying the charms of women's bodies in public beyond what may decently be apparent thereof, and of the drawing of some of their outer garments over themselves when they are in public. These precautions are not meant to restrict women's rights and freedom or to treat them as an inferior sex and put them under oppressive measures, but they are merely meant "*to make them more recognized [as decent women], and thus not be harassed*". The charms of a woman's body are bountiful, and the dress code is not decided arbitrarily and groundlessly. It is decided to make men and women mix comfortably in public, without restricting the women's movement when carrying out their individual and social responsibilities, or distracting a man or a woman from constructive intellectual communication or social co-operation because of physical or sexual attraction.

As the classical historians and commentators stated, the early Muslim societies had the tradition of making free woman and slaves distinctive in their dresses and in what is covered of the bodies of each; and some of women's charms - such as the bosom - may have been displayed. The Quranic guidance as provided in the above verse and in the previous ones [24:30-31] is general, and it has to be considered and implemented according to different circumstances and prevailing customs, and they do not prescribe a certain strict pattern or fashion. The essence and goal that ought to be always observed is modesty, while the form and means are by nature variable and changeable [see the previous commentary on verses 24:30-31].

It is not for a believing man or a believing woman, whenever a matter is decided by God and the Conveyor of His message, to exercise choice in what they may do in this matter; and anyone who disobeys God and the Conveyor of His message, has indeed, wandered off into evident deviation. [33:36]

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا
مُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى ٱللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُۥٓ أَمْرًا
أَن يَكُونَ لَهُمُ ٱلْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ ۗ وَمَن
يَعْصِ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَٰلًا
مُّبِينًا ﴿٣٦﴾

Although the masculine singular or plural may be used to include both male(s) and female(s) in the Arabic language, the Quran mentions each of the masculine and feminine singular or plural separately in many verses to stress the independent responsibility of every person, be they male or female, and the equality of both sexes in relation to God's message and law as a general principle, especially in human rights and obligations [e.g.

9:71-72; 24:12, 30-31; 33:35-36, 58, 73; 47:19; 48:5, 25; 57:12; 71:28; 85:10]. Even for those who have associated others with God, or have been hypocrites, males and females may be mentioned separately to indicate the equal responsibility of both genders about their beliefs and deeds [e.g. 9:67-68; 33:73; 48:6; 57:13].

The above verse stresses that the believing man and the believing woman has his/her responsibility and obligation to follow God's guidance independently and equally, and that both of them are held responsible individually for negligence or disobedience of it. Thus Muslim women are not addressed by God's message through men [i.e. fathers, brothers, husbands, sons ...], but are addressed directly, and a woman has her individual and social rights and obligations independently. At the time of the Prophet, women gave their pledge of commitment to Islam [60:12], attended the Prophet's teaching and proved their seriousness and self-confidence in asking or discussing with him matters which they wanted to know or to get clarified. They also had their role in defending Islam and Muslims, as the sources of the Prophet's traditions (Sunna) and the Prophet's life (*Sira*) clearly and strongly indicate.

CHAPTER EIGHT

LAW "SHARI'A" (II)

CIVIL AND COMMERCIAL DEALINGS
" MU'AMALAT"

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

A general principle in Shari'a is that everything created by God for the human use is thus lawful, unless something is specifically proved prohibited by relevant Quranic and/or Sunna texts.

It is He who has created for you all that is on earth, and has dealt with the heavens formed appropriately into seven, and He alone has full knowledge of everything. [2:29]

هُوَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ لَكُم
مَّا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ ٱسْتَوَىٰٓ إِلَى
ٱلسَّمَآءِ فَسَوَّىٰهُنَّ سَبْعَ سَمَٰوَٰتٍ وَهُوَ
بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٩﴾

And He has made subservient to you, what is in the heavens and what is on the earth, all together from Him; in that are signs indeed for people who reflect. [45:13]

وَسَخَّرَ لَكُم مَّا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مِّنْهُ ۚ إِنَّ فِى
ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

God's law, "Shari'a", aims to help fulfill the needs of the human beings and make their lives as easy as possible "*God wills that you have ease, and does not will you to suffer*

hardship" [2:185]; "*God does not want to impose any hardship on you, but wants to purify you and that He may complete His blessing upon you, haply you will be grateful*" [5:6]. God's law neither aims to impede human discretion, nor to cover every detail in the vast range of human activities. If it supposedly did this in relation to present circumstances, how may believers act in the ever changing circumstances in the future? Revelation of all future occurences is against God's plan of not revealing everything to the human knowledge and entrusting the human mind with thinking of changing and emerging circumstances [e.g. *"And it is not God's will to acquaint you with what is beyond the reach of human perception"* [3:179; also 6:59; 7:188; 27:65; 72:26 ...]]. The human intellect is God's creation, and God's message does not aim to obstruct the human intellectual capabilities that are created by God.

The Quran emphatically states in the above-mentioned verses that everything in the whole multiple cosmos has been created for the use of the human beings. Anything found in nature is lawful for human use unless it is specifically forbidden by a relevant text in the Quran and Sunna, and any human deed or dealing is permitted, unless it, too, is prohibited or discouraged by the Quran and Sunna. One is not required to prove that the use of natural substances, or the allowance of any human deed or dealing is specifically supported by divine texts or historical precedents; lawfulness is implied as a general rule for God's creation unless there is evidence to the contrary, and the burden of presenting the acceptable evidence lies upon the person who claims the prohibition or discouragement. Such legitimate use of human intellect and discretion "*ijtihad*," in coping with the infinite emerging circumstances is guided only by the general principles of Shari'a which are based on justice and benevolence *"al-'adl wa al-ihsan"* [e.g. 16:90], Every thing and dealing is considered lawful by Shari'a insofar as it fulfills its general goals and principles, and secures and develops the essentials, needs and refinements for the human being [i.e. the human life, the family as the continuation of human life, the human mind, the freedom of faith, and the legitimate property], and other principles of justice and benevolence in the Quran and Sunna, and do not contradict any particular rule in them. For the place of how ijtihad in Shari'a in order to respond to the infinite and unexpected emerging circumstances, see: al-Shihristani, *al-Milal wa-l-Nihal*, verified by Muhammad Sayyid Kaylani I:p.199, Beirut: 1975; Ibn Khaldun, *al-Muqadimma*, pp. 445-446, Beirut: 1978].

O You who have attained to faith! Forbid not such good things of life as God has made lawful to you, but do not transgress the bounds of what is right; verily, God loves not transgressors. Thus, partake of the lawful good things with which God has provided you, and be conscious of God, in whom you believe. [5:87-88]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُواْ لَا تُحَرِّمُواْ طَيِّبَٰتِ مَآ أَحَلَّ ٱللَّهُ
لَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوٓاْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ
ٱلْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾ وَكُلُواْ مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ ٱللَّهُ
حَلَٰلًا طَيِّبًا ۚ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنتُم
بِهِۦ مُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾

O Children of Adam! Take your adornment at every place of worship; and eat and drink, yet do not go

يَٰبَنِىٓ ءَادَمَ خُذُواْ

beyond natural and reasonable limits, for God loves not those who go beyond moderation. Say: "Who has forbidden the beauty that God has brought forth for His creatures, and the good things, among the means of sustenance?" Say: "They are [lawful] in the life of this world for all who have attained to faith, and they will be theirs alone on the Day of Resurrection." Thus, clearly do We spell out these messages to those who know. [7:31-32]

زِينَتَكُمْ عِندَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَكُلُوا۟ وَٱشْرَبُوا۟
وَلَا تُسْرِفُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُسْرِفِينَ
﴿٣١﴾ قُلْ مَنْ حَرَّمَ زِينَةَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّتِىٓ
أَخْرَجَ لِعِبَادِهِۦ وَٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ مِنَ ٱلرِّزْقِ ۚ
قُلْ هِىَ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ
ٱلدُّنْيَا خَالِصَةً يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ
نُفَصِّلُ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

Say: "Have you considered what God has sent down to you as sustenance, yet you [on your own] hold forbidden some things thereof and [some things] lawful?" Say: "Has God indeed given you leave [to do this], or do you attribute what you yourselves forge to God?" And what think those who attribute their forged lies to God [will happen to them] on the Day of Resurrection? Verily, God is limitless in His bounty to human beings, but most of them are ungrateful. [10:59-60]

قُلْ أَرَءَيْتُم مَّآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ لَكُم مِّن رِّزْقٍ
فَجَعَلْتُم مِّنْهُ حَرَامًا وَحَلَٰلًا قُلْ ءَآللَّهُ
أَذِنَ لَكُمْ ۖ أَمْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ تَفْتَرُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾
وَمَا ظَنُّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ٱلْكَذِبَ
يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى
ٱلنَّاسِ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾

And eat of all the lawful good things with which God has provided you, and be grateful for the blessings of God, if it is [truly] Him whom you worship. [16:114]

فَكُلُوا۟ مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ ٱللَّهُ
حَلَٰلًا طَيِّبًا وَٱشْكُرُوا۟ نِعْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ إِن
كُنتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿١١٤﴾

And do not utter falsehoods by letting your tongues determine [at your own discretion] saying: 'This is lawful, and this is forbidden', thus attributing your own lies to God; surely those who attribute falsehood to God will never attain success. A little enjoyment [may be their share in this life], but grievous suffering awaits them [in the eternal life to come]. [16:116-117]

وَلَا تَقُولُوا۟ لِمَا تَصِفُ أَلْسِنَتُكُمُ
ٱلْكَذِبَ ۚ هَٰذَا حَلَٰلٌ وَهَٰذَا حَرَامٌ
لِّتَفْتَرُوا۟ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ٱلْكَذِبَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ
يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ٱلْكَذِبَ لَا يُفْلِحُونَ
﴿١١٦﴾ مَتَٰعٌ قَلِيلٌ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ
﴿١١٧﴾

The above verses emphasize the general Islamic principle that the good things of life are created for human use and are lawful, except when specifically forbidden. The

believers are warned against mistaken piety and individual determination of the *halal* and *haram*, and are reminded that they can never declare on their own what may be lawful or unlawful in the name of God; only He can do this. Deeming the lawful to be unlawful is as wrong and as prohibited as making the unlawful lawful. Exaggerated inclinations towards permissiveness as well as restrictiveness are human extremes which ought to be avoided, and God's laws intervene and maintain what is right, sensible and fair in such matters. Ultra-strictness would not make God's message appeal to a wider range of people, and cannot be observed indefinitely. In addition, the Prophet describes such ultra-strictness as "dissuasion from God's way, *fitna*" [a tradition addressed to Mu'adh ibn Jabal when he led a long prayer which exhausted those who prayed behind him and some of them complained to the Prophet; reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, al-Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, al-Darami].

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا
تَسْـَٔلُواْ عَنْ أَشْيَآءَ إِن تُبْدَ لَكُمْ تَسُؤْكُمْ ۖ
وَإِن تَسْـَٔلُواْ عَنْهَا حِينَ يُنَزَّلُ ٱلْقُرْءَانُ
تُبْدَ لَكُمْ ۖ عَفَا ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا ۗ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٌ
حَلِيمٌ ﴿١٠١﴾ قَدْ سَأَلَهَا قَوْمٌ مِّن قَبْلِكُمْ ثُمَّ
أَصْبَحُواْ بِهَا كَٰفِرِينَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

O you who have attained to faith! Do not ask about matters which, if they were to be made manifest to you may cause you hardship; if you ask about them while the Quran is being revealed, they will be made manifest to you. God has let them unindicated [and you accordingly unbound] in this respect, for God is All-forgiving, All-clement. People before your time have asked such questions, and they in result thereof stubbornly denied the revelation. [5:101-102]

People are allowed to use their intelligence, apply their moral values and take their own initiative during a considerable amount of their daily activities, and thus should not be subjected to many legal sanctions and prohibitions. Laws need to be made only when they become necessary, such as in cases when individual initiative and moral motivation fail to secure justice, and to maintain the rights of all concerned parties (the different individuals and the society). Human deeds and dealings ought to be as free from restrictions as possible, allowing the creativity of the human mind to work and develop, as it represents a great gift of God and an outstanding sign of His marvelous creation.

This is an important principle that protects society from excessive legislation or heavy obligations that result from human inclination towards unrealistic intellectual or moral perfection. Such exhaustive and exhausting laws did not protect other communities from going astray or from rejecting righteousness in word and deed. Along the same lines of the above verse, a tradition of the Prophet reads, "Do not ask me about matters which I leave without indication. There were people before you who went to their doom because they had put too many questions to their prophets and then did not follow their guidance [about such details]. If I command you anything do as much of it as you are able to do, and if I forbid you anything abstain from it" [reported by al-Daraqutni]. Another tradition tradition of the Prophet emphasizes: "God has determined obligations on you, so do not neglect them, and He has drawn out certain boundaries, so do not transgress them, and

He has left without indication certain matters without forgetting them, so do not ask about them" [reported by Muslim, Ibn Hanbal, al-Nasa'i, Ibn Majah].

DIETARY LAWS

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا
ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ كُلُواْ مِن طَيِّبَٰتِ مَا
رَزَقۡنَٰكُمۡ وَٱشۡكُرُواْ لِلَّهِ إِن كُنتُمۡ إِيَّاهُ
تَعۡبُدُونَ ﴿١٧٢﴾ إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيۡكُمُ ٱلۡمَيۡتَةَ
وَٱلدَّمَ وَلَحۡمَ ٱلۡخِنزِيرِ وَمَآ أُهِلَّ بِهِۦ
لِغَيۡرِ ٱللَّهِۖ فَمَنِ ٱضۡطُرَّ غَيۡرَ بَاغٖ وَلَا
عَادٖ فَلَآ إِثۡمَ عَلَيۡهِۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٞ رَّحِيمٞ
﴿١٧٣﴾

O you who have attained to faith! Eat of the good things which We have provided for you, and give thanks to God if it be [truly] Him that you worship. He has only forbidden to you carrion, and blood, and the flesh of swine and that over any other name has been invoked other than that of God. Yet whoever is driven by necessity, without wilful disobedience or exceeding the immediate need, no offence will be held against him [/her]; God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious. [2:172-173; see also in slightly different wording. [16:115]

حُرِّمَتۡ عَلَيۡكُمُ
ٱلۡمَيۡتَةُ وَٱلدَّمُ وَلَحۡمُ ٱلۡخِنزِيرِ وَمَآ
أُهِلَّ لِغَيۡرِ ٱللَّهِ بِهِۦ وَٱلۡمُنۡخَنِقَةُ
وَٱلۡمَوۡقُوذَةُ وَٱلۡمُتَرَدِّيَةُ وَٱلنَّطِيحَةُ وَمَآ
أَكَلَ ٱلسَّبُعُ إِلَّا مَا ذَكَّيۡتُمۡ وَمَا ذُبِحَ عَلَى
ٱلنُّصُبِ وَأَن تَسۡتَقۡسِمُواْ بِٱلۡأَزۡلَٰمِۚ
ذَٰلِكُمۡ فِسۡقٌۗ ٱلۡيَوۡمَ يَئِسَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ
مِن دِينِكُمۡ فَلَا تَخۡشَوۡهُمۡ وَٱخۡشَوۡنِ
ٱلۡيَوۡمَ أَكۡمَلۡتُ لَكُمۡ دِينَكُمۡ وَأَتۡمَمۡتُ
عَلَيۡكُمۡ نِعۡمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ ٱلۡإِسۡلَٰمَ
دِينٗاۚ فَمَنِ ٱضۡطُرَّ فِي مَخۡمَصَةٍ غَيۡرَ
مُتَجَانِفٖ لِّإِثۡمٖ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٞ رَّحِيمٞ ﴿٣﴾

Forbidden to you are carrion and blood and the flesh of swine and that over which any other name has been invoked than that of God and the animal that has been strangled or died as a result of being hit [on the head] or by a fall or by being gored or savaged by a beast of prey excepting any that you may have managed to slaughter properly while it is still alive; as also what has been slaughtered before idols. And [you are forbidden as well] to seek to learn through divination what the future may hold in store for you; this is [all] wrongdoing. Today, those who are bent on [stubbornly] denying the truth have lost all hope of [any compromise from] your religion; therefore fear not, but stand in awe of Me. Today, I have concluded your religion for you, and I have completed My blessing upon you, and willed that self-submission unto Me shall be your faith. But whosever is driven [to any that may be forbidden] by pressing necessity and not inclining purposely to wrong doing, God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious.

They will ask you as to what is lawful to them. Say: "Lawful to you are the good things. And as for those hunting animals which you train [as hounds] by imparting to them something of the knowledge that God has imparted to you - eat of what they seize for you, but mention God's name over it, and remain conscious of God; God is swift at reckoning.
Today the good things have been made lawful to you, and the food of those who were given the Book is lawful to you, and your food is lawful to them. And [lawful to you] in wedlock are believing women and women from among those who were given the Book before you, provided that you give them their dowries, taking them in honest wedlock, not in fornication, nor as secret love-companions.As for one who [stubbornly] rejects belief [in God], his[/her] work has failed, and in the life to come he[/she] shall be among the losers. [5:3-5, Madani, except verse 3 revealed at Arafat during the Farewell Pilgrimage]

يَسْـَٔلُونَكَ مَاذَآ أُحِلَّ لَهُمْ ۖ قُلْ
أُحِلَّ لَكُمُ ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتُ ۙ وَمَا عَلَّمْتُم مِّنَ
ٱلْجَوَارِحِ مُكَلِّبِينَ تُعَلِّمُونَهُنَّ مِمَّا عَلَّمَكُمُ
ٱللَّهُ ۖ فَكُلُوا۟ مِمَّآ أَمْسَكْنَ عَلَيْكُمْ
وَٱذْكُرُوا۟ ٱسْمَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ ۚ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ۚ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَرِيعُ ٱلْحِسَابِ ﴿٤﴾ ٱلْيَوْمَ
أُحِلَّ لَكُمُ ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتُ ۖ وَطَعَامُ ٱلَّذِينَ
أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ حِلٌّ لَّكُمْ وَطَعَامُكُمْ حِلٌّ
لَّهُمْ ۖ وَٱلْمُحْصَنَٰتُ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ
وَٱلْمُحْصَنَٰتُ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ مِن
قَبْلِكُمْ إِذَآ ءَاتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ
مُحْصِنِينَ غَيْرَ مُسَٰفِحِينَ وَلَا مُتَّخِذِىٓ
أَخْدَانٍ ۗ وَمَن يَكْفُرْ بِٱلْإِيمَٰنِ فَقَدْ
حَبِطَ عَمَلُهُۥ وَهُوَ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ مِنَ
ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ ﴿٥﴾

And eat not that over which God's name has not been pronounced, for this would indeed be a deviation from the right conduct. It is the devils who inspire their allies to drag you into arguments with them, and if you listen to them you will be [acting as] those who associate others with God. [6:121]

وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا۟ مِمَّا لَمْ يُذْكَرِ ٱسْمُ
ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَإِنَّهُۥ لَفِسْقٌ ۗ وَإِنَّ
ٱلشَّيَٰطِينَ لَيُوحُونَ إِلَىٰٓ أَوْلِيَآئِهِمْ
لِيُجَٰدِلُوكُمْ ۖ وَإِنْ أَطَعْتُمُوهُمْ إِنَّكُمْ
لَمُشْرِكُونَ ﴿١٢١﴾

Say: 'I do not find, in what is revealed to me, anything forbidden to one who eats thereof unless it be carrion or blood poured forth or the flesh of swine, for that is loathsome, or a sinful offering over which any name other than God has been invoked. Yet whoso is driven by necessity, neither coveting it nor exceeding his [/her] immediate need, no offense will be held against him [/her], God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious. [6:145]

قُل
لَّآ أَجِدُ فِى مَآ أُوحِىَ إِلَىَّ مُحَرَّمًا عَلَىٰ
طَاعِمٍ يَطْعَمُهُۥٓ إِلَّآ أَن يَكُونَ مَيْتَةً أَوْ
دَمًا مَّسْفُوحًا أَوْ لَحْمَ خِنزِيرٍ فَإِنَّهُۥ
رِجْسٌ أَوْ فِسْقًا أُهِلَّ لِغَيْرِ ٱللَّهِ بِهِۦ ۚ
فَمَنِ ٱضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ فَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ
غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٤٥﴾

كُلُّ ٱلطَّعَامِ كَانَ حِلًّا لِّبَنِىٓ
إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ إِلَّا مَا حَرَّمَ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلُ عَلَىٰ
نَفْسِهِۦ مِن قَبْلِ أَن تُنَزَّلَ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةُ ۗ قُلْ
فَأْتُوا۟ بِٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ فَٱتْلُوهَآ إِن كُنتُمْ
صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٩٣﴾

All food was lawful to the children of Israel, save what Israel forbade for himself before the Torah was sent down; say: "Bring you the Torah, then, and recite it, if you are saying the truth." [3:93]

فَبِظُلْمٍ مِّنَ
ٱلَّذِينَ هَادُوا۟ حَرَّمْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ طَيِّبَٰتٍ
أُحِلَّتْ لَهُمْ وَبِصَدِّهِمْ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ
كَثِيرًا ﴿١٦٠﴾ وَأَخْذِهِمُ ٱلرِّبَوٰا۟ وَقَدْ
نُهُوا۟ عَنْهُ وَأَكْلِهِمْ أَمْوَٰلَ ٱلنَّاسِ
بِٱلْبَٰطِلِ ۚ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ مِنْهُمْ
عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٦١﴾

It was for the evil-doing of those who followed the Jewish faith that We have forbidden them certain good things that had been [before] allowed to them, and for their barring from God's way many, and for their taking usury, that they were prohibited, and their wrongful devouring of other people's possessions; and for those from among them who deny [stubbornly] the truth, We have readied grievous suffering. [4:160-161]

وَعَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ هَادُوا۟
حَرَّمْنَا كُلَّ ذِى ظُفُرٍ ۖ وَمِنَ ٱلْبَقَرِ
وَٱلْغَنَمِ حَرَّمْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ شُحُومَهُمَآ إِلَّا مَا
حَمَلَتْ ظُهُورُهُمَآ أَوِ ٱلْحَوَايَآ أَوْ مَا
ٱخْتَلَطَ بِعَظْمٍ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ جَزَيْنَٰهُم بِبَغْيِهِمْ ۖ
وَإِنَّا لَصَٰدِقُونَ ﴿١٤٦﴾

And to those who followed the Jewish faith did We forbid all beasts that have claws, and We did forbid unto them the fat of both oxen and sheep, except what is in their backs or entrails or that is mingled with bone; thus did We requite them for their evil-doing; surely We speak truly. [6:146]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَوْفُوا۟
بِٱلْعُقُودِ ۚ أُحِلَّتْ لَكُم بَهِيمَةُ ٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ إِلَّا
مَا يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ غَيْرَ مُحِلِّى ٱلصَّيْدِ وَأَنتُمْ
حُرُمٌ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَحْكُمُ مَا يُرِيدُ ﴿١﴾

O you have attained to faith! Fulfill your bonds. Lawful to you is the [flesh of certain] beasts [camels, cattle and sheep], except that which is now mentioned to you, but you are not allowed to hunt while you are in the sanctity of pilgrimage. Behold, God ordains in accordance with His will. [5:1]

يَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلْخَمْرِ وَٱلْمَيْسِرِ ۖ قُلْ
فِيهِمَآ إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ وَمَنَٰفِعُ لِلنَّاسِ

They ask you about liquor and gambling. Say, "In both there is great evil, as well as some benefit for people;

but the evil which they cause is greater than the benefit they may bring...." [2:219]

وَإِثْمُهُمَآ أَكْبَرُ مِن نَّفْعِهِمَا ۗ وَيَسْـَٔلُونَكَ
مَاذَا يُنفِقُونَ قُلِ ٱلْعَفْوَ ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ
ٱللَّهُ لَكُمُ ٱلْـَٔايَٰتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢١٩﴾

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا
ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تَقْرَبُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَأَنتُمْ
سُكَٰرَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَعْلَمُوا۟ مَا تَقُولُونَ
وَلَا جُنُبًا إِلَّا عَابِرِى سَبِيلٍ حَتَّىٰ
تَغْتَسِلُوا۟ ۚ وَإِن كُنتُم مَّرْضَىٰٓ أَوْ عَلَىٰ
سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَآءَ أَحَدٌ مِّنكُم مِّنَ ٱلْغَآئِطِ أَوْ
لَٰمَسْتُمُ ٱلنِّسَآءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا۟ مَآءً
فَتَيَمَّمُوا۟ صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَٱمْسَحُوا۟
بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُوًّا
غَفُورًا ﴿٤٣﴾

O you who have attained to faith! Do not try to pray while you are drunken, [but wait] until you know what you are saying.... [4:43]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِنَّمَا ٱلْخَمْرُ وَٱلْمَيْسِرُ
وَٱلْأَنصَابُ وَٱلْأَزْلَٰمُ رِجْسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ
ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ فَٱجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ
﴿٩٠﴾ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ أَن يُوقِعَ
بَيْنَكُمُ ٱلْعَدَٰوَةَ وَٱلْبَغْضَآءَ فِى ٱلْخَمْرِ
وَٱلْمَيْسِرِ وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَن ذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ وَعَنِ
ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ ۖ فَهَلْ أَنتُم مُّنتَهُونَ ﴿٩١﴾
وَأَطِيعُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا۟ ٱلرَّسُولَ
وَٱحْذَرُوا۟ ۚ فَإِن تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّمَا
عَلَىٰ رَسُولِنَا ٱلْبَلَٰغُ ٱلْمُبِينُ ﴿٩٢﴾ لَيْسَ
عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ
جُنَاحٌ فِيمَا طَعِمُوٓا۟ إِذَا مَا ٱتَّقَوا۟
وَّءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ ثُمَّ ٱتَّقَوا۟
وَّءَامَنُوا۟ ثُمَّ ٱتَّقَوا۟ وَّأَحْسَنُوا۟ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ
يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٩٣﴾

O you who have attained to faith! Liquor and gambling, and idolatrous practices and divining of the futures are but a loathsome evil of Satan's doing; avoid it, then so that you may attain to success. By means of liquor and gambling Satan seeks only to bring about enmity and hatred among you, and to bar you from the remembrance of God and from prayer. Will you not, then, desist? Hence, obey God and obey the Conveyor of His message, and beware [against evil], but if you turn away then know that it is only for the Conveyor of Our message to clearly deliver it. It will not be held against those who have attained to faith and do righteous deeds what they may have fed on, as long as they are conscious of God and [truly] believe and do righteous deeds, and continue to be conscious of God and to adhere to faith, and grow ever more conscious of God and persevere in doing good, and God loves the doers of good. [5:90-93]

Dietary laws may be considered as purely religious since they are ordained by God to be observed by the believers in His message; yet such laws are not far removed from the area of civil law, for they have their effect on the market and dealings among the believers. The declaration of certain objects as unlawful eliminates them from legitimate transactions [unless they have undergone a basic change, e.g. wine being turned into vinegar]. For the forbidden food or drink, sanitary considerations are obvious, as in the case of carrion, blood, strangled animals or animals that are dead as a result of being hit on the head, or by a fall, or by being gored or savaged by a beast of prey, unless one can manage to slaughter the animal properly while it is still alive after suffering the last five accidents. There may also be some health considerations involved in the prohibition of pork in Jewish and Islamic laws, although this is still controversial among specialists in nutrition and medicine. Intoxicants of any kind or form - not merely alcohol - are harmful in the long term, and may lead to drunkenness, alcoholism or addiction, as well as violence, and all these cause appalling damages damages to the individual and society. The Quran has reportedly stressed that it allows things which are good in themselves and forbids things which are bad and harmful in themselves [e.g. 5:4-5; 7:157] and that nothing has been forbidden for the sake of mere punishment as was the case in certain Jewish prohibitions [4:160-161; 6:146, and see also 3:93].

For additional psychological and conceptual reasons, the believer is required to pronounce the name of God when legitimate slaughtering is practiced, and to refrain from eating from that over which a name other than that of God has been invoked, or slaughtered before idols [5:3; 6:121, 145]. It is lawful for Muslims to eat the food of the People of the Book [Jews and Christians] including meat cooked from animals slaughtered by them, and it is also lawful for Muslims to invite the People of the Book to eat their food. Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Rida dealt in length with this case, mentioning juristic views that accept this lawfulness regardless of means by which the animal was slaughtered. According to some jurists, this lawfulness may be extended to what may be slaughtered by Magians [Zoroastrians] and Sabians. The juristic views make a distinction between what is prohibited in and of itself such as pork, and what is prohibited because of some considerations related to how the animal died. The meat cooked by the People of the Book is permitted for Muslims according to the verse 5:5, regardless of the way by which the animal died. However, consecrating the animal to idols or any deity other than God makes eating it unlawful for a Muslim [*Tafsir al-Manar*, commentary on the verse 5:5, vol. 6 pp 177-180, 185-186, 196-219].

The absolute prohibition against drinking liquor, regardless of whether the person reaches the state of drunkenness or not, has been proven to be the only effective way for protecting the individual, the family and the society against the evils and the disasters caused by drunkenness, which is almost impossible to be completely avoided when drinking liquor is allowed in principle. Drawing a line between mere drinking and becoming drunk widely varies according to individual and social circumstances, and the formulating of legal rules and sanctions very difficult. Car accidents, violence, and many other offences that are committed under the influence of drunkenness, represent a soaring peril for the human life and social safety and tranquility in modern societies. Prohibiting drinking liquor in the Arab society, which was used to and fond of drinking in pre-Islamic times,

required a gradual process which is significant for the Islamic reform in dealing with such deeply-rooted habitual behavior. While Islam did not allow any compromise or graduation in matters of faith, it dealt differently with drinking liquor. In the beginning, the Quran teaches that liquor - as well as gambling - have their evils and benefits, but that the evil exceeds any benefit [2:219]. The next step was to forbid praying while one was drunken [4:43], and the final step was total prohibition [5:90].

As the Arabic word *"khamr"* may mean "liquor," and may also mean anything that may "cover" or "conceal" the mind and the intellectual ability, prohibiting liquor can also comprise any intoxicant in whatever form it may be. This can be supported by certain traditions of the Prophet such as "Every intoxicant is considered *khamr*, and all *khamr* is prohibited" [reported by Muslim, Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi, al-Nasa'i, and Ibn Majah]. This has become a general legal rule for jurists in dealing with any emerging use of any drug. Even when coffee came into use, jurists discussed its properties to decide if it should be considered *khamr,* and realized that it was not an intoxicant.

There are other traditions of the Prophet that are related to this subject. Another states the prohibition of every intoxicant, as well as everything that causes tepidness or decline of human vitality [reported by Ibn Hanbal and Abu Dawud]. Besides this, the Prophet condemned any involvement in what may be related to intoxicants, be it producing, selling, buying, serving or drinking [reported by Abu Dawud and al-Hakim], and forbade sitting at a table on which liquor is served [reported by Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah and al-Hakim]. However, jurists allowed dealing in liquor and its drinking for the People of the Book, as wine is used in the Christian sacrament and for Jewish holidays, and so it should be allowed as a matter related to the religious freedom secured by Islam and its law and authorities [see also the commentary on the verses 5:90-92 under "Penal Law"].

The Quran also prohibits unproductive and unfair means of earning money and unreasonable approaches for stating facts. Earning money from gambling [the above verse 5:90] or more widely any games of chance which do not require a human effort or skill is forbidden, since this would represent an unproductive and unfair means of gaining a profit. Such practices tempt to get easy money without effort but by mere chance, and lack the required balance of gain and loss on both sides. The winners are very few in proportion to the multitude of losers. This may stir disputes, hostilities and fights between the winners and the losers. In our time, the organizers of the various kinds of gambling are the permanent and sure winners of huge amounts of money. Meanwhile, the society is deprived in such gambling from serious productive work and suffer from the individual addiction to such gambling and frustration from its successive losses.

Attempts at foretelling the future (with certainty) which lack scientific grounds or are not clearly meant to be mere personal conjecture, are also forbidden. Such attempts contradict the Islamic emphasis about the generality and regularity of nature's laws and of the need for a sound reasoning for any claim. God only has the full knowledge of the future and the power over all happenings, and even prophets cannot knows what is beyond the human perception, unless some of this might be revealed to any of them by God [see for example 3:179; 6:50, 59, 73; 7:188; 10:20; 11:31, 123; 27:65; 72:26-28]. Fortune tellers rely on superstition or claim supernatural power in knowing the future and letting the person get the best of it and avoid the worst, since all this contradicts the basics of the

Islamic faith. Such attempts are therefore forbidden whether or not they are connected with earning money.

DEEDS ARE CONSIDERED ACCORDING TO INTENTION

وَلَا تَجْعَلُوا اللَّهَ
عُرْضَةً لِّأَيْمَانِكُمْ أَن تَبَرُّوا وَتَتَّقُوا
وَتُصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ
عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٢٤﴾ لَّا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ اللَّهُ بِاللَّغْوِ فِي
أَيْمَانِكُمْ وَلَٰكِن يُؤَاخِذُكُم بِمَا كَسَبَتْ
قُلُوبُكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٢٥﴾

And do not allow your oaths in the name of God [frequently and hastily pronounced to thus] become an obstacle to acts of virtue and righteousness and reconciliation of people; surely God is All-hearing, All-knowing. God will not hold against you a slip in your oaths, but He will hold you responsible [only] for what your hearts have earned [intentionally]; and God is All- forgiving, Forbearing. [2:224-225]

لَا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ اللَّهُ
بِاللَّغْوِ فِي أَيْمَانِكُمْ وَلَٰكِن يُؤَاخِذُكُم
بِمَا عَقَّدتُّمُ الْأَيْمَانَ ۖ فَكَفَّارَتُهُ إِطْعَامُ
عَشَرَةِ مَسَاكِينَ مِنْ أَوْسَطِ مَا تُطْعِمُونَ
أَهْلِيكُمْ أَوْ كِسْوَتُهُمْ أَوْ تَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ ۖ
فَمَن لَّمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ ثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ
كَفَّارَةُ أَيْمَانِكُمْ إِذَا حَلَفْتُمْ ۚ وَاحْفَظُوا
أَيْمَانَكُمْ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٨٩﴾

God will not hold against you a[n unintentional] slip in your oaths; but He will [only] hold you responsible for such oaths which you have earnestly. Thus, the expiation for breaking [such] an oath is to feed ten needy persons with the average of the food you serve to your own families, or to clothe them or to free a human being from bondage; and if any finds not the means [for any of these], let him [/her] fast for three days. That is the expiation of your oaths when you have sworn; but be mindful of your oaths. Thus, God makes clear to you His messages, so that you might be grateful. [5:89]

Intention is basic in assessing and judging any deed. Accordingly, the above Quranic verses state that God forgives an unintentionally broken oath, whereas He holds a person responsible for intentional violation of an oath. The Prophet states that, "Actions are but by intentions and every person shall have but what he/she intends" [reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim]. Since formality is not the required by Shari'a in human actions other than worship, one may break an oath in order to do what is more righteous and acceptable by God. Islam requires individuals to free slaves as expiation for a broken oath in certain cases [e.g. 4:92; 5:89; 58:3], and urges them to do this as an act of benevolence in general [e.g. 2:177; 90:13]; Shari'a also makes freeing slaves a state obligation in the public spending, especially in the distribution of zakat dues [9:60]. If one who breaks an oath is poor, needy, or cannot offer charity, it is sufficient for him/her to

fast as an expiation.

However, determining human intentions may be difficult for people, especially when it is hidden and there are no signs that may refer to it. Accordingly, the concrete, apparent circumstances have to be considered in addition to the intention when a person's actions are interpreted, especially in court. The Prophet states sharply that he makes his rulings, as a human being, according to the presentation of a case, not according to the truth which may not be obvious to him in such a presentation [a tradition reported by Malik, al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi, al-Nasa'i, Ibn Majah]. The knowledge of what is beyond the human perception,, including what a person hides, is only for God [e.g. 9:78; 11:5; 40:19; 20:7; 43:80; 58:7; 67:13]. A ruling of a judge in this life has to be based on apparent and concrete evidence, not on mere personal feelings. Caliph Abu Bakr stated that he could not make a ruling according to his personal knowledge, unless this might be supported by other evidence or witnesses [see for example: al-Shawkani, *Nayl al-Awtar*, vol. 9 pp 185-187, 196, Beirut, 1973]. At the time of the Prophet, the hypocrites were known by the fact that, "*They have made their [apparently pronounced] faith as a cover, while they [actually] turn others away from the path of God. Evil, indeed, is all that they are wont to do,*" [63:2]. Numerous Quranic verses unveil their intentions and practices [e.g. 3:167-168; 4:61-63, 72-73, 88-89, 91, 138-146; 9:47-59, 61-68, 75-90, 93-98, 101, 107-110, 124-127; 29:10-11; 33:12-20, 60-62, 73; 47:16, 20-32; 48:6, 11-12, 15-16; 57:13-15; 59:11-13; 63:1-8; 66:9]. Yet, the Prophet's policy was not to deal with a group collectively according to what he could feel about their intentions, but according to their apparent statements in which they said that they were Muslims. Besides, every individual is only accountable for what he/she says and can be proved. The Prophet's Sunna emphasizes the principle that the person making rulings has to rely on the apparent and the concrete situation, unless the intention can be known without doubt, and is then fundamental in assessing and judging a human deed. On the Day of Judgement, God will judge a deed and determine its requital according to the doer's intention, as He alone knows what is concealed in the hearts and minds [e.g. 2:77; 6:3; 9:78; 11:5; 20:7; 25:6; 43:80; 47:26; 67:13; 86:9-10].

BALANCED CONDUCT OF THE INTERACTING INTERESTS OF THE INDIVIDUALS AND THE SOCIETY [See also: Socio-Economic Justice]

True piety and virtuousness is not in [merely] turning your faces towards the east or the west, but true piety and virtuousness is [represented] in one who believes in God and the Last Day, and the angels, and the [divine] writ[s], and the prophets, and spends of his [/her] possessions - however cherished they may be - upon the near of kin, and the orphans, and the needy, and the wayfarer, and those who ask [for help], and for

لَّيْسَ ٱلْبِرَّ أَن تُوَلُّوا۟ وُجُوهَكُمْ
قِبَلَ ٱلْمَشْرِقِ وَ ٱلْمَغْرِبِ وَ لَٰكِنَّ ٱلْبِرَّ
مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِٱللَّهِ وَ ٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْأَخِرِ
وَ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ وَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَ ٱلنَّبِيِّۦنَ وَ ءَاتَى
ٱلْمَالَ عَلَىٰ حُبِّهِۦ ذَوِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ
وَ ٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰ وَ ٱلْمَسَٰكِينَ وَ ٱبْنَ ٱلسَّبِيلِ

the freeing of human beings from bondage, and keeps up prayer, and renders the purifying [welfare] dues (zakat); and [truly pious and virtuous are] those who keep their word whenever they promise, and are patient [and persevere] in adversity and hardship and peril. It is they who have proved themselves true, and it is they who are conscious of God. [2:177]

وَٱلسَّآئِلِينَ وَ فِى ٱلرِّقَابِ وَ أَقَامَ
ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَ ءَاتَى ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَ ٱلْمُوفُونَ
بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَٰهَدُوا۟ ۖ وَ ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ فِى
ٱلْبَأْسَآءِ وَ ٱلضَّرَّآءِ وَ حِينَ ٱلْبَأْسِ
أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا۟ ۖ وَ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ
ٱلْمُتَّقُونَ ﴿١٧٧﴾

And spend in God's cause [on those who are in need and on what the society needs], and let not your own hands throw you into destruction; and do always what is good; God loves those who do good. [2:195]

وَ أَنفِقُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ
وَ لَا تُلْقُوا۟ بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى ٱلتَّهْلُكَةِ ۛ
وَأَحْسِنُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٩٥﴾

...But if you repent, you shall be entitled to your principal; you will do no wrong, and neither will you be wronged. [2:279]

فَإِن لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوا۟ فَأْذَنُوا۟ بِحَرْبٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ
وَرَسُولِهِۦ ۖ وَ إِن تُبْتُمْ فَلَكُمْ رُءُوسُ
أَمْوَٰلِكُمْ لَا تَظْلِمُونَ وَ لَا تُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٧٩﴾

You will never attain to true piety and benevolence unless you spend [on others] of that which you yourselves love and value, and whatever you spend, God has full knowledge thereof. [3:92]

لَن
تَنَالُوا۟ ٱلْبِرَّ حَتَّىٰ تُنفِقُوا۟ مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ ۚ
وَ مَا تُنفِقُوا۟ مِن شَىْءٍ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِهِۦ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٩٢﴾

And do not entrust to those who are weak of judgement the possessions which God has placed in your charge [for the benefit of the whole society], but provide their sustenance therefrom, and clothe them, and speak to them fairly and kindly. [4:5]

وَ لَا تُؤْتُوا۟ ٱلسُّفَهَآءَ أَمْوَٰلَكُمُ ٱلَّتِى
جَعَلَ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ قِيَٰمًا وَ ٱرْزُقُوهُمْ فِيهَا
وَٱكْسُوهُمْ وَ قُولُوا۟ لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا ﴿٥﴾

And do not covet that whereby God has granted of His bounty some of you differently from others. Men benefit from what they have earned and women benefit from what they have earned. And ask God of His bounty; God has full

وَ لَا تَتَمَنَّوْا۟ مَا فَضَّلَ ٱللَّهُ
بِهِۦ بَعْضَكُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ ۚ لِّلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ
مِّمَّا ٱكْتَسَبُوا۟ وَ لِلنِّسَآءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا
ٱكْتَسَبْنَ ۚ وَ سْـَٔلُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ مِن فَضْلِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّ

knowledge of everything. [4:32]

اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا ﴿٣٢﴾

And worship God [alone], and associate not any with Him, and do good to your parents, and near of kin, and to orphans, and the needy, and the neighbor who is of kin and the neighbor who is a stranger, and the friend by your side, and the wayfarer, and those whom you rightfully possess; surely, God loves not the arrogant and boastful; those who are close-fisted and bid others to be close-fisted, and themselves conceal whatever God has granted them out of His bounty; We have readied a shameful suffering for all who [stubbornly] reject the truth. And those who spend out of their possessions on others to show off to people, and they believe not in God and the Last Day; and any who has Satan for a soul-mate, how evil a soul-mate has he [/she]. And what [harm] would they cause themselves if they believed in God and the Last Day, and spent [in His way] out of that God has provided them? And God has full knowledge of them. God does not wrong [anyone] by as much as an atom's weight, and if there be a good deed, He multiplies it [in His recompensation], and grants of His grace a mighty reward. [4:36-40]

وَاعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِۦ شَيْـًٔا ۖ
وَبِالْوَٰلِدَيْنِ إِحْسَٰنًا وَبِذِى الْقُرْبَىٰ
وَالْيَتَٰمَىٰ وَالْمَسَٰكِينِ وَالْجَارِ ذِى
الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْجَارِ الْجُنُبِ وَالصَّاحِبِ
بِالْجَنۢبِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ
أَيْمَٰنُكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَن كَانَ
مُخْتَالًا فَخُورًا ﴿٣٦﴾ الَّذِينَ يَبْخَلُونَ
وَيَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبُخْلِ وَيَكْتُمُونَ مَآ
ءَاتَىٰهُمُ اللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ ۗ وَأَعْتَدْنَا
لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُّهِينًا ﴿٣٧﴾ وَالَّذِينَ
يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَٰلَهُمْ رِئَآءَ النَّاسِ وَلَا
يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَا بِالْيَوْمِ الْءَاخِرِ ۗ
وَمَن يَكُنِ الشَّيْطَٰنُ لَهُۥ قَرِينًا فَسَآءَ قَرِينًا
﴿٣٨﴾ وَمَاذَا عَلَيْهِمْ لَوْ ءَامَنُوا بِاللَّهِ
وَالْيَوْمِ الْءَاخِرِ وَأَنفَقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَهُمُ
اللَّهُ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِهِمْ عَلِيمًا ﴿٣٩﴾ إِنَّ
اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ ۖ وَإِن تَكُ
حَسَنَةً يُضَٰعِفْهَا وَيُؤْتِ مِن لَّدُنْهُ أَجْرًا
عَظِيمًا ﴿٤٠﴾

God does command you to render back all with which you have been entrusted to those who are entitled to it, and whenever you rule over people, to rule with justice. Excellent is what God exhorts you to do; surely, God is All-hearing, All-seeing. [4:58]

إِنَّ اللَّهَ
يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَن تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَٰنَٰتِ إِلَىٰٓ أَهْلِهَا
وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُم بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَن تَحْكُمُوا
بِالْعَدْلِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُم بِهِۦٓ ۗ إِنَّ
اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًۢا بَصِيرًا ﴿٥٨﴾

No good is there in much of their private conversations, except such as are meant to enjoin charity, or an act of

لَّا خَيْرَ فِى كَثِيرٍ
مِّن نَّجْوَىٰهُمْ إِلَّا مَنْ أَمَرَ بِصَدَقَةٍ أَوْ

righteousness, or setting things right between people. Whoso does that, seeking God's acceptance, We shall surely grant him [/her] a mighty reward. [4:114]

مَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ إِصْلَٰحٍۭ بَيْنَ ٱلنَّاسِ ۚ وَمَن
يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ ٱبْتِغَآءَ مَرْضَاتِ ٱللَّهِ فَسَوْفَ
نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١١٤﴾

O You who have attained to faith! There are many among the clergy and monks, who transgressively devour people's possessions and turn others away from the way of God. And there are those who treasure up gold and silver and do not spend them in the way of God: announce unto them a grievous suffering [in the life to come]; on the Day when those [treasures] shall be heated in the fire of hell, and therewith shall be branded their foreheads, their sides, and their backs; [and they will be told:] "These are what you treasured up for yourselves. Taste you, then, what you treasured up." [9:34-35]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ ٱلْأَحْبَارِ
وَٱلرُّهْبَانِ لَيَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَٰلَ ٱلنَّاسِ
بِٱلْبَٰطِلِ وَيَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ
وَٱلَّذِينَ يَكْنِزُونَ ٱلذَّهَبَ وَٱلْفِضَّةَ وَلَا
يُنفِقُونَهَا فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ فَبَشِّرْهُم بِعَذَابٍ
أَلِيمٍ ﴿٣٤﴾ يَوْمَ يُحْمَىٰ عَلَيْهَا فِى نَارِ
جَهَنَّمَ فَتُكْوَىٰ بِهَا جِبَاهُهُمْ وَجُنُوبُهُمْ
وَظُهُورُهُمْ ۖ هَٰذَا مَا كَنَزْتُمْ لِأَنفُسِكُمْ
فَذُوقُوا۟ مَا كُنتُمْ تَكْنِزُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

And render to the kindred their due rights, as well as to the needy, and to the wayfarer, but squander not [your possessions] senselessly.

Behold, the squanderers are in the party of the devils; and the devil has always been ungrateful to his Lord. But if you [have to] turn aside from those [who are in need], seeking God's grace [because of certain considerations] and hoping for it, then [at least] speak to them in a gentle way. And neither keep your hand chained to your neck [avoiding any spending], nor outspread forth altogether [beyond what you may afford], lest you should end in sitting [motionless] blamed and full of sorrow. Surely, your Lord grants sustenance in abundance or within certain limits unto whomever He wills; Surely, He is fully aware of His servants and sees them all. [17:26-30]

وَءَاتِ ذَا
ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ حَقَّهُۥ وَٱلْمِسْكِينَ وَٱبْنَ
ٱلسَّبِيلِ وَلَا تُبَذِّرْ تَبْذِيرًا ﴿٢٦﴾ إِنَّ
ٱلْمُبَذِّرِينَ كَانُوٓا۟ إِخْوَٰنَ ٱلشَّيَٰطِينِ ۖ
وَكَانَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ لِرَبِّهِۦ كَفُورًا ﴿٢٧﴾ وَإِمَّا
تُعْرِضَنَّ عَنْهُمُ ٱبْتِغَآءَ رَحْمَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكَ
تَرْجُوهَا فَقُل لَّهُمْ قَوْلًا مَّيْسُورًا ﴿٢٨﴾
وَلَا تَجْعَلْ يَدَكَ مَغْلُولَةً إِلَىٰ عُنُقِكَ وَلَا
تَبْسُطْهَا كُلَّ ٱلْبَسْطِ فَتَقْعُدَ مَلُومًا
مَّحْسُورًا ﴿٢٩﴾ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَبْسُطُ ٱلرِّزْقَ
لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَيَقْدِرُ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ بِعِبَادِهِۦ
خَبِيرًۢا بَصِيرًا ﴿٣٠﴾

... *And if any of those whom you rightfully possess seeks a deed of manumission, write it out for them if you are aware of any good in them, and offer [to help them in obtaining their freedom] of that which belongs [initially] to God which He has granted you.* ... [24:33]

وَلْيَسْتَعْفِفِ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَجِدُونَ
نِكَاحًا حَتَّىٰ يُغْنِيَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ
وَٱلَّذِينَ يَبْتَغُونَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ مِمَّا مَلَكَتْ
أَيْمَٰنُكُمْ فَكَاتِبُوهُمْ إِنْ عَلِمْتُمْ فِيهِمْ
خَيْرًا ۖ وَءَاتُوهُم مِّن مَّالِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّذِىٓ
ءَاتَىٰكُمْ ۚ وَلَا تُكْرِهُوا۟ فَتَيَٰتِكُمْ عَلَى
ٱلْبِغَآءِ إِنْ أَرَدْنَ تَحَصُّنًا لِّتَبْتَغُوا۟ عَرَضَ
ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۚ وَمَن يُكْرِههُّنَّ فَإِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ إِكْرَٰهِهِنَّ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٣٣﴾

Those [worshippers of the All-merciful] who, when they spend, are neither prodigal nor parsimonious, but hold a just [balance] between these [two extremes].[25:67]

وَٱلَّذِينَ إِذَآ أَنفَقُوا۟ لَمْ يُسْرِفُوا۟
وَلَمْ يَقْتُرُوا۟ وَكَانَ بَيْنَ ذَٰلِكَ قَوَامًا ﴿٦٧﴾

Believe in God and the Conveyor of His Message, and spend [on those in need and for the needs of the society as a whole] out of that unto which He has made you trustees, and those of you who have attained to faith and spend [on the needy individuals and for the social well-being] shall have a mighty reward. [57:7]

ءَامِنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ
وَأَنفِقُوا۟ مِمَّا جَعَلَكُم مُّسْتَخْلَفِينَ فِيهِ ۖ
فَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مِنكُمْ وَأَنفَقُوا۟ لَهُمْ أَجْرٌ
كَبِيرٌ ﴿٧﴾

What God has turned over to the Conveyor of His Message from the people of the cities, belongs to God and the Conveyor of His Message, and the near of kin [of the deceased fighters] and the orphans, and the needy and the wayfarer; in order that it may not be [merely a benefit limited to a particular group] going round and round among only those of you who [may fight and] thus would become wealthy. Hence, follow whatever the Conveyor of the Message gives you [thereof] and refrain from whatever he forbids you, and be conscious of God; surely, God is strict in retribution. [59:7]

مَّآ أَفَآءَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ
رَسُولِهِۦ مِنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْقُرَىٰ فَلِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ
وَلِذِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ وَٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰ وَٱلْمَسَٰكِينِ
وَٱبْنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ كَىْ لَا يَكُونَ دُولَةًۢ بَيْنَ
ٱلْأَغْنِيَآءِ مِنكُمْ ۚ وَمَآ ءَاتَىٰكُمُ ٱلرَّسُولُ
فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَىٰكُمْ عَنْهُ فَٱنتَهُوا۟ ۚ
وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ شَدِيدُ ٱلْعِقَابِ
﴿٧﴾

...But they rather give others preference over themselves, even though they feel a private need, and those who are saved from the covetousness of their own selves, it is they who attain to success. [59:9]

وَ ٱلَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُو ٱلدَّارَ وَ ٱلْإِيمَٰنَ مِن
قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَ لَا
يَجِدُونَ فِى صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِّمَّآ أُوتُوا۟
وَ يُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَ لَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ
خَصَاصَةٌ ۚ وَ مَن يُوقَ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِۦ
فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٩﴾

And those in whose possessions there is a due share, determined and recognized and acknowledged [by them], for one who asks [for help] and one who is deprived [of the needs of life]. [70:24-25; see also 51:19]

وَ ٱلَّذِينَ فِىٓ أَمْوَٰلِهِمْ حَقٌّ
مَّعْلُومٌ ۙ ﴿٢٤﴾ لِّلسَّآئِلِ وَ ٱلْمَحْرُومِ ﴿٢٥﴾

And those who give food, however much they themselves may cherish what they give, to the needy and the orphan and the captive, [saying in their hearts], "We feed you only for the sake of God: no recompense do we desire from you, nor thankfulness." [76:8-9]

وَ يُطْعِمُونَ
ٱلطَّعَامَ عَلَىٰ حُبِّهِۦ مِسْكِينًا وَ يَتِيمًا
وَ أَسِيرًا ﴿٨﴾ إِنَّمَا نُطْعِمُكُمْ لِوَجْهِ ٱللَّهِ لَا
نُرِيدُ مِنكُمْ جَزَآءً وَ لَا شُكُورًا ﴿٩﴾

Nay, surely, the human being becomes grossly overweening whenever he [/she] believes himself [/herself] to be self- sufficient. Surely, unto your Lord is the returning [of all]. [96:6-8]

كَلَّآ إِنَّ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ
لَيَطْغَىٰٓ ۙ ﴿٦﴾ أَن رَّءَاهُ ٱسْتَغْنَىٰٓ ﴿٧﴾
إِنَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ ٱلرُّجْعَىٰٓ ﴿٨﴾

Woe to [one]...who piles up wealth and becomes obsessed by its enormity and variety, thinking that his[/her] wealth will make him [/her] live forever! Nay, but [in the life to come] such a person will be left to crushing torment. [104:2-4]

ٱلَّذِى جَمَعَ مَالًا وَ عَدَّدَهُۥ ﴿٢﴾
يَحْسَبُ أَنَّ مَالَهُۥٓ أَخْلَدَهُۥ ﴿٣﴾
كَلَّا ۖ لَيُنۢبَذَنَّ فِى ٱلْحُطَمَةِ ﴿٤﴾

Have you ever seen a human being who contradicts the [essence of] faith [in God and His Judgement]? Then such is the one who thrusts the orphan away, and feels no urge to feed the needy.

Woe, then, unto those who pray, but their hearts and minds from [the

أَرَءَيْتَ ٱلَّذِى يُكَذِّبُ بِٱلدِّينِ ﴿١﴾ فَذَٰلِكَ
ٱلَّذِى يَدُعُّ ٱلْيَتِيمَ ﴿٢﴾ وَ لَا يَحُضُّ عَلَىٰ
طَعَامِ ٱلْمِسْكِينِ ﴿٣﴾ فَوَيْلٌ لِّلْمُصَلِّينَ ﴿٤﴾
ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ عَن صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ ﴿٥﴾

essence and message of] their prayers are remote, those who [want but] to be seen and praised, whereas they refuse to help others [who need help]. [107:1-7]

ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ يُرَآءُونَ ۝٦
وَيَمْنَعُونَ ٱلْمَاعُونَ ۝٧

Private property is secured and protected in Islam, as long as it is earned legitimately through honest work [2:279; 4:32], or through an inheritance that has been acquired legitimately by the legator. Spending on one's needs is left to the individual's desires as long as they are within what is allowed by Shari'a, but a believer is warned against prodigality and parsimony [17:26-30; 25:67], and the mere accumulation of wealth is strongly denounced by the Quran [9:34-35; 104:2-4]. However, the inter-relations and the interaction between the individuals and the society are considered in the Islamic law. Significantly, the Quran considers the private property something *"unto which He [God] has made you trustees,"* [57:7], and "*the possessions of God which He has granted you,*" [24:33]. The individual freedom in relation to private property is based on a person's ability to fulfill the responsibilities and avoid any harm to himself/herself or to other individuals or to the society as a whole. Accordingly, a weak-minded person cannot deal with his/her possessions, and they thus should be managed by a capable and honest person who must secure for the weak- minded all of his/her needs for a comfortable life according to his/her wealth [4:5]. An orphan who reaches the physical age of marriage has to be also mentally capable of dealing with his/her possessions before this responsibility is turned over from him/her guardian to him/her [4:6]. Private property, as well as public property are among what people are entrusted with, and they have to fulfill their responsibilities towards those who are entitled to any right related to it [4:58]. Due to the undeniable interrelations and interaction between individuals and society in the economic arena [spending, consumption, saving, credit, investment, production, employment etc], the Quran reportedly stresses the individual's obligation to pay the social welfare dues, "*zakat*", an obligation constituting one of the five pillars of Islam. Its revenues are allocated solely for those who need financial assistance and cannot temporarily or permanently earn their own living [9:60, 103]. Significantly, the Quran indicates that in one's possessions, *"there is a due share determined and recognized for one who asks for help and one who is deprived [of the needs of life],"* [70:24-25; see also 51:19].

According to the Quran, state spending must aim to establish, maintain, or adjust the social balance, *"in order that it [the gain of war] may not be [merely a benefit limited to a particular group] going round and round among only those of you who [may fight and] thus become wealthy"* [59:7]. Public resources and spending should observe the needs of all people in their various categories, in the present and in the short and long term future, [59:7-10], and should aim to develop their living standard. This social security encompasses all members of the Islamic state, Muslim or not [e.g. see the agreement of Khalid ibn al-Walid with the people of Hira who were mostly non Muslims at that time, which secured state assistance for the elderly, the ill, and any who becomes in need, and the social assistance decided on by Caliph Umar for an old needy Jew and the Caliph's statement about this: Abu Yusuf, "*al-Kharaj*", pp. 155-156, 136; Cairo 1397 A.H.]. The Quran pioneeringly called attention to the fact that the human rights of the prisoners of

war should be secured, in spite of any differences or hostilities [76:8-9].

Muslims are repeatedly urged by the Quran in more than 50 passages to "spend from what God has granted them" on individual and social needs [see "Socio-Economic Justice" e.g. 2:3, 195, 261-274; 3:92; 9:34-35, 60, 103....]. Spending may be of one's material possessions, physical strength and energy, intellectual abilities and knowledge, or it can be merely moral support. One should spend on others, however cherished one's possessions may be [e.g. 2:177; 3:92; 76:8]. Individuals must know that selfishness and shortsightedness would lead to the destruction of the society as a whole and its individuals, and the wise human being should always resist the illusion that he/she is self-sufficient, since such a false illusion leads to arrogance and transgression. One *"who thrusts the orphan away and feels no urge to feed the needy,"* is merely rejecting God's message and denying his/her human accountability on the Day of Judgement. As for those who pray but decline to help those in need *"Their hearts from their prayers are remote; those who want only to be seen and praised, whereas they refuse to help others [who need help]"* [107:1-7]. As Muslims are trained to attend prayers in congregation, *"jama'a,"* and to observe the straightness of their lines in it, they are repeatedly urged to care about their social solidarity and togetherness through social assistance, other acts of righteousness and benevolence, and reconciliation and setting of matters right between people, [4:114]. Although offering help to those who are in need can be required publicly, (especially when this may urge others to follow) the believer is warned repeatedly against spending on others *"to be seen and praised by people,"* and following the spending by *"stressing one's own generosity and thus hurting [the feelings of the needy],"* [e.g. 2:262-274; 4:36-40; 76:8-9].

The strong Quranic urge for spending on the needs of the individual and the society addresses the hearts and minds of the believers to give voluntarily, while state interference and its compelling power and measures remain as limited as possible. Even for the mandatory zakat dues themselves, Caliph Uthman -the third of the early four Caliphs- preferred to leave the earnings of gold and silver (including money) to the earners themselves, if they could pay directly to those who are in need, since such earnings required much administrative efforts and could lead to disputes in a society dominated by illiteracy. He restricted the state collection of zakat to what became defined by jurists as "apparent possessions," namely animals and agricultural yield which could be easily checked and counted.

Such an urge to spend on others, however, should by no means lead to a negligence of direct responsibilities towards one's own self and family, as Islam strikes a fair balance in the interrelations of individuals and society. When a Prophet's Companion told the Prophet of his intention to leave all his possessions to charity, the Prophet said, "One third of your possessions is enough to be left for charity, or even it may be more than enough. It is better to leave your inheritors rich [or living comfortably] than to leave them in need and begging people [for help]" [reported by Malik, al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, al- Tirmidhi, al-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah, on the authority of Sa'ad ibn Abi Waqqas].

OTHER FUNDAMENTALS: FAIR BENEFIT FOR INVOLVED PARTIES AND CONSENT FROM THEM ALL

And devour not one another's possessions wrongfully, nor offer them to those who rule, so as to wrongfully and knowingly devour what is owned by others. [2:188]

وَلَا
تَأْكُلُوٓاْ أَمْوَٰلَكُم بَيْنَكُم بِٱلْبَٰطِلِ وَتُدْلُواْ
بِهَآ إِلَى ٱلْحُكَّامِ لِتَأْكُلُواْ فَرِيقًا مِّنْ
أَمْوَٰلِ ٱلنَّاسِ بِٱلْإِثْمِ وَأَنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٨٨﴾

O you who have attained to faith! Do not devour one another's possessions transgressively, but let mutual agreement be the basis of trade, and do not destroy yourselves; surely God is Most Gracious to you. [4:29]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُواْ لَا تَأْكُلُوٓاْ أَمْوَٰلَكُم بَيْنَكُم
بِٱلْبَٰطِلِ إِلَّآ أَن تَكُونَ تِجَٰرَةً عَن
تَرَاضٍ مِّنكُمْ ۚ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوٓاْ أَنفُسَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا ﴿٢٩﴾

"Devouring the possessions of one another" is a term that may cover different and numerous forms of dishonest and unfair dealings such as fraud, double-dealing, insidiousness, black-mailing, manipulation, bribery, and various kinds of exploitation which all result in illegitimate gain of possessions on the one side, and illegitimate loss on the other. Those who enjoy authority as public officers are in a privileged position that may tempt them to abuse their power so as to obtain for themselves without any right what belongs to others, or they may be actively or passively involved in facilitating such devouring for others and benefit from this [2:188]. While the Quran prohibits such forms of inequity in transactions between people, it legitimizes indefinite forms of exchange and earnings which are based on "mutual agreement," and fairness in mutual giving and taking of all involved parties.

The other Quranic verse 4:29 moves from prohibiting the devouring of one another's possessions, to prohibiting *"killing one another"*. Such "killing" may be either literally and narrowly interpreted, or it may be taken more widely and convincingly as "destroying the life of one another", in the case where such destruction may be physical, economic, familial, social, moral, etc. The verse addresses the Muslim society as a whole, since such a "destruction of life" afflicts (in the long term), not only the party against which it is targeted, but all the parties involved, including that which initiates it, as well as the society as a whole. In the same way, the Quran warns against refraining from extensive spending on others who are in need and on social welfare since in this way one would be letting "*your own hands throw you into destruction*" [2:195].

USURY

Those who devour usury shall not rise but as one who blunders through being affected by Satan, for they say, "Buying and selling is like usury," while God has made buying and selling lawful and prohibited usury. Hence, whosoever receives [positively] his[/her] Lord's admonition and gives over, he may keep his past gains, and it will be for God to judge him[/her], but whosoever returns to it, they are destined for the fire, therein to abide. God blots out usury, whereas He augments charitable offerings with fruitfulness [from various angles], and God loves not any ingrate and persisting evil-doer.
Surely, those who have attained to faith and do good works, and keep up prayer and offer the purifying [welfare] dues (zakat) will have their reward with their Lord; no fear shall be on them, and neither shall they grieve.
O you who have attained to faith! Remain conscious of God, and give up gains that remain of usury, if you are indeed believers. If you do not, then know that you are at war with God and the Conveyor of His message. But if you repent, you shall be entitled to your principal; you will do no wrong, and neither will you be wronged.
And if [a debtor] should be in a difficulty, grant him a delay until a time of ease; but to remit [the debt entirely] would be for your own good, if you only knew.
And be conscious of a day when you shall be brought back to God, then every human being shall be paid in full for what he [/she] has earned, and none shall be wronged. [2:275-281; verse 281 was revealed in Mina]

ٱلَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ ٱلرِّبَوٰا۟ لَا يَقُومُونَ
إِلَّا كَمَا يَقُومُ ٱلَّذِى يَتَخَبَّطُهُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ
مِنَ ٱلْمَسِّ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّمَا
ٱلْبَيْعُ مِثْلُ ٱلرِّبَوٰا۟ ۘ وَأَحَلَّ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْبَيْعَ
وَحَرَّمَ ٱلرِّبَوٰا۟ ۚ فَمَن جَآءَهُۥ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِّن
رَّبِّهِۦ فَٱنتَهَىٰ فَلَهُۥ مَا سَلَفَ وَأَمْرُهُۥٓ
إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَمَنْ عَادَ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ
أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ
يَمْحَقُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلرِّبَوٰا۟ وَيُرْبِى ﴿٢٧٥﴾
ٱلصَّدَقَٰتِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ كَفَّارٍ
أَثِيمٍ ﴿٢٧٦﴾ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟
ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ وَأَقَامُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَوُا۟
ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ
عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٢٧٧﴾ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا
ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَذَرُوا۟ مَا
بَقِىَ مِنَ ٱلرِّبَوٰٓا۟ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٧٨﴾
فَإِن لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوا۟ فَأْذَنُوا۟ بِحَرْبٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ
وَرَسُولِهِۦ ۖ وَإِن تُبْتُمْ فَلَكُمْ رُءُوسُ
أَمْوَٰلِكُمْ لَا تَظْلِمُونَ وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٧٩﴾
وَإِن كَانَ ذُو عُسْرَةٍ فَنَظِرَةٌ إِلَىٰ
مَيْسَرَةٍ ۚ وَأَن تَصَدَّقُوا۟ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۖ إِن
كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٨٠﴾ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ يَوْمًا
تُرْجَعُونَ فِيهِ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۖ ثُمَّ تُوَفَّىٰ كُلُّ
نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٨١﴾

The above verses deal with the unlawful usury followed by others that deal with lending/borrowing contracts between people. Usury, "*riba*" in Arabic, was mentioned in the earlier verse 30:39: "*And whatever you may give in usury so that it may increase through [other] people's possessions will bring [you] no increase in the sight of God, whereas all that you give in charity seeking God's acceptance, it is they who shall have*

their recompense manifold". Usury or "*riba*" in the Quran may encompass any unlawful addition to the principle when such an addition is unfair and thus harmful to the individuals and the society. As Ibn Kathir noticed in his commentary on the verse 2:275, as did other commentators and jurists, riba is one of the most difficult subjects in Islamic law, since the verse prohibiting riba, as well as what the Prophet said about riba in his sermon during the 'Farewell Pilgrimage,' came in the last days of the Prophet's life. As a result of this, the Companions had no opportunity to ask him about the matter, so that even 'Caliph' Umar stated a wish that the Prophet could have given some explanations, according to a report by Ibn Hanbal. In general, riba has been related to loans involving an exploitation of the economically weak and needy borrower by the strong and wealthy lender who always gains, whereas the borrower may be merely using the money to fulfill a need of life. Even if he/she uses the loan in investment he/she may receive less than the interest which the lender gains in any case, or he/she (the borrower) may lose altogether. In his commentary on the above verse Muhammad Asad rightfully sates, "... We realize that the question as to what kinds of financial transactions fall within the category of riba is closely connected with the socio-economic motivation." The motivation referred to here is that of lending and borrowing and is connected with the circumstances underlying the mutual gain and loss and fair benefit from the transaction, in addition to the genuine consent of the borrower and lender. Thus "... it is a question as to how profits and risks may be equitably shared by both partners to a loan transaction ... Our answers must necessarily vary in accordance with the changes..." These changes may occur in the situation of the involved parties, the society and/or the economy. "Hence, while the Quranic condemnation of the concept and practice of riba is unequivocal and final, every successive Muslim generation is faced with the challenge of giving new dimensions and a fresh economic meaning to this term which may be rendered as 'usury'."

What Muhammad Asad has clarified is essential, since 'usury' is not a name of a certain concrete material object, but of a dealing between two or more people which can only be understood within historical and social circumstances. Linguistic explanation of riba as an 'addition' or an 'increase' cannot shed any light on the matter, since any legitimate incurrence of profit is also an increase. Relating the words 'addition' or 'increase' to a loan in particular may also not be sufficiently convincing, because the circumstances of the society and the dealer have to be considered, since a loan may have secured mutual free agreement, mutual gain and payment, mutual equitable benefit, social usefulness, etc. Thus, a socio-economic context is necessary to define a socio-economic practice and figure out what "harm" and injustice in the dealing provide legal justification for the prohibition, as Quranic verses on riba are few, and the Prophet died before elaborating on the matter or responding to questions about it. His mere reference to "*riba*" in the loans among Arabs before Islam (*"riba al-Jahiliyya"*) in the sermon of the "Farewell Pilgrimage" underlines the historical and social circumstances of the transaction.

A prohibition has its reason ('illa)in civil and commercial transactions, which may be indicated explicitly or implicitly. In the case of riba, we cannot find explicit indications. As historical and social circumstances play a role in what may be harmful and unfair in a loan or in any exchange, the legal outcome may vary according to different times and places. Transactions will never cease to emerge and vary. No rigid and/or

superficial legal frames which ignore individual and social circumstances can be formulated. The general principle of Shari'a regarding transactions "*mu'amalat*" is allowance, unless there is a contradiction of a legal rule of Shar'ia. One of the fundamentals and significant goals of Shari'a is to prevent "harm" and "hardship" or even substantial pressure, "*haraj*" in Arabic, [see 5:6; 22:78, also 2:185, 233, 286; 6:152; 7:42; 23:62; 65:7]. Ignoring historical developments as well as socio-economic differences and changes, some jurists in modern times have been inclined to deal with the term "interest," used in modern transactions [e.g. banking, insurance, mortgage ... etc.], as if it were an exact synonym of "usury/riba", thus ignoring the modern development in which banking and insurance operations and independent institutions have emerged and developed, which have led to a separation of financing and financial investment on one side and production (be it agricultural or industrial or otherwise and commercial enterprises) on the other. Besides, the time factor has become essential in modern transactions, since the revolutionary changes in transportation and communications has its enormous effect on money circulation, the flow and availability of cash, and consequently the need for credit.

Accordingly, the "risk" factor is aggravated by the speed of transactions that can be done by telephone, fax or through computer. The contemporary global village in which we live has developed mass-production and mass-marketing which require enormous capital. An Australian company may have an enterprise in Malaysia or Pakistan and may rely on financing from American or European banks. This has increased the need for specialist establishments to deal with financing and to provide financial services which are different from the long or medium term operations and risks of agricultural or industrial production and commercial enterprises. Such financial establishment benefits a wide range of share-holders, depositors, and borrowers, and furthermore they are often not owned by individuals. Thus, legal safeguards can protect against monopoly and various forms of fraud and exploitation. The central (national) bank has its supervisory and controlling role in relation to financial activities and establishments. Moreover, money no longer takes the form of gold or silver, and thus cannot maintain stability in its value. Fluctuation in the value of currency and inflation in the prices of commodities affect the purchasing power of money over time. All these qualitative changes in contemporary world economics have to be considered deeply in order to precisely ascertain the nature and the role of 'interest' and how it can be understood in relation to and in comparison with the texts of the Quran and Sunna, and the historical, social circumstances related to "*riba*". Besides, the particular situation of the involved parties and the transactions should be studied. "Every successive Muslim generation" - Muhammad Asad rightfully states, and I may add every Muslim society with its own particular circumstances - "is faced with the challenge of giving new dimensions and a fresh economic meaning to the term (riba) which may be rendered as usury." Several juristic attempts have been made to ascertain whether certain emerging and widely-needed transactions may or may not be included in the prohibited riba.

In his distinguished work *'Ilm Usul al-Fiqh* [first edition, 1942] Abdel-Wahhab Khallaf [d. January 1956], the prominent Egyptian jurist and professor of Shari'a at the College of Law in Cairo University, quoted late Hanafi sources that allowed the taking of loans which could be paid back with certain addition if the borrower was in need [p 210,

12th ed., Kuwait 1978]. (It should be pointed out here that generally, even when there is an obvious and clear-cut prohibition against a thing, God allows it for the individual in cases of necessity [e.g. 2:173; 5:3; 6:119, 145; 16:115], and He allows the society to do the same in the case of a common need [e.g. see Khallaf, *'Ilm Usul al-Fiqh*, p. 208-210; al-Juwayni, Imam ul-Haramayn Abdul-Malik, *Ghiyath al-Umam*, edited by Fu'ad Abdel-Mun'im, Mustafa Hilmi, Cairo: no date, p.345]). Since the 19th century, the Muslims have experienced the banking and insurance operations conducted by European establishments. The eminent Hanafi jurist Muhammad ibn 'Abidin [d. 1252 A.H./ 1836 C.E.] dealt at length with insurance. Muhammad ibn al-Hassan al Hajwi al-Tha'alibi, a prominent Maliki jurist from Morocco wrote an outstanding work on the history of Islamic jurisprudence *al-Fikr al-Sami fi Tarikh al-Fiqh al-Islami*, in which he considered an insurance contract allowable, and thus argued against three jurists who considered it forbidden [quoted by Ahmad 'Ashur: al-Fiqh al-Muyassar, vol. 2. p 360, 5th ed., Cairo no date].

Muhammad al-Bahiyy, the former president of al-Azhar University in Egypt who died about ten years ago, considered insurance lawful, following the legal analysis that insurance in fact comprises two separate operations. The first operation takes place between the insured, (whose aim is merely to help one another from the total of their monthly payments when any of them faces certain sudden adversity) and the insurer who serves in this contract as mediator and manager, collecting the payments from the insured and giving those who face the specific trouble. The other operation is the insurer's investment of the capital, and this is solely the insurer's responsibility. The insured cannot have any responsibility for the way that the insurer may choose to invest the money he has at hand, and from which he gets his own benefit even if it includes the insurance payments of the insured [*'aqd al-ta'min*]. Muhammad Abduh, the distinguished Egyptian mufti and commentator on the Quran [d. 1905], considered the interest paid by the post offices for the savings there as lawful, an opinion later supported by Mahmud Shaltut, the former Sheikh of al-Azhar [d. 1962]. Moreover, he allowed for the interest on state bonds, if the economic development and the individual and public interests require issuing them [*al-Fatawa*, 8th ed., Cairo: 1975, p. 351-355,]. Additionally, Shaltut agreed to any transaction with any fixed interest in advance, if it was offered by the Muslim state or any establishments subsidiary to the state or affiliated with it, as it assumed that there is no exploitation of either party in such cases. The present mufti of Egypt, Dr. Muhammad Tantawi, is of the opinion that a fixed advance profit is lawful, if the involved parties freely agree to it, and mentions eight points to support his view and refute those who see it as unlawful [pp. 134-143, *Mu'amalat al-Bunuk*, 6th ed., Cairo: 1991].

Islamic justice secures the legitimate rights of anyone who had been involved in profiting from usury before the Quranic prohibition came into effect. Such a person could keep his/her past gains from usury, since Shari'a requires that law after it is publicly announced, and can by no means be retroactive; "*Whosoever receives admonition from his [/her] Lord and thereupon desists [from usury] may keep the past gains, and it will be for God to judge him [/her]; but whosoever reverts - they are destined for the fire ...*" [2:275], "*God has pardoned what is past, but whoever offends again, God will inflict his retribution on him [/her] ...*" [5:95; see also 4:22, 23; 8:38]. As for a recent lending of money to gain usury, the lender is entitled to the principal "*unwronging and unwronged*"

[2:279]. Shari'a always aims to remove only the injustice, and not to eliminate the person who commits it. Its purpose is to "*Fight against the aggressors until they revert to God's commandment; and if they revert, make peace between them [the two fighting parties] with justice, and deal equitably [with both of them]* ..." [49:9]. Human circumstances will never improve if yesterdays' wronged (party) becomes today's wrong-doer(s). The lender, who used to gain from any delay of the debtor in paying back the debt, as this would increase the lender's gain from usury, is urged now by the Quran to consider the circumstances of the borrower whenever there is any delay in paying back the debt: "*And if a debtor should be in a difficulty, grant him a delay until a time of ease*". Moreover, the lender is urged to go beyond the justice of retrieving his money to the kindness and generosity of entirely remitting the debt if the debtor is going through a hardship, as such an act "*would be for your own good if you only know,*" [2:280]. In addition to God's award in the life to come, helping overwhelmed debtors would revive their purchasing power which would benefit the producers, the sellers and the whole society. Some state revenues of social welfare dues used to relieve the overwhelmed debtors [9:60].

In the end, the Quran calls those who might have repeatedly squeezed money from persons who suffer difficulties to keep in mind that this life will come to an end, and it is wise for the human being to be conscious of his/her accountability before God in the eternal life to come, when "*every human being shall be paid in full for what he [/she] has earned, and none shall be wronged*" [2:281].

EVIDENCE IN CREDITS

O you who have attained to faith! Whenever you give or take credit for a stated term, set it down in writing, and let a scribe write it down between you equitably, and let not any scribe refuse to write it down as God has taught him; so let him write, and let the debtor dictate, but he [/she] should be conscious of God his [/her] Lord and not diminish anything of what he [/she] owes. And if the debtor is weak of mind or body, or is unable [by any means] to dictate himself [/herself], then let his[/her] guardian dictate equitably.
And call upon two of your men to act as witnesses, and if two men may not be available, then a man and two women from among such as are acceptable to you as witnesses, so that if one of the two women makes a mistake, the other will remind her. The witnesses should not refrain [to give this testimony] whenever

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِذَا تَدَايَنتُم بِدَيْنٍ
إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى فَٱكْتُبُوهُ ۚ وَلْيَكْتُب
بَّيْنَكُمْ كَاتِبٌۢ بِٱلْعَدْلِ ۚ وَلَا يَأْبَ كَاتِبٌ
أَن يَكْتُبَ كَمَا عَلَّمَهُ ٱللَّهُ ۚ فَلْيَكْتُبْ
وَلْيُمْلِلِ ٱلَّذِى عَلَيْهِ ٱلْحَقُّ وَلْيَتَّقِ ٱللَّهَ
رَبَّهُۥ وَلَا يَبْخَسْ مِنْهُ شَيْـًٔا ۚ فَإِن كَانَ
ٱلَّذِى عَلَيْهِ ٱلْحَقُّ سَفِيهًا أَوْ ضَعِيفًا أَوْ لَا
يَسْتَطِيعُ أَن يُمِلَّ هُوَ فَلْيُمْلِلْ وَلِيُّهُۥ
بِٱلْعَدْلِ ۚ وَٱسْتَشْهِدُوا۟ شَهِيدَيْنِ مِن
رِّجَالِكُمْ ۖ فَإِن لَّمْ يَكُونَا رَجُلَيْنِ فَرَجُلٌ
وَٱمْرَأَتَانِ مِمَّن تَرْضَوْنَ مِنَ ٱلشُّهَدَآءِ
أَن تَضِلَّ إِحْدَىٰهُمَا فَتُذَكِّرَ إِحْدَىٰهُمَا
ٱلْأُخْرَىٰ ۚ وَلَا يَأْبَ ٱلشُّهَدَآءُ إِذَا مَا

they are called upon. And be not loath to write down [the provisions of any debt] whether small or great, together with time given [for paying back]; this is more equitable in the sight of God, and more helpful for testimony, and more likely it prevents you from having doubts. If, however, [the credit] concerns present merchandise that you transfer directly to one another, no blame is held against you if you do not write it down. And have witnesses whenever you trade with one another, but neither scribe nor witness must suffer harm; for if you do [harm them] it will be evil-doing on your part. And remain conscious of God, since it is God who teaches you [herewith], and God has full knowledge of everything.

And if you are on a journey, and cannot find a scribe, then a pledge [may be taken as a security]. But if you trust one another, let the one who is trusted fulfill his [/her] trust, and let him [/her] be conscious of God his [/her] Lord. And do not conceal what you have witnessed, and one who conceals his[/her] heart is wrongdoing, and God has full knowledge of all that you do.

To God belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth. Whether you bring out what is in your own selves or conceal it, God calls you to account for it; He [through His full justice and knowledge of each individual] will forgive whom He wills, and will punish whom He wills, and God has the power over all things. [2:282-284]

دُعُوا۟ ۚ وَلَا تَسْـَٔمُوٓا۟ أَن تَكْتُبُوهُ صَغِيرًا
أَوْ كَبِيرًا إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلِهِۦ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ أَقْسَطُ
عِندَ ٱللَّهِ وَأَقْوَمُ لِلشَّهَٰدَةِ وَأَدْنَىٰٓ أَلَّا
تَرْتَابُوٓا۟ ۖ إِلَّآ أَن تَكُونَ تِجَٰرَةً حَاضِرَةً
تُدِيرُونَهَا بَيْنَكُمْ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَلَّا
تَكْتُبُوهَا ۗ وَأَشْهِدُوٓا۟ إِذَا تَبَايَعْتُمْ ۚ
وَلَا يُضَآرَّ كَاتِبٌ وَلَا شَهِيدٌ ۚ وَإِن تَفْعَلُوا۟
فَإِنَّهُۥ فُسُوقٌۢ بِكُمْ ۚ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ۖ
وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ ٱللَّهُ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌ
﴿٢٨٢﴾ ۞ وَإِن كُنتُمْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ وَلَمْ
تَجِدُوا۟ كَاتِبًا فَرِهَٰنٌ مَّقْبُوضَةٌ ۚ فَإِنْ أَمِنَ
بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا فَلْيُؤَدِّ ٱلَّذِى ٱؤْتُمِنَ
أَمَٰنَتَهُۥ وَلْيَتَّقِ ٱللَّهَ رَبَّهُۥ ۗ وَلَا تَكْتُمُوا۟
ٱلشَّهَٰدَةَ ۚ وَمَن يَكْتُمْهَا فَإِنَّهُۥٓ ءَاثِمٌ
قَلْبُهُۥ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٨٣﴾
لِّلَّهِ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ وَإِن تُبْدُوا۟ مَا فِىٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ
أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ يُحَاسِبْكُم بِهِ ٱللَّهُ ۖ فَيَغْفِرُ
لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَآءُ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ
عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٢٨٤﴾

Since the Quran strictly prohibits the use of 'riba' and warns those who go on earning from it of being "*...at war with God and the Conveyor of His message,*" it presents a substitute practice of lending money without profit, but with legal and moral safeguards to cover the risk of any denial of obligation. The first safeguard is to require written record the debt and the pay-back date, in addition to the necessary information about the creditor and the debtor [i.e. names, addresses, the place of pay-back etc.]. A second safeguard is that the writer of the credit/debt would preferably be a third party to secure neutrality and trust, "*And let a scribe write it down between you, and no scribe shall refuse to write it down as God has taught him [/her].*" This may be a clear reference to a

required establishment of a public position for such work, so that it would not be merely a voluntary service. Thirdly, it is moreover required that the debtor dictate that which the scribe has to write, so that an oral statement is added to the written one. Two witnesses are required as a fourth safeguard to the whole procedure, to state that the transaction was done properly in their presence, and carried out consensually without any pressure. A witness has the obligation to come to testify and to say the whole truth and nothing but the truth whenever this is required. At the same time he/she and the scribe of the document must be protected against any pressure to force them to change any fact, or any or harm . All of these safeguards should reduce the disputes about lending/borrowing contracts to the minimum: "*This is more equitable in the sight of God, and more helpful for a proper testimony, and more likely it prevents you from having doubts.*" The whole procedure was required initially of an illiterate society, and the believers there were taught to take part in this securing procedure, whether the credit/debt was small or great.

Aside from all these legal requirements, the concerned parties and the whole society who have to observe these rules are called to observe for these requirements as "*those who have attained to faith,*" and thus the faith ought to guard their business conduct. The scribe is urged to write equitably and not to hesitate in doing what he/she can and was taught to do; this is an obvious reminder of the individual's social responsibility to serve others according to his/her abilities, be he/she a public official, a hired clerk, or a volunteer. The debtor who dictates the information to be written by the scribe "*has to be conscious of God his [/her] Lord and not diminish anything of what he [/she] owes.*"

The Quranic requirements for documenting the credit/loan may be difficult to fulfill in certain cases, and alternative or complementary requirements are provided by the Quran: "*And if the debtor is weak of mind or body or is unable [by any means] to dictate himself [/herself], then let his[/her] guardian dictate equitably*". As for the requirement of two women to replace one male witness should he not be available, the reason for it is indicated in the Quran is "*so that if one of them [the women] may make a mistake, the other may remind her*". Women in Arabia at that time were not versed in business activities, and the arithmetic and wording involved in them, and thus might not have been observant of the terms stated by the debtor and recorded by the scribe. As the jurists have underlined, the requirement of two women as a substitute for one man is limited to this case of credit/loan contracting, [e.g. Ibn al-Qayyim, "*al-Turuq al-Hukmiyya*"]. Some jurists such as al-Thawr, al-Tabari and Ibn Hazm allowed a woman to be a judge who rules in all cases if she fulfills the requirements for the position. On the other hand Hanafis stated that a woman can only be a judge of civil cases, as criminal cases may not be bearable for her nature. The obvious question is that if a woman can be eligible to be a judge with certain or full jurisdiction, how can she count as only half a witness? It is a jurisprudential principle that a legal rule is applied or suspended in accordance with existence or absence of its reason respectively. The reason for "*making a mistake,*" as the Quran indicates, does not exist in the case of educated women or those who have experienced business or may be practicing lawyers or accountants, for example. In all such cases, the woman is equal to a man in witnessing credit/loan contracts.

The formalities must be reduced to the minimum in commercial contract, as they often require speed and may be mainly built on trust between the concerned parties; thus

the burden of documentation should be eased as much as possible: "*If, however, [the credit] concerns present merchandise that you transfer directly to one another, no blame is held against you if you do not write it down. And have witnesses whenever you trade with one another*". The Quranic law thus, like modern laws, observes the distinction between civil and commercial obligations concerning the required evidence. Travel circumstances also have to be considered, as the scribe who should "*write as God has taught him/her*" and the acceptable witnesses may not be available. In this case, something may be given by the borrower to the lender as a security. However, trust has its place in law especially in such circumstances, and a lender's trust should be met by the borrower's fulfillment of his/her obligations. The right of a witness to be free from any pressures or harm is not limited to civil or credit transactions. These are actually human rights and responsibilities which should be observed by the individuals and the society as represented by the state in all circumstances. It is the right and the responsibility of every individual and group to express his/her/their opinion publicly and the responsibility of the society and its authorities to secure the right of expression for all persons without physical or moral pressure.

The two above-mentioned verses [2:282] (the longest verse in the Quran), and [2:283] provide a rich legal and moral source for the whole of human relations and for the corresponding legal system. It is remarkable that such well and carefully indicated legal rules are presented with the same characteristic eloquent and inspiring style of the whole Quran. After providing these legal and moral safeguards for giving and taking credit (which represent general guidelines for civil and commercial transactions as a whole, and for human rights and responsibilities in their widest range), the Quran reminds the believers that their faith can provide those who are conscious of God and the eternal life to come with safeguards the depth and width of which cannot be matched by any human provision or authority. Believers have to always remember in their minds and hearts that "whether you bring into the open what is in yourselves or conceal it, God calls you to account for it" [2:284; also 2:33, 77; 3:29; 5:99; 11:5; 16:19, 23; 33:54; 60:1; 67:13 etc.].

FULFILLMENT OF BONDS

"O you who have attained to faith! Fulfill your bonds ..." [5:1]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَوْفُوا۟
بِٱلْعُقُودِ ۚ أُحِلَّتْ لَكُم بَهِيمَةُ ٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ إِلَّا
مَا يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ غَيْرَ مُحِلِّى ٱلصَّيْدِ وَأَنتُمْ
حُرُمٌ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَحْكُمُ مَا يُرِيدُ ﴿١﴾

...But as for those who have come to believe without having migrated [to join you], you have no [general responsibility about them [as a part of your entity] until they migrate [to you]. But if they ask you for support to defend against a threat

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَهَاجَرُوا۟ وَجَٰهَدُوا۟
بِأَمْوَٰلِهِمْ وَأَنفُسِهِمْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ
وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَاوَوا۟ وَّنَصَرُوٓا۟ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ بَعْضُهُمْ
أَوْلِيَآءُ بَعْضٍ ۚ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَلَمْ
يُهَاجِرُوا۟ مَا لَكُم مِّن وَلَٰيَتِهِم مِّن شَىْءٍ

to the faith, it is your duty to support them, except against a people with whom you have a bond, and God sees all that you do. [8:72]

حَتَّىٰ يُهَاجِرُوا ۚ وَإِنِ ٱسْتَنصَرُوكُمْ فِى
ٱلدِّينِ فَعَلَيْكُمُ ٱلنَّصْرُ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ قَوْمٍ
بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُم مِّيثَٰقٌ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا
تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٧٢﴾

And a proclamation from God and the Conveyor of His message [is herewith made] unto all people on this day of the greatest pilgrimage that God disavows all who associate others with Him and [so does] the Conveyor of His message. Hence, if you repent, it shall be for your own good, and if you turn away, then know that you can never prevail over God ['s will]; and give unto those who are bent on denying [stubbornly] the truth the tiding of grievous suffering. But excepted are people from among those who associate others with God, with whom you have made a bond and who thereafter have never failed to fulfill any of their obligations towards you, and neither have [they] supported anyone against you: with these observe your bond with them until the end of term agreed upon. Verily, God loves those who are conscious of Him. [9:3-4]

وَأَذَٰنٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ
وَرَسُولِهِۦٓ إِلَى ٱلنَّاسِ يَوْمَ ٱلْحَجِّ ٱلْأَكْبَرِ
أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ بَرِىٓءٌ مِّنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ۙ
وَرَسُولُهُۥ ۚ فَإِن تُبْتُمْ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۖ
وَإِن تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّكُمْ غَيْرُ مُعْجِزِى
ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ
﴿٣﴾ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ عَٰهَدتُّم مِّنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ثُمَّ
لَمْ يَنقُصُوكُمْ شَيْـًٔا وَلَمْ يُظَٰهِرُوا۟ عَلَيْكُمْ
أَحَدًا فَأَتِمُّوٓا۟ إِلَيْهِمْ عَهْدَهُمْ إِلَىٰ مُدَّتِهِمْ ۚ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٤﴾

And if one of those who associate others with God seeks your protection, grant him [/her] protection so that he [/she] may [be able to] hear the word of God, and then do convey him [/her] to the place where he [/she] feels secure, since there may be [among them] people who do not know [the truth]. [9:6]

وَإِنْ أَحَدٌ مِّنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ
ٱسْتَجَارَكَ فَأَجِرْهُ حَتَّىٰ يَسْمَعَ كَلَٰمَ ٱللَّهِ
ثُمَّ أَبْلِغْهُ مَأْمَنَهُۥ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَّا
يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦﴾

How should there be a bond with those who associate others with God on the part of God and the Conveyor of His message, except those [of them] with whom you have made a bond at the Inviolable House of Worship, and these so long as they are going straight with you do go straight with

كَيْفَ يَكُونُ لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ عَهْدٌ
عِندَ ٱللَّهِ وَعِندَ رَسُولِهِۦٓ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ
عَٰهَدتُّمْ عِندَ ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ ۖ فَمَا
ٱسْتَقَٰمُوا۟ لَكُمْ فَٱسْتَقِيمُوا۟ لَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ

them; surely, God loves those who are conscious of Him. How [else could it be], while if those [who are hostile to you] were to prevail over you, they would not observe towards you any relationship or promise. They merely seek to satisfy you with their mouths, while their hearts persistently refuse, and most of them are iniquitous. [9:7-8]

يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٧﴾ كَيْفَ وَ إِن يَظْهَرُوا
عَلَيْكُمْ لَا يَرْقُبُوا۟ فِيكُمْ إِلًّا وَ لَا ذِمَّةً ۚ
يُرْضُونَكُم بِأَفْوَٰهِهِمْ وَ تَأْبَىٰ قُلُوبُهُمْ
وَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ فَٰسِقُونَ ﴿٨﴾

And fulfill your bond [that you have given] in the name of God whenever you bind yourselves by such a bond, and break not [your] oaths after having confirmed them, while you have set God as your guarantor; surely God knows all that you do. And be not like a woman who breaks completely into fibers the yarn which she [herself] has firmly spun, [by] using your oaths to deceive one another, simply because some of you may be more powerful than others. God only puts you to a test thereby, and certainly on the Day of Resurrection He shall make clear to you all that whereon you used to differ.

وَ أَوْفُوا۟ بِعَهْدِ ٱللَّهِ إِذَا
عَٰهَدتُّمْ وَ لَا تَنقُضُوا۟ ٱلْأَيْمَٰنَ بَعْدَ
تَوْكِيدِهَا وَ قَدْ جَعَلْتُمُ ٱللَّهَ عَلَيْكُمْ كَفِيلًا ۚ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٩١﴾ وَ لَا
تَكُونُوا۟ كَٱلَّتِى نَقَضَتْ غَزْلَهَا مِنۢ بَعْدِ
قُوَّةٍ أَنكَٰثًا تَتَّخِذُونَ أَيْمَٰنَكُمْ دَخَلًۢا
بَيْنَكُمْ أَن تَكُونَ أُمَّةٌ هِىَ أَرْبَىٰ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ ۚ
إِنَّمَا يَبْلُوكُمُ ٱللَّهُ بِهِۦ ۚ وَ لَيُبَيِّنَنَّ لَكُمْ
يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ مَا كُنتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٩٢﴾
وَ لَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً
وَلَٰكِن يُضِلُّ مَن يَشَآءُ وَ يَهْدِى مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ
وَ لَتُسْـَٔلُنَّ عَمَّا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾ وَ لَا
تَتَّخِذُوٓا۟ أَيْمَٰنَكُمْ دَخَلًۢا بَيْنَكُمْ فَتَزِلَّ قَدَمٌۢ
بَعْدَ ثُبُوتِهَا وَ تَذُوقُوا۟ ٱلسُّوٓءَ بِمَا
صَدَدتُّمْ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَ لَكُمْ عَذَابٌ
عَظِيمٌ ﴿٩٤﴾ وَ لَا تَشْتَرُوا۟ بِعَهْدِ ٱللَّهِ
ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۚ إِنَّمَا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ هُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ
إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٩٥﴾ مَا عِندَكُمْ يَنفَدُ ۖ
وَ مَا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ بَاقٍ ۗ وَ لَنَجْزِيَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ
صَبَرُوٓا۟ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا۟

And had God so willed, He could surely make you all one single [homogenous] people; but He lets go astray one whom He wills [by his/her free choice allowed by God], and lets be guided aright one whom He wills; and you will surely be called to account for all that you ever did. And do not use your oaths to deceive one another, lest [your] foot should slip after it has stood firm, and then you will have to taste the evil [consequences] of turning away [as a whole] from the way of God, and tremendous suffering will be awaiting you [in the life to come]. Hence, do not barter away your bond with God for a trifling gain. Verily, what is with God is far better for you, did you but know.

All that is with you comes to an end, but what is with God abides, and surely We grant to those who are patient and who persevere their reward according to the best that they ever

did. And whosoever does a righteous deed, be it male or female, believing, We shall assuredly cause him [/her] to live a good life; and We shall assuredly grant unto such as these their reward according to the best that they ever did. [16:91-97]

يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾ مَنْ عَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ
أَوْ أُنثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُۥ حَيَوٰةً
طَيِّبَةً ۖ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا
كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٧﴾

And do not touch the possession of an orphan save in the fairest manner, until he/she be of age. And fulfill the promise, for there is responsibility for whatever promise you have made. [17:34]

وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا۟ مَالَ ٱلْيَتِيمِ إِلَّا بِٱلَّتِى
هِىَ أَحْسَنُ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ أَشُدَّهُۥ ۚ وَأَوْفُوا۟
بِٱلْعَهْدِ ۖ إِنَّ ٱلْعَهْدَ كَانَ مَسْـُٔولًا ﴿٣٤﴾

And those who are observant of what they are entrusted with and what they promise. [23:8; 70:32]

وَٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمَٰنَٰتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَٰعُونَ ﴿٨﴾

The "bonds" [Arabic *'aqd*, pl. *'uqud*] which the Quran commands to observe and fulfill [5:1] include bi- or multi-party contracts, as well as any unilateral obligation that one binds him/herself to. The word is also comprehensive, covering any commitment towards God [e.g. 2:27, 40; 3:76-77; 9:75; 13:20, 25; 16:95; 33:15], or other individuals, in addition to commitments between the state as represented by its authorities and the people, and the state and other states. Thus, the above verse may apply to various areas of private law, especially the civil and commercial branches of it, the law dealing with employer-employee relations, in addition to the various areas of constitutional, administrative, financial, and international laws. All bonds with which Muslims find themselves are described in the Quran as "*bonds with God*" [6:152; 16:91], since they are made in the name of God by people who have "submitted" themselves to His will and guidance. These people are urged to be always conscious of Him Who watches over and has full knowledge of everything, and Who holds every individual human being accountable for all that he/she does. All individuals will be returned to and judged by Him in the eternal life to come. Thus, even bonds and commitments given to the most hostile and belligerent enemies should be observed and fulfilled. Moreover, Muslims are urged to give protection (political asylum in our contemporary terms), to any of their enemies who seek it [9:6], and whenever this person decides to be repatriated [9:4], a safe journey back should be secured by the Muslims, even though such a person may later turn against them.

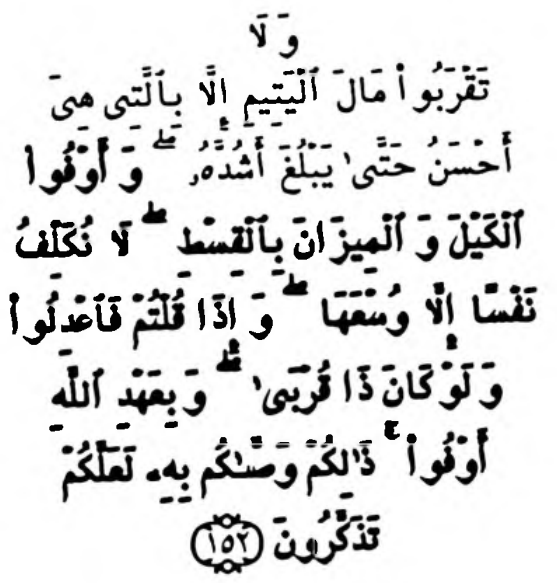
Such a wide sense of the word "bond" and the commitment that it implies were behind the terms "*dhimma*" and "*'ahd*," categorizing non-Muslims who were a part of the Islamic state and temporary non-Muslim residents who require a "secure" stay there "*musta'minin*," who both are under the "pledge of protection and justice" given by the Islamic state and its authorities. During the early conquests, whenever Muslim forces had to withdraw from an area for strategic or tactical reasons, they would inform the non-Muslim residents that they could no longer defend and protect them [e.g. al-Baladhuri,

Futuh al-Buldan, Cairo, 1959, p. 143 (a report regarding Hims 'Emessa' in Syria)]. Al-Qarafi, the prominent Maliki jurist [d. 1285], stated that any Muslim individual, group or authority that transgresses against any non-Muslim living in the Islamic state is actually violating "the pledge of defence and justice, dhimma" to which all Muslims are committed. In the case of international law, the people of Samarqand in central Asia once complained to the Caliph Umar ibn Abd-el-Aziz [717-720] that the military leader Qutayba ibn Muslim managed to enter their city by a breach of trust and that he let many Muslims settle there. The Caliph turned the case to the judge who ruled that Muslims should withdraw and leave the city [Al-Baladhuri, *Futuh al-Buldan*, p. 411].

It is the faith in God and its unmatchable binding force that multiplies the power of a legal obligation. Consciousness of God and of the accountability of every individual human being before Him in the eternal life to come puts every possible material gain of this present world life in perspective. This causes powerful parties, whether they be individuals or state authorities or entire countries, to observe a power far greater than any human power and an eternal judgement and reward that outweigh any short-term benefit in this world's life: "*God only puts you to a test thereby, and certainly on the Day of Resurrection He shall make clear to you all that whereon you used to differ. And had God so willed, He could surely make you all one single [homogenous] people; but He lets go astray one whom He wills [by his/her free choice allowed by God], and lets be guided aright one whom He wills; and you will surely be called to account for all that you ever did ... Hence, do not barter away your pledge to God for a trifling gain. Surely, what is with God is far better for you, did you but know. All that is with you comes to an end, but what is with God abides; surely We grant to those who are patient in adversity their reward according to the best that they ever did. And whosoever does a righteous deed, whether male or female, believing, We shall assuredly cause him [/her] to live a good life; and We shall assuredly grant to such as these their reward according to the best that they ever did*" [16:92-97].

NO FRAUD

... and [in your dealings] give full measure and weight with equity; We do not burden any human being with more than he [/she] is able to bear, and whenever you speak, speak with justice, even if it be about one near of kin, and fulfill your pledge to God; this has been enjoined upon you, so that you may keep it in mind. [6:152]



And to [the people of] Madyan (Midian) [We sent] their brother Shu'ayb. He said, "O my people! Worship [the One] God; you have no god other than He; and diminish not the measure and the weight [in any of your dealings with people]. I see you are [now] prospering, but I fear that suffering befalls you on a Day that will encompass all [human beings]. O my people, give [always] full measure and weight with equity, and do not diminish what belongs rightfully to people, and do not act viciously on earth spreading corruption. That which rests with God is far better for you, if you but believe [the truth]. However, I am not a keeper over you."
They said, "O Shu'ayb, does your prayer [and relation to God] command you that we should give up what our forefathers were used to worship, or that we refrain from doing whatever we wish with our possessions? We hope you think with coolness and deliberation, and be right-minded?" He answered, "O my people! What do you think if I am taking my stand on a clear evidence from my Lord, and He has provided me with good provision from Him? I have no desire [by any means] to do what I forbid you to do. I only desire to set things right, so far as I am able; but the achievement of my aim depends only on God. In Him have I placed my trust, and to Him do I wholeheartedly turn." [11:84-88, see also 7:85-87; 12:59; 26:176-186]

وَإِلَىٰ مَدْيَنَ أَخَاهُمْ شُعَيْبًا ۚ قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ
ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرُهُۥ ۖ
وَلَا تَنقُصُوا۟ ٱلْمِكْيَالَ وَٱلْمِيزَانَ ۖ إِنِّىٓ
أَرَىٰكُم بِخَيْرٍ وَإِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ
يَوْمٍ مُّحِيطٍ ﴿٨٤﴾ وَيَٰقَوْمِ أَوْفُوا۟
ٱلْمِكْيَالَ وَٱلْمِيزَانَ بِٱلْقِسْطِ ۖ وَلَا
تَبْخَسُوا۟ ٱلنَّاسَ أَشْيَآءَهُمْ وَلَا تَعْثَوْا۟
فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾ بَقِيَّتُ ٱللَّهِ
خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ۚ وَمَآ أَنَا۠
عَلَيْكُم بِحَفِيظٍ ﴿٨٦﴾ قَالُوا۟ يَٰشُعَيْبُ
أَصَلَوٰتُكَ تَأْمُرُكَ أَن نَّتْرُكَ مَا يَعْبُدُ
ءَابَآؤُنَآ أَوْ أَن نَّفْعَلَ فِىٓ أَمْوَٰلِنَا مَا
نَشَٰٓؤُا۟ ۖ إِنَّكَ لَأَنتَ ٱلْحَلِيمُ ٱلرَّشِيدُ
﴿٨٧﴾ قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ أَرَءَيْتُمْ إِن كُنتُ عَلَىٰ
بَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّى وَرَزَقَنِى مِنْهُ رِزْقًا
حَسَنًا ۚ وَمَآ أُرِيدُ أَنْ أُخَالِفَكُمْ إِلَىٰ مَآ
أَنْهَىٰكُمْ عَنْهُ ۚ إِنْ أُرِيدُ إِلَّا ٱلْإِصْلَٰحَ مَا
ٱسْتَطَعْتُ ۚ وَمَا تَوْفِيقِىٓ إِلَّا بِٱللَّهِ ۚ
عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَإِلَيْهِ أُنِيبُ ﴿٨٨﴾

And give full measure whenever you measure and weigh with the straight balance; this is far better [for you] and more trusted [for others who deal with you]. And never pursue that of which you have no knowledge; verily, the hearing, and the sight, and the heart - for all of these you will be accountable [on the Day of Judgement]. [17:35-36]

وَأَوْفُوا۟ ٱلْكَيْلَ إِذَا كِلْتُمْ وَزِنُوا۟
بِٱلْقِسْطَاسِ ٱلْمُسْتَقِيمِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ
وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا ﴿٣٥﴾ وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ
لَكَ بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلسَّمْعَ وَٱلْبَصَرَ
وَٱلْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْـُٔولًا ﴿٣٦﴾

And measure always accurately with [all] fairness, and cut not the measures short. [55:9]

وَ أَقِيمُواْ ٱلْوَزْنَ
بِٱلْقِسْطِ وَ لَا تُخْسِرُواْ ٱلْمِيزَانَ ﴿٩﴾

Woe to those who give short measure; those when they require measuring from others to receive their due, demand a full measure, but when they have to measure or weigh for others whatever they ought to give, they give less then what is due. Do they not know that they shall be raised up from the dead on a mighty day, a day when all human beings shall stand before the Lord of all being? [83:1-6]

وَيْلٌ لِّلْمُطَفِّفِينَ ﴿١﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ إِذَا ٱكْتَالُواْ
عَلَى ٱلنَّاسِ يَسْتَوْفُونَ ﴿٢﴾ وَ إِذَا
كَالُوهُمْ أَو وَّزَنُوهُمْ يُخْسِرُونَ ﴿٣﴾ أَلَا
يَظُنُّ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ أَنَّهُم مَّبْعُوثُونَ ﴿٤﴾ لِيَوْمٍ
عَظِيمٍ ﴿٥﴾ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ ٱلنَّاسُ لِرَبِّ
ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٦﴾

Giving "full measure and weight with equity" is not merely a literal statement intended for transactions that require measuring or weighing only, but is also meant in its wider sense. Balance and fairness in the rights and obligations of all parties involved in a transaction or contract should be observed. Any kind of fraud or exploitation from any party would mean "*diminishing what belongs rightfully to people and acting viciously on earth, spreading corruption.*" Any injustice in the relation between the haves and have nots, between the rulers and the ruled, between the powerful and the weak or between any two unequal parties whatever the strength on one side and weakness on the other may be, reflects an imbalance and a failure to give full measure in rights and obligations. God has guided people to be fair in their dealings with one another as early as the time of Shu'ayb. However, the privileged wealthy have refused to accept any interference in, or control of, "*doing whatever they wish with what they possess*", since they see such an inference or control as going too far "*from deep thinking and right mindedness.*" Calling for justice and fairness in dealing with one another is fundamental in the divine message to human beings, the goal of which is "to set things right" and to reform the social circumstances in as far as it is possible and achievable: "*so far as I am able*" [11:88], "*We do not burden any human being with more then he [/she] is able to bear*" [6:152; also 2:233, 286; 7:12; 23:62]. Absolute justice may never be achieved, yet always having the intention and aim to act rightfully and fairly and to make all possible efforts to reach this goal by the individuals, the society, the state and the different countries in the whole world would improve and reform human circumstances. Even in making a judgement about one's self or others, one should avoid and resist a bias of being favorable or hostile, and should fairly measure, weigh, and compare the positives and negatives in any case; "*Be ever steadfast in upholding equity, bearing witness to the truth for the sake of God, even though it [may] be against your ownselves or your parents or your near kin. Whether the person concerned be rich or poor God is more caring for either. Do not, then, follow your own whims that may let you swerve from justice; for if you twist [the truth] or turn away [from it], God is indeed fully aware of all that you do*" [4:135], and "*never let hatred of*

anyone lead you into deviating from justice. Be just; this is closest to being God-conscious. And remain conscious of God; surely, God is fully aware of all that you do" [5:8].

PLANNING, CONTROL, AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT

He [Joseph] said, "You shall sow for seven years consecutively as you are used to, so let all [the grain] that you harvest remain [untouched] in its ear, excepting only a little whereof you may eat. Then thereafter there shall come upon you seven hard years that shall devour what you have laid up in advance for them, excepting only a little of what you may [be after all able to] keep in store. Then thereafter there shall come a year wherein the people will be relieved [from the hardship] and wherein they will [be able to] press [seeds and fruit to obtain oil and drink] in season [as before]." [12:47-49]

قَالَ تَزْرَعُونَ سَبْعَ سِنِينَ دَأَبًا فَمَا
حَصَدتُمْ فَذَرُوهُ فِى سُنۢبُلِهِۦٓ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا
مِّمَّا تَأْكُلُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾ ثُمَّ يَأْتِى مِنۢ بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ
سَبْعٌ شِدَادٌ يَأْكُلْنَ مَا قَدَّمْتُمْ لَهُنَّ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا
مِّمَّا تُحْصِنُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾ ثُمَّ يَأْتِى مِنۢ بَعْدِ
ذَٰلِكَ عَامٌ فِيهِ يُغَاثُ ٱلنَّاسُ وَفِيهِ
يَعْصِرُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

And the King said, "Bring him to me! I would make him close to me and serve me exclusively. Then, speaking to him, he [the King] said, "From today, you are established firmly close to us, enjoying trust". He [Joseph] said, "Place me in charge of the storehouses of the land; I shall be a well-guarding and knowing keeper." Thus We established Joseph firmly in the land; he had full mastery over it, [doing] whatever he willed. We bestow Our grace upon whomever We will, and We leave not to waste the recompensation of the good-doers. Yet, the reward of the [eternal] life to come is far better for those who have attained to faith and have always been conscious of God. [12:54-57]

وَقَالَ ٱلْمَلِكُ
ٱئْتُونِى بِهِۦٓ أَسْتَخْلِصْهُ لِنَفْسِى ۖ فَلَمَّا
كَلَّمَهُۥ قَالَ إِنَّكَ ٱلْيَوْمَ لَدَيْنَا مَكِينٌ أَمِينٌ
﴿٥٤﴾ قَالَ ٱجْعَلْنِى عَلَىٰ خَزَآئِنِ
ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ إِنِّى حَفِيظٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٥٥﴾
وَكَذَٰلِكَ مَكَّنَّا لِيُوسُفَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ يَتَبَوَّأُ
مِنْهَا حَيْثُ يَشَآءُ نُصِيبُ بِرَحْمَتِنَا مَن
نَّشَآءُ ۖ وَلَا نُضِيعُ أَجْرَ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ
﴿٥٦﴾ وَلَأَجْرُ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ لِّلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا۟ وَكَانُوا۟ يَتَّقُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾

The above verses present an early plan that was suggested by the Prophet Yusuf (Joseph) to overcome the seven hard years that Egypt would face. The consideration that common interest should prevail over individual interests and planning for the future difficulties while dealing with the present ease are fundamental in Shari'a, which aims always

to strike a balance between the individual and society, and between present and future. According to the Islamic law, a private harm may be borne to avoid a common one, and the common interest has to be considered as a legitimate basis for a law as long as it does not contradict a certain rule in the revealed sources.

Besides this, the verses teach that a person who is capable of carrying out a public service, especially in pressing circumstances, has to present him/herself and his/her merits and qualifications to the people and their authorities in order to be honest towards God and grateful for His gifts, as well as towards the people. The Quran also teaches the Muslims to always think about tomorrow, "*and let every human being look to what he [/she] has forwarded for tomorrow*" [59:18], and to secure the future of successive generations: "*And so, they who come after them [the present generation] pray: 'O our Lord! Forgive us and our brothers and sisters who preceded us in faith; and let not our hearts have any unfavorable thoughts or feelings against those who have attained to faith. Our Lord, surely you are All-clement, Most Gracious' "* [59:10].

METALLIC UTILIZATION AND ORGANIZED WORK

He [Dhu al-Qarnayn] said, "That wherein my Lord has established me is better [than anything that you may pay me]; so help me [with your work] strongly, and I will set up a rampart between you and them. Bring me ingots of iron." Then when he had made all level between two cliffs [by putting in the ingots of iron], and then said, "[Light a fire and] blow", until he had made it [glow like] fire, he said, "Bring me molten copper to pour upon it." Thus they [who became barred by the rampart] were unable to come over or pierce it. [18:95-97]

قَالَ
مَا مَكَّنِّي فِيهِ رَبِّي خَيْرٌ فَأَعِينُونِي بِقُوَّةٍ
أَجْعَلْ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ رَدْمًا ﴿٩٥﴾
ءَاتُونِي زُبَرَ الْحَدِيدِ ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا
سَاوَىٰ بَيْنَ الصَّدَفَيْنِ قَالَ انفُخُوا ۖ
حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَعَلَهُ نَارًا قَالَ ءَاتُونِي
أُفْرِغْ عَلَيْهِ قِطْرًا ﴿٩٦﴾ فَمَا اسْطَاعُوا أَن
يَظْهَرُوهُ وَمَا اسْتَطَاعُوا لَهُ نَقْبًا ﴿٩٧﴾

Indeed, We sent aforetime the conveyors of Our messages with clear signs and messages, and We sent down along with them the book and the balance [to weigh right and wrong] so that people observe [in dealing with one another] justice; and We provided on the earth [for human use] iron and in it there is great might, as well as many benefits for human beings; and through all these [means] God marks out those who would stand up for [the principles of justice presented by] Him and the conveyors of His

لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا
بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَنزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ
وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ ۖ
وَأَنزَلْنَا الْحَدِيدَ فِيهِ بَأْسٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَنَافِعُ
لِلنَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ مَن يَنصُرُهُ

messages, even though He [Himself] is beyond the reach of human sensory perception. Surely, God is All-mighty, Exalted in power. [57:25]

وَرُسُلَهُۥ بِٱلْغَيْبِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ قَوِىٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٢٥﴾

In the above verses, the Quran calls the attention to the mineral resources and how they should be used for the benefit of the people. Molten copper was mixed with iron ingots which were heated until they glowed like fire, a process after which an inaccessible rampart was set up to protect a group of people from the invasion of another. The verses [18:95-97] underline the essential co-operation between the entrepreneur (the technical and/or organizational manager) and the workers who should feel that they are strongly involved in the enterprise on which they are working, and that their hard work is indispensable in its success.

In fact, texts in the Quran and Sunna provide general principles that can apply to the relations between employers and employees. A tradition of the Prophet indicates that the relations between a person and those of whom he/she is in charge should be based on justice and kindness, "Your brothers [/and sisters] are those who serve you and God has made you in charge of them Whoever has a brother [or a sister] under his [/her] charge, should let him [/her] eat from the same food that he [/she] eats, and be dressed in clothes like his [/hers], and not charge them with work that overburdens them, and if you do, you have to help them," [reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah]. This tradition might be taken only as referring to the relation between a master and a slave, although nothing in its wording may hinder its relevance to the relation between one in charge and those who work under him/her.

If this was the kind of relation required between a master and slave, how, then, might one expect the relation between an employer and free workers to be? With regard to the due wages for a free worker, the employer should provide him/her - as inferred from the previous tradition and others - with the basis of a decent life and what should secure the human dignity; "*We have conferred dignity on the children of Adam, and carried them over land and see, and provided for them sustenance out of the good things of life ...*" [17:70]. The worker's standard of living should not be far below that of the employer, or may even be equal, as the above-mentioned tradition mentions. Another authentic tradition of the Prophet secures for the public employee of the state a home, means of transportation, a helper in house-work and even secures his [/her] marriage [quoted by Ibn Kathir in his commentary on the verse [3:161]. Such needs have to be fulfilled also for those who work in the private sector. It was within the institution of the public position "*muhtasib*" to deal instantly on the spot with any mistreatment of slaves and free workers whether they were men or women, or even animals.

Verse [57:25] underlines the great value of iron, "*and in it there is great might as well as many benefits for people*," especially in relation to the power of the state which has to secure justice and fight injustice whether it emerges within its borders or from abroad. The state forces should be well equipped with weapons and other technological advances to enforce the principles of justice which have been presented in God's message. As it has been indicated in a well-known statement, "God may sometimes cause deterrence

[from evil-doing] by the state power while it may not be caused by the mere guidance of the Quran". This should by no means overshadow the enormous peaceful benefits of iron and minerals for civil industry and economic development; as the Quran refers "*and in it there is great might as well as many benefits for human beings.*"

JUDICIAL MERITS

And [remember] Dawud and Sulayman [David and Solomon], when both of them gave rulings concerning the tillage when some people's sheep had strayed by night [and destroyed the tillage], and We watched their rulings. We caused Solomon to understand the case [in a better way], yet We granted both sound judgement and knowledge; and We caused the mountains to join David in extolling Our limitless glory, and likewise the birds; as We are able to do [all things]. [21:78-79]

وَدَاوُۥدَ وَسُلَيْمَٰنَ إِذْ يَحْكُمَانِ فِى
ٱلْحَرْثِ إِذْ نَفَشَتْ فِيهِ غَنَمُ ٱلْقَوْمِ وَكُنَّا
لِحُكْمِهِمْ شَٰهِدِينَ ﴿٧٨﴾ فَفَهَّمْنَٰهَا
سُلَيْمَٰنَ ۚ وَكُلًّا ءَاتَيْنَا حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا ۚ
وَسَخَّرْنَا مَعَ دَاوُۥدَ ٱلْجِبَالَ يُسَبِّحْنَ
وَٱلطَّيْرَ ۚ وَكُنَّا فَٰعِلِينَ ﴿٧٩﴾

Dawud [David, d. c. 961 B.C. ruled 1002-962], and Sulayman [Solomon, ruled 972-922 B.C.], were both kings of the Israelites according to the Bible, and were kings and prophets at the same time according to the Quran [in addition to the above verse see 4:163; 6:84; 38:26, 35]. The above verses refer - according to statements attributed only to the Prophet's Companions and their Successors - to a flock of sheep that strayed at night into a farm and destroyed the tillage. When the owner of the farm complained to King David, he ruled that the sheep should be given to the owner of the farm as a compensation for the damage of his tillage. David's son Solomon viewed the ruling against the sheep's owner to be very hard, for the sheep were all what he owned and now he had lost them, while the owner of the farm still had the land. Solomon mentioned to his father that he would rule in this case differently, giving the owner of the farm a temporary right of usufruct over the sheep and the ownership of their milk and wool and breed, while the owner of the sheep had to take care of the farm until similar tillage to what had been damaged was re-grown. In this way the harmed party would be compensated fairly, and the wrongdoing party would not be deprived from his source of living or capital. Realizing that such a ruling would be more just, David changed his previous ruling to be in concordance with what his son Solomon suggested [see e.g. the commentary of Ibn Kathir vol. 3 on the above verses]. The above verses may thus indicate that a prophet, as David is considered in the Quran, might make decisions according to his human discretion and judgement "*ijtihad*", and might consequently make human mistakes or might not reach the best decision, and thus might change a previous ruling according to what he might later find to be closer to justice, as David did in following his son's suggestion [see the commentary of al-Qurtubi vol. II on the above verses 21:78-79].

According to a tradition of Prophet Muhammad, one who makes a ruling according to his "*ijtihad*" and makes a mistake has one reward for doing his best whatever the result may be, whereas one who practices "*ijtihad*" and reaches a right decision has a double reward [reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, al-Nasa'i, Ibn Majah]. I believe the same rule applies to a prophet when he practices ijtihad. I do not see why a prophet should be corrected by a divine revelation when he applies "*ijtihad*" and perhaps makes a mistake, as some theologians and jurists have stated, as long as "*ijtihad*" is allowed and what is reached through it does not contradict the goals and principles of Shari'a, although it may not be the best decision reached in the given case. It is repeatedly stressed in the Quran that all prophets including Muhammad are merely human beings, and thus might make mistakes in using their discretion. A prophet's infallibility has to be restricted solely to the conveyance of God's message, and does not cover his human discretion in human affairs. Prophet Muhammad used his discretion in selecting the strategic site of his army in the battle of Badr, and in suggesting that a portion of the yield of the date palm trees in Medina be given to the chieftains of the tribe of Ghatafan to persuade them to withdraw from the siege of the city in the battle of the Confederates, and he also accepted what his Companions suggested as better ideas in both cases, and once clearly stated, "You are more knowledgeable of your worldly affairs" [reported by Muslim and see the reports about the battles of Badr, al-Ahzab in Ibn Hisham: *al-Sira*, Ibn Sa'd: *al-Tabaqat* vol. 2, Ibn al-Qayyim: *Zad ul-Ma'ad*, vol 3; and see Ibn Kathir's commentary on the verse 3:159]. Moreover, when discussing with his Companion Mu'adh, when he appointed him as a judge, what would be the sources of his rulings, the Prophet approved of Mu'adh's answer that ijtihad is a principle for ruling among people when there was no particular text in the Quran or Sunna that could be applied to the case under consideration [reported by Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi, al-Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, al-Darami]. The Prophet agreed to the different results of "ijtihad" reached by his Companions when he ordered them to pray the afternoon prayer at the area where Bani Qurayza were settled [reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim].

Muslim jurists have agreed that a ruling may be changed after being pronounced to reach a more rightful and just decision. However, such a change in their view should be made only by the judge who made the previous decision in the same case, or by a superior authority such as the Caliph or the higher court that handles complaints of injustice (*al-mazalim*) over which the Caliph, crown prince, or the minister presided in the capital, while a regional governor would preside over a regional court. A ruling cannot be changed in the jurists' view by another judge of the same rank as the one who ruled initially, as this would affect the reliability and stability of rulings which must be maintained for the benefit of the people and the state, though exceptions have to be allowed in certain conditions in order to secure justice [see al-Qurtubi, *ibid*]. Stability of rulings is still observed in modern laws. A hierarchical organization of courts as applied in a modern judicial system, through which a change of ruling should be authorized only to a higher court would be acceptable by Shari'a, as long as it secures a good administration of justice.

The Quran mentions another case in which David erred by making a decision based upon the statement of one party, without listening to the other [38:21-26], since giving disputing parties an equal chance to present their case is essential to justice. According to

what was reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Hanbal and al-Nasa'i, David and Solomon also differed in their methods of dealing with a well-known dispute between two women arguing over a certain child. Whereas David was convinced by the argument of one party and decided that she was the child's mother, Solomon attempted to reach a just decision through use of practical evidence, and not merely argument. He suggested cutting the child in half and giving one half to each woman. This meant that the child would be killed, so the true mother agreed to give the child to the other woman in order to keep it alive, even if it meant that she herself would lose it. Thus Solomon was able to discover who the real mother was and decided that she was the one who should have the child. Use of such a presumption of facts and circumstantial indication is accepted in the law of evidence in Shari'a when stronger kinds of evidence such as a confession or admission of a defendant, or concrete material evidence, or witnesses are not present or not sufficient to make a ruling based on them. Muslim jurists have dealt extensively with the conceptual and procedural principles of ruling and the art of judgement in their voluminous works as well as in specific ones [e.g. al-Mawardi, *'Adab al-Qadi*; Ibn al-Qayyim, *al-Turuq al-Hukmiyya*; Ibn Firhawn, *Tabsirat al-Hukkam*....etc.

INTERACTION AND BALANCE BETWEEN THE SPIRITUAL-MORAL AND THE MATERIAL

O you who have attained to faith! When the prayer is called for on the Day of Congregation (Jum'a, Friday) hasten to the remembrance of God, and leave all selling [and buying] business; this is for your own good, did you but know. And when the prayer is ended, disperse freely on earth and seek the bounty of God, and often keep up the remembrance of God, so as you may attain to success.
[Yet] if they come across a commercial dealing or a passing delight, they scatter off to it and they leave you standing [alone]. Say: "What is with God is far better than all passing delight and commercial dealing, and God is the best of providers." [62:9-11]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِذَا
نُودِىَ لِلصَّلَوٰةِ مِن يَوْمِ ٱلْجُمُعَةِ فَٱسْعَوْا۟
إِلَىٰ ذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ وَذَرُوا۟ ٱلْبَيْعَ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ
خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٩﴾ فَإِذَا
قُضِيَتِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةُ فَٱنتَشِرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ
وَٱبْتَغُوا۟ مِن فَضْلِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱذْكُرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ
كَثِيرًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠﴾ وَإِذَا رَأَوْا۟
تِجَٰرَةً أَوْ لَهْوًا ٱنفَضُّوٓا۟ إِلَيْهَا وَتَرَكُوكَ
قَآئِمًا ۚ قُلْ مَا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ خَيْرٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهْوِ
وَمِنَ ٱلتِّجَٰرَةِ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ
خَيْرُ ٱلرَّٰزِقِينَ ﴿١١﴾

Your wealth and your children are but a trial and a temptation, and with God is a mighty reward [64:15]

إِنَّمَآ أَمْوَٰلُكُمْ وَأَوْلَٰدُكُمْ
فِتْنَةٌ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ عِندَهُۥٓ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٥﴾

The Quran does not by any means aim to split the human being from this world, as it is created and subjected to human beings who have to make use of it legitimately in accordance with the guidance of God. The sole worship of God is a goal which human beings observe in living fully in this world, but this does not mean that another separate world in this present life should be established for the religious and righteous people. The person who submits him/herself to God's will and guidance is one who seeks his/her sustenance in this world and keeps the eternal life to come in mind, and thus deals such as to gain God's acceptance of all his/her dealings with others in this life: "*And seek through what God has granted you [the good of] the life to come, without forgetting, withal, your [rightful] share in this present world; and do good as God has done good to you; and seek not to spread corruption on earth; surely, God loves not those who spread corruption*" [28:77]; "*And there are among them [the people] such as pray, 'Our Lord! Give to us in this world good, and good in the world to come, and keep us safe from suffering through the fire'. It is these that have their portion [of happiness] in return for what they have earned; and God is swift in reckoning*" [2:201-202]; "*it is He who has made the earth easy to live upon; go about, then, in all its tracts, and eat of the sustenance which He provides, but [always bear in mind that] unto Him you shall be resurrected*" [67:15].

In this way, the belief in God and the life to come does not isolate the believer from other people or from this world. Instead, it supports and strengthens his/her relations with others in working in this world with a purpose and a dimension that guards him/her against egocentrism, materialistic myopia and color-blindness. Faith in God and the human accountability in this life and in the eternal life to come allows the human being a longer, wider, deeper and more thorough vision of the past, present and future. More individual balance and an avoidance of the two extremes of arrogance and desperateness can be maintained through this faith in reacting to the ups and downs of this life, as the Prophet's tradition teaches: "How amazing is the matter of the believer: He/she is always enjoying the good of this life [whatever the present situation may be], and this can only be attained for a believer. If he [/she] has ease and plenty, he [/she] is thankful [to God] and this is good for him[/her], and if he [/she] suffers a hardship and straitened circumstances he [/she] is patient and steadfast and this is good for him [/her]" [reported by Muslim, Ibn Hanbal].

Besides, making this life more livable by enabling the human will to enjoy it and to meet its contrasts with more strength , faith in God and the life to come provides a deep and solid basis for human equality and togetherness: "*O human beings! We have created you male and female, and have made you [different] peoples and tribes, so that you may well know and recognize [the merits of] one another*" [49:13]. Submission to God's will and guidance can never mean merely "*turning faces towards the east or the west*"; instead it implies a genuine and serious commitment to morality, righteousness and benevolence. It inspires spending on those who are in need "*however much one may love and cherish it [one's wealth],*" and keeping one's promises, and meeting all vicissitudes of life with a strong will and balanced mind [2:177], and thus prevailing over them. The Prophet teaches that the best among the believers is "one who does not forsake the life to come for this life, nor forsake this world's life for the life to come, and one who does not live as a burden on others" [reported by al-Khatib in his History], and that "The most loved by God

is the most beneficial to His dependents" [reported by Abd-Ullah in *Zawa'id al-Zuhd*, as al-Suyuti indicated in *al-Jami' al-Saghir*, and graded by Nasir al-Albani as good, and reported with a slight difference by Ibn Abi al-Dunya and al-Tabarani in *al-Kabir*], and that "the most loved by God among His servants is the most virtuous and well behaving" [reported by al-Tabarani in "*al-Kabir*"]. The Prophet prays to God to bless with His mercy and grace "*a servant of Him who is easygoing when he [/she] sells, buys, pays back what he [/she] owes, or asks to be paid what he [/she] is owed*" [reported by al-Bukhari, Ibn Majah].

In this perspective, the above verses about the "congregation prayer" on Friday stress the due balance between "working in this life" while keeping in mind as a goal and purpose "the life to come". As soon as the call for prayer is heard, those who have attained faith should "*hasten to the remembrance of God, and leave all selling [and buying]; this is for your own good, did you but know*". But as soon as the prayer is ended "*disperse freely on earth and seek the bounty of God, and keep on frequently the remembrance of God, so as you may attain to success*" [62:9-10]. Prayers do not take long to be offered, yet they stress the faith and train the individuals and the society in good behavior, as their main goal is to improve human conduct in this world: "*and keep up the prayer; prayer restrains [the human being] from loathsome behavior and from that which runs counter to reason [and common sense]; and the remembrance of God is indeed far greater [in its value and reward in this world life and in the life to come]. And God knows all that you do*" [29:45].

In such a balanced way, the believer realizes that "wealth and children are the adornment of this world life", but that one should not be indulged in this adornment lest he/she becomes a prisoner of his/her own selfishness and materialistic accumulation, and thus turns the adornment of this world life into a barrier from fairness and togetherness [64:14, also 9:24; 23:55; 68:13-14; 74:11-13]. While the believer can enjoy the pleasures and the adornments of this life, he [/she] should maintain the balance by keeping in mind the ultimate goal and the journey's end: "*and the good deeds with their everlasting fruits are far better for your Lord's reward and for hope*" [18:46], "*all this is the enjoyment of this life, but the most beauteous goal is with God*" [3:14].

Wealth and children, then, "*are but a trial [for you from God]; and with God there is a mighty reward*" [64:15]. One loses such a mighty reward in the life to come and some reward in this world's life if he/she loses this balance and goes to either the one extreme of distancing him/herself from any chance of establishing a family and making money altogether, or to the other extreme of indulging him/herself in accumulating wealth and enjoying only the pleasures of his/her family and children and thus living isolated and unbalanced in a self-imposed prison of egotism and materialism [e.g. 8:28; 9:69; 18:34-40; 19:77-8; 26:88-89; 34:35; 57:10; 63:9; 68:14; 74:12-16; 104:2-3].

PENALTIES
SPECIFIED AND UNSPECIFIED

" HUDUD, QISAS, TA'ZIR"

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The general principles in Shari'a naturally apply to each area of law, including the penal law. One may stress here that no sanctions can be decided except by a law, and that it should be known by the public before it is enforced. This principle is essential in penal law: deciding that a certain human action is an offence and deeming a punishment that would be inflicted for its commitment should be formulated in a law which should be announced to the public. Clarifying the guidance of what is required and what is prohibited is a prerequisite for moral and legal responsibility for deviation and transgression [e.g. 4:115]; thus information and education about laws in general and the penal law in particular is essential in Shari'a. Accordingly, the law should become effective only after being made known to the public, and no retroaction is allowed, especially in penal law, since God does not hold a person morally or legally accountable for any deed except after revealing His guidance about it [e.g. 2:275; 4:22-23; 5:95; 8:38].

Being a religion, Islam always combines education and social reform with laws, and even makes the former precede the latter. Thus a lack of knowledge by an individual, or social suffering may lead to a reduced or even suspended penalty. A punishment for killing has to be preceded by moral education about the sanctity of life, and serious efforts to avoid and remove factors that encourage violence and develop hostilities among people should be undertaken. In the same way a punishment for committing fornication or adultery has to be preceded by educating the people about the importance and value of marriage for the individual and the society, and the great difference between marriage and any other sexual relation which lacks the psychological dimensions for a permanent partner and companion to complement one another, have comfort and satisfaction, and enjoy mutual love, happiness and tenderness [e.g. 4:1; 30:21].

Besides, in the case of marriage, there are the pleasures of having a home, a family, and children which are beyond description. To fulfill such an essential, families should be understanding and cooperative in making marriage possible, and the state should provide its material and moral support. Shari'a considers the state authorities responsible for helping those who cannot afford marriage to fulfill this religious, personal and social need, and wealthy individuals have organized endowments or trusts, "*awqaf,*" to encourage marriage among the youth who do not have sufficient income, just as they have done in allocating permanent resources for providing clean water, education, medical treatment, and various other services.

Punishment for theft should come after securing the essential needs through opportunities for work, sufficient income, public services, and social assistance for those who may not be able to work temporarily or permanently. Caliph 'Umar suspended the punishment for theft in general when the people suffered a famine, and suspended it for the individual who was under the pressure of hunger as a result of unfair treatment by those in charge.

In this light, it is easily understandable that Shari'a does not make its penalties a priority in the plan for Islamic reform, nor is it even keen to inflict punishment. The Sunna of the Prophet in his rulings emphasizes how eager he was to let defendants be acquitted rather than convicted. A defendant's offence has to be proved beyond any doubt in order for him/her to be convicted and punished. The tradition of the Prophet states that it better for a judge to make an error in acquitting a guilty person than in convicting an innocent one, and that a judge has to avoid inflicting the severe punishments decided for serious crimes "*hudud*" as much as possible [reported by Ibn Abi Shayba, al-Tirmidhi, al-Hakim and al-Bayhaqi]. Repentance is urged for the offender rather than punishment, this repentance being a genuine reform in the depth of the human self [The Quran, e.g. 4:16; 5:33-34, 38-39; 6:54; 16:119; 24:4-5]. On the other hand, the wronged party is urged to forgive [e.g. 2:178; 24:22; 64:14].

The criminal responsibility is individual, since a burden can only be accounted to the one who bears it, and nothing can be accounted to a person except what he/she has actually done [53:38-9; also 6:164; 17:15; 35:18; 39:7]. On the Day of Judgement God judges every human being individually [6:94; 19:80, 95], and the divine justice is the ideal. According to the Quran, Prophet Yusuf [Joseph] stressed the individual responsibility when he was requested by his half-brothers to seize one of them as a substitute for his own full brother who was accused of a theft that he had not committed: "*He answered, 'May God preserve us from detaining any other than the one with whom we have found our property; for if we do so we would indeed be evil-doers'*" [12:79]. If the defendant is proved to have any defect or mental disorder, or any pressure that has an effect on his/her free will, the defendant's responsibility may be remitted or reduced.

The story of Joseph mentions a precedent of ruling according to circumstantial presumption: "*and witness of her folk stated, 'If his [Joseph's] tunic has been torn from the front, then she is telling the truth and he is a liar, but if his tunic is torn from behind, then she is lying and he is telling the truth.' And when [the husband] saw his tunic torn from behind, he said, 'This is of you women's guile; surely your guile is great'*" [12:26-28].

Penal law, like all laws of Shari'a, sets the general principles and directions and deals with certain fundamental cases, leaving to the human discretion any required detailing or specifying according to changing circumstances in different times. Introduced penal rules for emerging offenses is called *ta'zir*, an Arabic word which originally means "punishing, disciplining or correcting." A penalty is decided in such cases by the legislation or left to the courts' discretion, and the decision varies according to the changing circumstances in different times and places, in relation to different societies and probably different individuals.

PREMEDITATED MURDER AND INJURY

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ
كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْقِصَاصُ فِى ٱلْقَتْلَى ۖ
ٱلْحُرُّ بِٱلْحُرِّ وَ ٱلْعَبْدُ بِٱلْعَبْدِ وَ ٱلْأُنثَىٰ
بِٱلْأُنثَىٰ ۚ فَمَنْ عُفِىَ لَهُۥ مِنْ أَخِيهِ شَىْءٌ
فَٱتِّبَاعٌۢ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَ أَدَآءٌ إِلَيْهِ
بِإِحْسَـٰنٍ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ تَخْفِيفٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ
وَرَحْمَةٌ ۗ فَمَنِ ٱعْتَدَىٰ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ فَلَهُۥ
عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٧٨﴾ وَ لَكُمْ فِى ٱلْقِصَاصِ
حَيَوٰةٌ يَـٰٓأُو۟لِى ٱلْأَلْبَـٰبِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ
﴿١٧٩﴾

O You who have attained to faith! Just retribution is ordained for you in cases of murder: the free for the free, and the slave for the slave, and the woman for the woman. And if a remission is decided for a guilty person by his [/her] brother [/sister], this [remission] should be pursued nicely, and the reparation for him [/her] should be made in a goodly manner. This is an alleviation from your Lord, and an act of His grace; but for one who wilfully commits aggression after that, a grievous suffering awaits. And in a just retribution there is life for you, O you who have sound minds; so that you may safeguard yourselves [against evil doing]. [2:178-179]

وَ مَن يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا
مُّتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَآؤُهُۥ جَهَنَّمُ خَـٰلِدًا فِيهَا
وَغَضِبَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَ لَعَنَهُۥ وَ أَعَدَّ لَهُۥ
عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٩٣﴾

But whoever kills deliberately another believer, his [/her] requital shall be hell, therein to abide; and God will condemn him [/her] and will reject him [/her] and will ready for him [/her] an awesome suffering. [4:93]

مِنْ أَجْلِ ذَٰلِكَ كَتَبْنَا
عَلَىٰ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ أَنَّهُۥ مَن قَتَلَ نَفْسًۢا
بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا
قَتَلَ ٱلنَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَ مَنْ أَحْيَاهَا
فَكَأَنَّمَآ أَحْيَا ٱلنَّاسَ جَمِيعًا ۚ وَ لَقَدْ
جَآءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُنَا بِٱلْبَيِّنَـٰتِ ثُمَّ إِنَّ كَثِيرًا
مِّنْهُم بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ لَمُسْرِفُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

Therefore, We ordained unto the children of Israel, that if whoever [intentionally] kills a human being, unless it be [in punishment] for murder or for spreading corruption on earth, shall be as if he [/she] had killed all human beings, and whoso saves a life, shall be as if he [/she] had saved the lives of all human beings. And, indeed, there came unto them conveyors of Our messages with all evidence of the truth; and then many of them thereafter commit excesses on earth. [5:32]

وَ كَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ فِيهَآ أَنَّ
ٱلنَّفْسَ بِٱلنَّفْسِ وَ ٱلْعَيْنَ بِٱلْعَيْنِ
وَ ٱلْأَنفَ بِٱلْأَنفِ وَ ٱلْأُذُنَ بِٱلْأُذُنِ وَ ٱلسِّنَّ

And therein [in the Torah] We ordained for them a life for a life, and an eye for an eye, and a nose for a nose, and an ear for an ear, and a tooth for a tooth; and a [similar] retribution for wounds;

but whosoever forgoes [this] out of generosity and magnanimity, that shall be for him[/her] an expiation [for some past wrongdoing]. And whoever does not rule according to what God has sent down - they are the evildoers. [5:45]

بِٱلسِّنِّ وَ ٱلْجُرُوحَ قِصَاصٌ ۚ فَمَن تَصَدَّقَ
بِهِۦ فَهُوَ كَفَّارَةٌ لَّهُۥ ۚ وَ مَن لَّمْ يَحْكُم بِمَآ
أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ فَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

And do not take the human being's life, which is sacred according to God's law, except in [the pursuit of] justice. And if anyone has been wrongfully slain, We have empowered the one who is responsible for him [/her to pursue justice or to forgive]; but let him [/her] not go through excessive killing, if he [/she] is keen to be supported [by God and His law]. [17:33]

وَ لَا تَقْتُلُوا۟ ٱلنَّفْسَ
ٱلَّتِى حَرَّمَ ٱللَّهُ إِلَّا بِٱلْحَقِّ ۗ وَ مَن قُتِلَ
مَظْلُومًا فَقَدْ جَعَلْنَا لِوَلِيِّهِۦ سُلْطَٰنًا فَلَا
يُسْرِف فِّى ٱلْقَتْلِ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ مَنصُورًا
﴿٣٣﴾

Retaliation, or "lex talionis", was known in early laws and societies [e.g. Babylonian, Assyrian, Greek, Roman, German tribes, and Arab tribes before Islam etc.], as well as in the Jewish law [Exodus 21:23 ff]. Revenge was sometimes practiced in a collective way against the whole tribe or clan to which the killer or the suspected killer belonged or was thought to belong. According to the Quran [5:32], the value of the human life and the evil of a murder were underlined in the Torah, following and related to the murder of one of the children of Adam by his brother [the Quran 5:27-31; Cain and Able in the Bible, Genesis 4:1-16]: "*Therefore, we ordained unto the children of Israel that whoever slays a human being, unless it be [in legitimate punishment] for murder or for spreading corruption on earth, shall be as if he [/she] had slain the whole humanity altogether; and whoever saves a [human] life, shall be as if he [/she] had saved the whole of humanity altogether*" [5:32]. The Quran restricts retaliation to the determined and premeditated murder of a particular person, the murderer himself/herself, and no-one else. The Quranic verse 2:178 strictly forbids that retaliation be inflicted on someone in the tribe or the clan of the murderer who is of a higher rank, in contrast to pre-Islamic times when it sometimes happened that revenge might target a slave's master or any other free man in the tribe or clan when that slave was accused of murder, even if the victim himself was another slave. Furthermore, sometimes the victim's clan might like to inflict excessive revenge with regard to the number or status of the persons killed in return for the victim in order to prove its superiority and power. The Quran restricts retaliation to the exact number of those who murdered. As for understanding the above verse as forbidding retaliation against a free person for killing a slave, or against a man who kills a woman, many jurists have generally applied the principle stated in the beginning of the above mentioned verse [2:178]: "*Just retribution is ordained for you in cases of murder*," as well as in the following verse 5:45 "*And therein we ordained for them: a life for a life ...*" in addition to what is mentioned in the Prophet's traditions.

The specific cases which have been indicated in the verse [2:178] are merely to stress that excessiveness is not allowed in retaliation, but they do not alter the general principle that human lives are equal in worth and that retaliation can be only inflicted on the person convicted of murder, whoever he/she, as well as the victim, may be [see the commentary of al-Qurtubi vol 2. on the verse [2:178], also the commentary of Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Rida "*al-Manar*" vol. 2 on the same verse]. Equality of male and female human life has also been underlined by many commentators and jurists. Besides, al-Qurtubi stated: "There is no difference [among the jurists] that the retaliation in cases of murder have to be inflicted only by the authorities since they are responsible for inflicting the retaliation and other decided penalties whether specified in the Quran or decided in another way; for God addresses all the believers as a whole in the verse, and since they cannot do this collectively by their ownselves, they have appointed the ruler to act in their place in inflicting retaliation and other penalties" [vol. 2, pp 245-246, Cairo].

The Quran urges forgiveness that should be practiced in a goodly manner [2:178] and considers it as an act of generosity and magnanimity that, *"shall be for him[/her, the closest relative to the victim] an expiation for some past wrongdoing"* [5:45]. Muhammad Asad has rightfully observed: "The Pentateuch does not contain this call to forgiveness [reported in the Quranic verse 5:45], which is brought out with great clarity not only in the Quran but also in the teachings of Jesus, especially in the Sermon on the Mount ... Alternatively, the above admonition may have been part of the original teachings of the Torah ..." which might have been ignored [note no. 62 on the verse 5:45; see also Matthew 5:38-40]. The victim's family is persuaded to forgive the guilty of murder, as the commentators and jurists have always understood from the phrasing of the verse [2:178].

If the victim has no family, or his/her family is unknown, the state and its authorities may exercise the allowable forgiveness in such a case. Accordingly, the whole society may express its will for a partial forgiveness by substituting the capital punishment with something less strict, through public referendum or decision by representative legislature: *"This is an alleviation from your Lord and an act of His grace."* The human errors increasingly encountered in the prosecution and court decisions, in our contemporary complicated societies, can add to the justification for abandoning capital punishment, when a defendant is convicted of a premeditated murder for the first time in ordinary circumstances. In the case of a recidivism, or a repeated committing a premeditated murder, capital punishment may be considered. The Quran, however, refers only to retribution in the life to come in such a case: "But for one who wilfully commits aggression after that a grievous suffering awaits". Capital punishment may also be considered, in addition to essential social reform, when a serious increase in cases of murder and violence, especially serial or gang murders, is noticed: *"And in a just retribution there is a life for you,"* [2:179].

As for retribution against an intentional injury to the body or loss of an organ, the injured is urged to forgo the retribution while accepting a financial compensation. Forgoing both signifies an act of generosity and magnanimity that is highly valued in the Quran "*that shall be an expiation for some past wrongdoing*" [5:45]. This is a progressive step after the harsh penalties indicated in the Torah [Exodus 21:23 ff.]. It may also be significant that retaliation for injury is mentioned in the Quran only in the above verse 5:45 referring to the law of the Torah. Since forgiveness is urged it should not be restricted only

to the injured person, and may be extended to the whole society which can express its will for abandoning retaliation in such cases, and replacing it by some other punishment, in addition to a financial compensation through a public referendum or a decision made by the representative legislature. This can be followed in a contemporary Islamic state. Shari'a, like modern secular laws, does not punish for a murder committed in legitimate self-defense, as is implied in the exception of the prohibition of killing: "*unless this is based on rightfulness and justice*" [17:33]. The Prophet's tradition clearly indicates that one should defend his/her life, property and family, and if such a person loses his/her life in this legitimate defense, he/she is a martyr [reported by Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi, al-Nasa'i and Ibn Habban].

UNINTENTIONAL MANSLAUGHTER

And no believer should kill another, unless it be by error. And if any believer kills another by error, then let him [/her] set free a believing human being from bondage, and pay an indemnity to the victim's family, unless they forgo it as an act of generosity and magnanimity. But if the victim himself [/herself] belongs to people who are at war with you and is a believer, let the killer set free a believing human being from bondage. Whereas if he [/she] belongs to a people with whom you have a bond, then an indemnity is to be paid to his [/her] family, in addition to setting free a believing human being from bondage. But one who finds not the means, let him [/her] fast two consecutive months: an atonement ordained by God; and God is All-knowing, All-wise. [4:92]

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ أَن يَقْتُلَ مُؤْمِنًا إِلَّا
خَطَـًٔا ۚ وَمَن قَتَلَ مُؤْمِنًا خَطَـًٔا فَتَحْرِيرُ
رَقَبَةٍ مُّؤْمِنَةٍ وَدِيَةٌ مُّسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَىٰٓ أَهْلِهِۦٓ
إِلَّآ أَن يَصَّدَّقُوا۟ ۚ فَإِن كَانَ مِن قَوْمٍ عَدُوٍّ
لَّكُمْ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُّؤْمِنَةٍ ۖ
وَإِن كَانَ مِن قَوْمٍۭ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُم مِّيثَـٰقٌ
فَدِيَةٌ مُّسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَىٰٓ أَهْلِهِۦ وَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ
مُّؤْمِنَةٍ ۖ فَمَن لَّمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ شَهْرَيْنِ
مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ تَوْبَةً مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ
عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿٩٢﴾

The above verses state that the only conceivable way to see a believer killed by another is through an error. In such a case, retaliation is not allowed, since there was no intention to kill in the first place. The penalty in general cases, according to the verse 4:92, is to free a believing human being from bondage and paying indemnity to the victim's family, unless it chooses to forgo it as an act of generosity and magnanimity. However, exceptions may emerge such as a case of a believer accidentally killing another who belongs to a people who are at war with the believers. Such a killing may occur at the front-line during a truce, or accidentally at the borders. During certain rare occasions, a believer from a people with whom one is at war may manage to enter a country and may be accidentally killed by another believer in the country. The penalty in this case

would be to release a believing human being from bondage, but it would be meaningless to pay indemnity to the society to whom the victim belongs during a time of war. If the victim is a member of a group with whom the people of the erred believing killer are bound by any kind of compact, whether the victim happens to be visiting the country or is a permanent resident, the penalty is the same as in the general case of a believer killing another by error: a believing human being is to be freed from bondage in addition to the payment of an indemnity to the victim's family. It is significant that the life of a person related to a non-Muslim people with whom the Muslims have a bond or compact is considered equal to that of a fellow believer.

The above verse clearly underlines that freeing a believing human being from bondage is required as a penalty in all cases of involuntary manslaughter of a believer or a person whose people have a bond with the Muslims. ever by error, as this is part of a comprehensive Islamic plan to gradually end slavery. This plan states the principles of human freedom and equality, restricts sources of slavery, secures the rights of the existing slaves in all areas of their lives and work, and arranges freeing them through mandatory and voluntary rules by the individuals and the state. The prominent commentator on the Quran al-Nasafi [d.537 A.H./ 1142 C.E.], points out that freeing a human being from bondage is the only way to make up for killing another human being, as freeing a person is comparable to giving life in its true meaning to a person deprived of it [commentary on 4:92]. Since the life of the person killed by error cannot be restored, true life has been made possible for another who has been dispossessed of it. Considering bondage equal to death, al-Nasafi states that slavery is related to a society dominated by the stubborn concealing of the truth, "*kufr*", and the injustice of such a society made its life in its real sense mere death, as indicated by the Quran [e.g. 6:122; 8:24]. Thus, Muslims inherited slavery from previous societies, and Islam has strongly indicated that its principles are against it, and has presented a comprehensive plan to liquidate it. Unfortunately, the Muslims could not grasp the plan nor fulfill it when they had power, and they followed the cultural and social patterns of others who had preceded or were contemporary to them.

GANGSTERISM, BANDITRY, SERIAL MURDER, AND ROBBERY CONNECTED WITH USE OF FORCE

إِنَّمَا جَزَٰٓؤُاْ ٱلَّذِينَ يُحَارِبُونَ
ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ وَيَسۡعَوۡنَ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ
فَسَادًا أَن يُقَتَّلُوٓاْ أَوۡ يُصَلَّبُوٓاْ أَوۡ تُقَطَّعَ
أَيۡدِيهِمۡ وَأَرۡجُلُهُم مِّنۡ خِلَٰفٍ أَوۡ يُنفَوۡاْ
مِنَ ٱلۡأَرۡضِۚ ذَٰلِكَ لَهُمۡ خِزۡيٞ فِي
ٱلدُّنۡيَاۖ وَلَهُمۡ فِي ٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ
٣٣ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ تَابُواْ مِن قَبۡلِ أَن

It is a [deserved] requital for those who wage war against God and the Conveyor of His message, and spread destruction throughout the land, that they shall be killed or crucified or shall have their hands and feet alternately cut off or shall be banished from the land. That is disgrace for them in this world life, and in the life to come awaits them an awesome suffering; except for such [of them] as repent before you have power over

them. So know you that God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious. [5:33-34]

تَقۡدِرُوا۟ عَلَيۡهِمۡ ۖ فَٱعۡلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ
غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٣٤﴾

One has to keep certain fundamental facts in mind reading the severe penalties indicated in the above verses. We have to recall the historical and social circumstances of the Arabs at the time of the Prophet, and the specific occasion that the above verses deal with in particular. While there were settled tribes in certain cities or towns in Arabia such as Mecca, Yathrib, and al-Ta'if, there were also nomadic groups wandering in the desert who lived by attacking and pillaging caravans on their journeys. It happened that some of these people came to the Prophet in Medina saying that they had become Muslims. He hosted them and provided them with food and cared for their health (as they were suffering from the change in their climate), and gave them female camels for milk. When they recovered, they killed the attendant of the camels, stole them and ran away [reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi, al-Nasa'i, Ibn Majah]. It was important to deter such groups that had no commitment to any authority, in order to establish order and maintain the respect of law and authority. The above penalties are thus intended for lawless groups who make use of their numbers, arms and chosen location to spread violence and anarchy, by killing and robbing. This also applies to an armed rebellion that uses "hit and run" strategy.

The penalties indicated in the above verses range from death to the cutting off of hands and feet, and to banishment from the land by forced movement to another area or imprisonment according to some interpretation. The legislative or judicial authorities may choose from these options what applies to the given circumstances. Jurists require that such outlaws have to be warned before being attacked and arrested. One has to keep in mind that the defined crime must be proven by a decisive event without any doubt, and all the requirements of justice in arresting, treatment in custody, inquiry, prosecution and trial in court must be fulfilled. When any penalty is decided after a fair trial, it has to be inflicted in a humane way, as the Prophet teaches: "God has ordained for you to be nice in everything; [even] when you have to kill [legitimately a person or an animal] you should be nice in killing..." [reported by Muslim, Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi, al-Nasa'i, Ibn Majah]. Torture is forbidden, and it is required to inflict as little pain as possible during a penalty. The status and circumstance of the defendant must be considered, along with the alleged criminal actions [see the commentary of al- Qurtubi vol. 6 on the verses 5:33-34; the commentary of Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Rida: "*Tafsir al-Manar*" vol. 6 on the same verses]. However, the verses in their phrasing and historical circumstances seem to be referring to a case of war rather than a criminal offence defined and sanctioned by penal law, even if the commentators and jurists understood it the other way. If it is meant to refer to a state of war, killing, cutting off limbs, and banishing from the land can be easily conceived as factual effects of military confrontation, injuries and defeat.

In any case, the above verses characteristically state a legal principle that stresses the moral goal of Islamic law which supersedes a mere legalistic dimension. Those who are charged with waging war against God and the Conveyor of His message, and with spreading havoc throughout the land can be forgiven if genuine repentance and an abandonment

of the aggression can be proven before "having power over [the defendant]". The prominent jurist Ibn al-Qayyim considers this as a general legal principle not restricted to a particular offense, and to mention it in such a horrible case indicates that it also applies to others which are less horrifying and harmful [*I'lam al-Muwaqqi'in*, vol. 2 pp. 48-49, Cairo]. A tradition of the Prophet states sharply that punishment has to be avoided if there is any reasonable consideration. It is better to err in acquitting a guilty person rather than in punishing an innocent one [reported by Ibn Abi Shaybah, al-Tirmidhi, al-Hakim, al-Bayhaqi and graded as authentic by al-Suyutti].

SUICIDE

... and let not your own hands throw you into destruction ... [2:195]

وَأَنفِقُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ
وَلَا تُلْقُوا۟ بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى ٱلتَّهْلُكَةِ ۛ
وَأَحْسِنُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٩٥﴾

... and do not destroy yourselves; surely, God is Most Gracious to you. [4:29]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تَأْكُلُوٓا۟ أَمْوَٰلَكُم بَيْنَكُم
بِٱلْبَٰطِلِ ۛ إِلَّآ أَن تَكُونَ تِجَٰرَةً عَن
تَرَاضٍ مِّنكُمْ ۚ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا ﴿٢٩﴾

The previous verses address society as a whole using the plural form, and thus they may be interpreted as a warning to the whole society against its own self-destruction and suicide which results when individuals are indulged in selfishness and egotism and do not feel any responsibility towards one another or towards the whole social well-being. However, they may also be interpreted, especially the last verse, as forbidding individual suicide. According to the faith of a believer in God, human life belongs to Him, and such faith requires the believer to be more forbearing in facing the ups and downs of life. The belief in God and the eternal life to come inspires the believer to be grateful to Him in times of ease, and to be patient in times of adversity, as a tradition of the Prophet, reported by Muslim and Ibn Hanbal, clearly states. The Prophet strictly warned against committing suicide by any means, mentioning stabbing and poisoning merely as examples [reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim].

In addition to being against the true faith in God, committing suicide is also against the social well-being. Every individual owes a great deal to the society, since he/she has grown up in it and has benefitted from its resources. The family, in caring for its children, receives various kinds of help from other individuals, families, the society as a whole, and the state as its representative. Through education and earning one's living, the individual receives assistance from others or goes through dealings of mutual benefits. Accordingly, an absolute right of the individual over his/her life cannot be justified. It is the right and

obligation of the society to guard the individual's life, safety and health.

A suicidal attitude points to a psychological imbalance and unhealthiness, and this, in turn, may refer to a social failure in securing individual human rights and social solidarity. One has to always keep in mind that the responsibility of anyone who commits suicide depends on his/her psychological and mental state, and any pressures or weaknesses that such a person suffers have to be considered. God, the only one who knows what is in the depth of one's self and mind, is the only one who can judge and requite one who goes through such a horrible experience.

INFANTICIDE

Thus those associates [that some people associated with God] have made killing their children attractive to many of those who associate [others with God] to lead them to ruin and to bring about confusion in their faith. Yet, had God willed, they would not have done so [but He willed to leave everyone to his/her free choice] ; so leave them to whatever they have been forging. [6:137]

وَكَذَٰلِكَ زَيَّنَ لِكَثِيرٍ مِّنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ
قَتْلَ أَوْلَٰدِهِمْ شُرَكَآؤُهُمْ لِيُرْدُوهُمْ
وَلِيَلْبِسُوا۟ عَلَيْهِمْ دِينَهُمْ ۖ وَلَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ
مَا فَعَلُوهُ ۖ فَذَرْهُمْ وَمَا يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿١٣٧﴾

Lost, indeed, are they who have killed their children in folly and ignorance, and prohibited what God provides for them, forging [this] against God; they have gone astray and have rejected guidance [to what is right]. [6:140]

قَدْ خَسِرَ ٱلَّذِينَ
قَتَلُوٓا۟ أَوْلَٰدَهُمْ سَفَهًۢا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَحَرَّمُوا۟
مَا رَزَقَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ ٱفْتِرَآءً عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ قَدْ
ضَلُّوا۟ وَمَا كَانُوا۟ مُهْتَدِينَ ﴿١٤٠﴾

Say: "Come, let me convey unto you what God has forbidden to you: that you associate any with Him, and be good to your parents, and kill not your children for fear of poverty; it is We who provide sustenance for you as well for them, and do not come close to [committing] shameful deeds, whether open or secret, and you take not life which God has made sacred except [when you have the] right; this has He enjoined upon you, so that you may learn wisdom. [6:151]

قُلْ تَعَالَوْا۟ أَتْلُ مَا حَرَّمَ رَبُّكُمْ
عَلَيْكُمْ ۖ أَلَّا تُشْرِكُوا۟ بِهِۦ شَيْـًٔا ۖ
وَبِٱلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ إِحْسَٰنًا ۖ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوٓا۟
أَوْلَٰدَكُم مِّنْ إِمْلَٰقٍ ۖ نَّحْنُ نَرْزُقُكُمْ
وَإِيَّاهُمْ ۖ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا۟ ٱلْفَوَٰحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ
مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ ۖ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا۟ ٱلنَّفْسَ
ٱلَّتِى حَرَّمَ ٱللَّهُ إِلَّا بِٱلْحَقِّ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ
وَصَّىٰكُم بِهِۦ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٥١﴾

And whenever any of them is given the good news of [the birth of] a girl, his face darkens and he chokes [with rage], avoiding all people for the misfortune that he has been told about: will he hold on to her and feel disgraced, or will he bury it in the dust? How evil is their judgement. [16:58-59]

وَإِذَا بُشِّرَ أَحَدُهُم بِالْأُنثَىٰ ظَلَّ وَجْهُهُۥ
مُسْوَدًّا وَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ ﴿٥٨﴾ يَتَوَٰرَىٰ مِنَ
ٱلْقَوْمِ مِن سُوٓءِ مَا بُشِّرَ بِهِۦٓ ۚ أَيُمْسِكُهُۥ
عَلَىٰ هُونٍ أَمْ يَدُسُّهُۥ فِى ٱلتُّرَابِ ۗ أَلَا
سَآءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

And kill not your children for fear of poverty; it is We who provide sustenance for them as well for you; verily, killing them is a great evil-doing. [17:31]

وَلَا تَقْتُلُوٓا۟
أَوْلَٰدَكُمْ خَشْيَةَ إِمْلَٰقٍ ۖ نَّحْنُ نَرْزُقُهُمْ
وَإِيَّاكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ قَتْلَهُمْ كَانَ خِطْـًٔا كَبِيرًا ﴿٣١﴾

As when the girl-child that was buried alive is asked for what crime she was slain. [81:8-9]

وَإِذَا ٱلْمَوْءُۥدَةُ سُئِلَتْ ﴿٨﴾ بِأَىِّ ذَنۢبٍ
قُتِلَتْ ﴿٩﴾

The human life, be it the life of a man or a woman, a child or an adult, is secured by God and His law. Although it was not a common attitude, infanticide due to economic and/or social pressures was known in pre-Islamic Arabia. In such a patriarchal tribal society, the man stood in the center of the clan, and his authority over the women and children of his clan was uncontestable. Children could be killed or sacrificed to the gods or goddesses if they were boys [see the commentary of al-Zamakhshari vol. 1 on the verse 6:137], or buried alive if they were girls. The Quran strongly condemned these acts, emphasizing the sanctity of human life in general, and for children in particular [6:151; 17:31, 33]. The offenses of fornication and adultery may be lead to such types of killing, since illegitimate sexual relations may tempt one or both parties involved to dispose of the baby that may be the outcome of the union. Moreover, it may lead to a killing of a spouse or a rival lover. This may explain how the verse about the prohibition of fornication and adultery came between that of the prohibition of killing children and that of committing murder in general [17:31-33].

Since at that time girls could not fight nor earn money, while they could be captured in a tribal war and in this way, or by other means, bring disgrace to their whole clan, having female children became a nightmare for a father [16:59], and getting rid of them as early as possible came to some minds as a solution [81:8-9]. Infanticide may also occur when a person has a number of children that is beyond what he/she can afford to properly raise and care about physically, psychologically, intellectually and morally. This is a factor that is considered in restricting marriage to one wife: "*this will be then to let you avoid what is overburdening and unfair*" [4:3]. Negligence physically and/or morally may kill the children be they male or female, and suppression and abuse would result in other forms of damage to the child. In this way Islamic law secured the woman's rights comprehensively in the society, starting from her birth.

However, it must be mentioned that there were some reasonable and kind persons who were reported to have opposed that barbaric custom in pre-Islamic Arabia. Among these were Zayd ibn 'Amr ibn Nufayl, a cousin of 'Umar ibn al-Khattab who was among those inclined to monotheism but who died shortly before Prophet Muhammad received and conveyed his message [reported by al-Bukhari, see the commentary of Ibn Hajar: *Fath al-Bari*, vol. 14 ch. on *Fada'il As-hab al-Nabiyy*, tradition. no 3828, p.301, Cairo, 1978], and Sa'sa'ah ibn Najiyah al-Tamimi, the grandfather of the poet al-Farazdaq who was known also for saving female babies from burial and who witnessed the message of Prophet Muhammad and embraced Islam [Khayr al-Din al-Zirikli, *al-A'lam*, vol. 3, p.205, Beirut 1980].

It is shameful that the killing and molestation of children still exists today in some of the most developed countries. Infanticide is also known in several developing countries, and now that technology can be used to detect the sex of an embryo, this is done as soon as possible in some countries so that the mother can have an abortion if the embryo turns out to be female.

THEFT

And as for the man who steals and the woman who steals, cut off the hand of either of them in requital for what they have earned and as a deterrent ordained by God, and God is All-mighty, All-wise. But whoever repents after his [/her] transgression and makes amends, God will accept his [/her] repentance; God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious. [5:38-39]

وَٱلسَّارِقُ وَٱلسَّارِقَةُ فَٱقْطَعُوٓا۟
أَيْدِيَهُمَا جَزَآءًۢ بِمَا كَسَبَا نَكَٰلًا مِّنَ
ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٣٨﴾ فَمَن
تَابَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ ظُلْمِهِۦ وَأَصْلَحَ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
يَتُوبُ عَلَيْهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٣٩﴾

According to al-Qurtubi and other juristic and historical sources, cutting off the hand of one who steals was known in Arabia before Islam [al-Qurtubi's commentary on the verse 5:38]. The Islamic law maintains the penalty as a psychological deterrent to stress the seriousness of the crime, but it puts it in the right perspective within the comprehensive social and legal structures that are meant to secure justice in all its dimensions. Basic needs of life are secured for every individual, man and woman, Muslim and non-Muslim, through the chance for work with fair conditions guarded by law and state authorities, or through the social welfare dues (zakat) and the other resources of the state treasury which are used to help those who may not find work or not able to work temporarily, as well as the elderly and disabled who cannot work permanently. Under such welfare arrangements and social justice, a transgression of others' property and public service cannot be tolerated, and anyone who thinks of, or attempts, to commit such a transgression should be firmly deterred.

It is in such a light that the severe penalty of cutting off the hand has to be understood. Within the legal perspective, rights and obligations are balanced and interact with

each other. Thus, an obligation - including a penalty - cannot be split from the corresponding right or rights. If the society, as represented by the state, fails to fulfill its responsibilities in time of a natural disaster or because of negligence, it loses the right to inflict such a punishment, and the defendant would benefit from this failure as soon as he/she can prove that the theft has been committed under the pressure of need. Caliph Umar did not inflict the punishment for theft during the time of famine, and neither did he inflict it in the case of a slave whose essential needs were not fulfilled by those responsible for him and who was stealing their property [reported by Malik in *al-Muwatta'*].

Islamic social justice must secure the essentials of human dignity [17:70] for every man, or woman or child. The prominent jurist Abu Yusuf reported the inspiring precedents of the leader Khalid ibn al-Walid and Caliph 'Umar in stating the responsibility of the Islamic state in providing social security for the elderly, the disabled, and those who might come across financial troubles, in an area where most people were non-Muslim at the time [*al-Kharaj*, pp. 50, 136, 155-156; Cairo 1397 A.H.]. The Caliph Umar also once saw a needy Jew and instantly ordered that his needs be met by assistance from the public treasury.

Furthermore, not any thief can be punished by cutting off his/her hand. A minimum value is required for the stolen object so that cutting off the hand may be inflicted. Also, the object should be enclosed and secured in a way that makes stealing it a deliberate and obvious transgression that is beyond any doubt. Easy access to an object prevents the authorities from enforcing the hand cutting penalty on the one who steals it. Most juristic opinions also do not see that this punishment can be applied to other forms of taking others' possessions or personal exploitation of them, such as pick pocketing, fraud etc. The disturbance of the public order and peace, and the violation of the individual security, are basically considered in defining the crime that may allow such a punishment.

The general legal principles must be observed in the cases of theft. The defendant must have full legal responsibility, and all his/her rights during the investigation, indictment and trial must be secured. Many jurists require that in the case of a defendant's confession, he/she has to repeat it and he/she ought to be given a real chance to deny the accusation initially or later [see al-Shawkani, Nayl al-Awtar, vol. 7, pp 308-9, Beirut 1973]. Some jurists in modern times have been inclined to restrict the penalty of theft to cases of recidivism. A mistaken court decision would be better in acquitting a guilty person than in punishing an innocent one, according to the Prophet's traditions [reported by Ibn Abi Shayba, al-Tirmidhi, al-Hakim, al-Bayhaqi and graded as authentic by al-Suyuti]. No physical or moral pressure can be made on a defendant to get his/her confession as the Prophet teaches [a tradition reported by Abu Dawud, al-Nasa'i].

The enquiry, trial and punishment are exclusive rights of the state and its authorities, and the person whose possessions are stolen has by no means any right in this respect. If the stolen object cannot be returned to the owner, a compensation for the damage has to be decided by the court when this is possible in any way. The owner of the stolen object can forgive the thief or grant the stolen object to him/her, and these actions would prevent the case from undergoing any legal process if they are made before informing the authorities about the theft [a Prophet's tradition reported by Malik, Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, al-Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, al-Hakim], and may lead to a mild sentence if they occur later

[Ibn Rushd, *Bidayat al-Mujtahid*, vol. 2 p360, Beirut no date]. Some jurists, including Ibn al-Qayyim, also apply to theft the rule of exempting the defendant who can prove his/her true repentance before being arrested. It may also be pointed that when the hand of one who steals is cut off, he/she cannot be denied the right of getting an artificial hand at the public expense, which would make a fresh discussion of the penalty in contemporary circumstances essential.

FORNICATION AND ADULTERY

And approach not adultery or fornication; surely this is shameful and an evil way. [17:32]

وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا الزِّنَىٰٓ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ فَٰحِشَةً
وَسَآءَ سَبِيلًا ﴿٣٢﴾

As for a woman or a man who has sexual intercourse out of wedlock, flog each of them with a hundred stripes, and do not let any pity for them keep you from [carrying out] what is ordained by God if you [truly] believe in God and the Last Day, and let a group of the believers witness their painful punishment. Such a sexual relation between men and women out of wedlock or between those who associate others with God, is absolutely forbidden to the believers. [24:2-3]

ٱلزَّانِيَةُ وَٱلزَّانِى فَٱجْلِدُوا۟ كُلَّ وَٰحِدٍ
مِّنْهُمَا مِا۟ئَةَ جَلْدَةٍ ۖ وَلَا تَأْخُذْكُم بِهِمَا
رَأْفَةٌ فِى دِينِ ٱللَّهِ إِن كُنتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ
بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ ۖ وَلْيَشْهَدْ
عَذَابَهُمَا طَآئِفَةٌ مِّنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢﴾
ٱلزَّانِى لَا يَنكِحُ إِلَّا زَانِيَةً أَوْ مُشْرِكَةً
وَٱلزَّانِيَةُ لَا يَنكِحُهَآ إِلَّا زَانٍ أَوْ مُشْرِكٌ ۚ
وَحُرِّمَ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٣﴾

As Islam encourages marriage and states the responsibility of the individual, the family, the society and the state to pave the way to it, it forbids any sexual relation out of wedlock and any "approach" that may most likely lead to it [17:32]. Accordingly, Islam requires modesty of dress, warns against concentrating one's gaze on the sexual attractions of a person's body [24:30-31; 33:59], and forbids that one man and one woman, who are eligible to marry one another, be together in complete privacy and seclusion.

The Arabic word "*zina*", which is used in the Quran and Sunna, refers to any sexual intercourse between a man and a woman out of wedlock, regardless of whether either of them is married. The offense has to be proved through the witness of four people who have full legal responsibility, and can describe what happened precisely and explicitly without any contradiction between each other. A confession by the defendant is discouraged, and if it is made, it has to be repeated four separate times - according to some sources - so that they may be parallel to the requirement of four witnesses as evidence. The defendant's confession has to be precise and explicit with regard to what he/she did, and should include that he/she is aware that what he/she did is prohibited. A defendant can withdraw

his/her confession after making it and before the execution of the punishment, or even during the execution according to some juristic opinions [Ibn Rushd, *Bidayat al-Mujtahid*, vol. 2 pp 328-329, Beirut al-Shawkani, *Nayl al-Awtar*, vol. 7 pp. 259-273]. The judge should dissuade the defendant from confessing and urge him/her to deny that he/she is guilty, as acquiring God's forgiveness through repentance is more encouraged than receiving the punishment as purification [Ibn al-Qayyim, *I'lam al-Muwaqqi'in*, vol. 2, pp. 48-49, Cairo, no date; Ibn Rushd, ibid vol. 2 p.329].

Thus, as has been repeatedly mentioned, the defendant must have full legal responsibility and all his/her rights have to be secured in the enquiry and trial, and an error that leads to the acquittal of a guilty person is better than one that results in punishing an innocent one. Physical evidence for fornication or adultery, such as a woman's pregnancy out of wedlock can be argued against by claiming rape, mental deficiency, unconsciousness or error [Ibn Rushd, *ibid* vol. 2 pp 325-329]. The penalty, like all penalties, has to be decided and executed only by the state authorities according to the Islamic law. The flogging should not be severe, and is directed only to the back as some jurists state, and must avoid the head, the face, the joints, and other weak points in the body. The flogger should not flog by his full strength or raise his arm too high. The jurists indicate certain requirements for the instrument and the practice of flogging to secure a humane punishment [e.g. see al-Qurtubi in his commentary on the verse 24:2, vol. 12 pp. 161-163, Cairo no date, al-Shawkani, *ibid* vol. 7 pp. 280-285].

It is obvious from what the Islamic law requires for the evidence and the punishment of adultery and fornication, that the legal provision may be meant more as a means of psychological deterrence and expression of the seriousness of the offense, rather than practical execution. It is clearly stressed through the Prophet's dealings with cases of "zina" as well as through the juristic approaches, that a psychological and spiritual reform through repentance to God and prayer for His forgiveness are more encouraged than a physical punishment. When a man came to the Prophet after the prayer confessing that he had committed something prohibited that should be punished by a determined penalty, "*hadd*", the Prophet did not ask him about any details, but only inquired, "Haven't you prayed with us?" When the man answered in the affirmative, the Prophet told him, "Then God has forgiven the wrong doing that you committed or you deserved a certain punishment for" [reported by al-Bukhari].

Requiring that some believers attend the flogging may be meant as additional moral and social pressure on one who thinks to commit the offense, and thus another deterrence from such behavior. It may also be meant as a deterrent for the attendants themselves, as well as for others who may hear from them about the what they witnessed. Al-Qurtubi further reports that it may be required so that the attendants would pray to God to grant to the punished person His forgiveness and mercy [commentary on 24:2, vol. 12, p.167, Cairo no date]. As no specific number of attendants is indicated, Muhammad Asad rightfully comments that "while the punishment must be given publicity, it need not be made a public spectacle" [note 3, verse 24:2]. An announcement in the media, and the attendance of a few reporters, in addition to some public officials, may be considered sufficient.

One has to observe that the Quran states only the penalty of flogging, and never refers to stoning to death as a penalty for any case of sexual intercourse out of marriage,

although it strongly announces in the verse that precedes the "*zina*" offense and penalty and that begins the whole sura: "*This is a sura that We have sent down and ordained, in which We have sent down clear messages so that you might keep [them] in mind*" [24:1]. The sura was revealed about the fifth or sixth year after Hijra. Could the cases reported in Sunna, in which the Prophet sentenced defendants to be stoned to death, have occurred before this sura was revealed? Could the ruling of the Prophet in such cases have been based on the Torah, if the cases had happened before the revelation of the verse about flogging, especially if is noticed that the Prophet had a discussion about the punishment in the Torah with the Jews and ruled according to it against some Jewish defendants? [reported by al-Bukhari, see Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, *Fath al-Bari*, vol. 25 pp 263, 318-324 traditions no. 6841, 6913, al-Shawkani, *ibid* vol. 7 pp 256-259].

Al Bukhari significantly reported that a Prophet's Companion, Abdullah ibn Abi Awfa, was asked: "Did the Prophet inflict the stoning to death before or after the revelation of the verse of flogging?" His answer was: "I don't know". In his commentary, Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani reported that the Prophet's ruling against the Jewish defendants occurred when the Prophet came initially to Medina, and was guided to follow the Torah and practice according to it, unless any of its teachings was abrogated in his own laws. Thus, he had probably stoned the Jewish defendants to death before this was abrogated by the verses [4:15-16]. However, Ibn Hajar stated in his commentary that the traditions about the Prophet's stoning indicated that the event was attended by the Prophet's Companion Abu Hurayra, who embraced Islam in the seventh year after Hijra, and by Ibn Abbas, who came with his mother to Medina in the ninth year after Hijra, while the revelation of the verse about flogging and the sura that includes it occurred following the Prophet's battle with the tribe "Bani al-Mustaliq" and the false accusation of the Prophet's wife 'Aisha in the fifth or sixth year after Hijra [*Fath al-Bari*, vol. 25, pp 263, 317-318, trad. no. 6813, 68400]. Cases and statements of the punishment by stoning were related to Caliphs Abu Bakr, ' Umar and 'Ali.

It was reported, however, that the sect of "Khawarij" who initially appeared as rebels against Caliph Ali when he accepted arbitration between himself and Mu'awiya ibn Abi Sufyan, and also some of the Mu'tazila, did not accept stoning as a penalty for adultery since it was different from what the Quran indicated [al-Shawkani, ibid, vol.7 p. 254, al-Fakhr al-Razi and his commentary on the verse 24:2]. Furthermore, the Quranic verse states that a married woman-slave would have a half of the punishment of a married free woman for adultery [4:25], and stoning to death cannot obviously be halved. Mahmud Shaltut, the former Shaykh of al-Azhar, argued for the view of the Khawarij that they might not see in the Prophet's traditions a permanent fixed law, *hadd*, but a temporary discretionary penalty, "*ta'zir*" [*al-Islam 'Aqida wa Shari'a*, p 283, 12th ed., Cairo: 1983].

The verse [24:3], which indicates that a relation of a man or a woman who has sexual intercourse out of wedlock can only be with a partner who has the same behavior or who associates another with God, does not seem to state a legal rule about the future marriage of such a person. The Arabic verb which is used in the verse can mean either "to marry" or merely "to have sexual intercourse." I believe, as do many early and late commentators and jurists, that the verse aims to point out how such behavior is so shameful and disgraceful that it may only be expected from those who are indulged in following

their lusts, and from those who associate others with God, but this can not even have been imagined to happen from those who believe in the One God, are conscious of him and observe His guidance. In the same way, a tradition of the Prophet warns the believers that any absence or weakness of faith may let them fall to evil-doing: "One who commits fornication or adultery (*zina*) does not do so while he [/she] is [feeling and acting as] a [true] believer, and one who steals does not do so while he [/she] is [feeling and acting as] a [true] believer, and one who drinks something intoxicating does not do so while he [/she] is [feeling and acting as] a [true] believer, and one who murders does not do so while he [/she] is [feeling and acting as] a [true] believer" [reported by al-Bukhari, see Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, *Fath al-Bari,* vol. 25 pp 190-191, 217, 257 trad. no. 6772, 6787, 6810].

As for the child who may be born as a result of fornication or adultery, he/she is innocent, and thus has the full human and legal rights as any person. His/her testimony is accepted, and he/she is eligible for any position according to the qualifications that he/she may acquire. The prominent jurist Ibn Hazm states that such a person can be a judge if he/she is qualified for the position [Ibn Hazm, *al-Muhalla*, vol. 9 pp. 525-526 rule no 1802, Cairo no date].

SLANDER

And for those who accuse chaste women [of fornication or adultery], and they cannot provide four witnesses [in support of the accusation], flog them with eighty stripes, and do not accept of them any testimony ever after; and those who are really far from morality; save such as repent thereafter and make amends; surely God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious. [24:4-5]

وَٱلَّذِينَ يَرْمُونَ ٱلْمُحْصَنَٰتِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَأْتُوا۟
بِأَرْبَعَةِ شُهَدَآءَ فَٱجْلِدُوهُمْ ثَمَٰنِينَ جَلْدَةً
وَلَا تَقْبَلُوا۟ لَهُمْ شَهَٰدَةً أَبَدًا ۚ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ
هُمُ ٱلْفَٰسِقُونَ ﴿٤﴾ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ تَابُوا۟ مِنۢ
بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ وَأَصْلَحُوا۟ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ
رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٥﴾

Since the Quran requires as evidence for fornication and adultery four witnesses who have full legal responsibility and who saw the offense directly and clearly and could describe it accurately without any contradiction, the human dignity and integrity is protected against any accusation which does not have the sufficient evidence for conviction, but which would cause psychological-moral and social harm to the accused. To deter any person from making an accusation of fornication or adultery without evidence, the Quran orders a severe penalty for slander. Some jurists have seen slander to be a violation of the rights of the society as a whole, which are labeled in the juristic terminology as the "rights of God"; so if the individual who may be directly hurt by the offense forgoes his/her right and forgives the defendant, this would not affect the legal process of indictment and trial, since the whole society has been hurt by such allegations of shameful behavior from "*those who like that shameful doing spread among the believers ...*" [24:19], "*and you deem it light, whereas in the sight of God it is awful*" [24:15]. Other jurists have seen the indi-

vidual harm caused by slander prevail over the collective harm caused to the whole society by blemishing the image of certain individuals, and thus the slandered personally has the right to initiate the legal process of indictment and trial or to forgive the slanderer. A third juristic opinion sees slander in a middle position between an absolute private right and a collective right for the society as a whole, and combines elements of both opinions.

In addition to the physical punishment of flogging, a moral one which may be more harmful to such slanderers can be inflicted and that is disqualifying them as witnesses for ever. However, the last of the above verses opens the door for the slanderer to restore consistent good behavior: by admitting to his/her previous evil-doing and acquiring the forgiveness of the slandered if possible. Although some jurists restrict the effect of repentance and amendment to obtaining God's forgiveness in the life to come, most of them see the exception in the verse 24:5 applies to all what is mentioned in the previous verse, including the rejection of testimony [see the commentary of al-Qurtubi on the verse 24:5, vol. 12 p 179, Cairo: no date]. Ibn Hazm states that if the repentance and good behavior of any person convicted in fornication, slander, theft or drinking an intoxicating substance, can be proved, he/she becomes eligible for testimony and re-acquires the initial human and legal rights in this respect [*al-Muhalla*, vol. 9, p 526, rule no 1803, Cairo: no date].

The general rules of Shari'a, such as the requirement to prove the full legal responsibility of the defendant in order that he/she be indicted, and the security of all human and legal rights in the investigation as well as the trial, must be observed, and the punishment has to be inflicted in the most humane way. Besides this point, although the above verses obviously apply to a man who accuses a woman of fornication or adultery without providing the required evidence, the jurists have stated, that the slanderer may be a man or a woman, and they have required only that the slandered be chaste while being physically able to commit fornication or adultery, without specifying women in particular [e.g. Ibn Rushd, *Bidayat al-Mujtahid*, vol. 2 p 330, Beirut: no date]. The penalty for slander indicated in the above verses does not affect the right of the slandered in demanding compensation for the damage that the slanderer has caused him/her personally or socially, materially or morally, if the slanderer can afford such a compensation.

A HUSBAND'S ACCUSATION OF ADULTERY AGAINST HIS WIFE WITHOUT SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE

And as for those who accuse their own wives [of adultery], but have no witnesses except themselves, the testimony of any of these [accusing husbands] is to testify - swearing by God - four times that he is indeed of the truthful, and in a fifth time that the curse of God shall be upon him if he should be of the liars. But it shall avert from her the painful punishment if she testifies

وَٱلَّذِينَ يَرْمُونَ أَزْوَٰجَهُمْ
وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُمْ شُهَدَآءُ إِلَّآ أَنفُسُهُمْ فَشَهَٰدَةُ
أَحَدِهِمْ أَرْبَعُ شَهَٰدَٰتٍۭ بِٱللَّهِ ۙ إِنَّهُۥ لَمِنَ
ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ ﴿٦﴾ وَٱلْخَٰمِسَةُ أَنَّ لَعْنَتَ
ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ إِن كَانَ مِنَ ٱلْكَٰذِبِينَ ﴿٧﴾
وَيَدْرَؤُا۟ عَنْهَا ٱلْعَذَابَ أَن تَشْهَدَ أَرْبَعَ

- swearing by God - four times that he is indeed of the liars, and in a fifth time she calls God's wrath shall be upon her if he is telling the truth. [24:6-9]

شَهَٰدَٰتُۢ بِٱللَّهِ ۙ إِنَّهُۥ لَمِنَ ٱلْكَٰذِبِينَ ﴿٨﴾
وَ ٱلْخَٰمِسَةُ أَنَّ غَضَبَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْهَآ إِن
كَانَ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ ﴿٩﴾

When a husband accuses his wife of adultery, but does not have a witness to this accusation except himself, it will be psychologically very difficult for him to maintain his family life, since his wife cannot be convicted for adultery, and accusing him of slander may be unfair and untrue. A certain procedure is indicated in the above verses to terminate only the family relations without going through any criminal procedure and thus avoiding any penalty for adultery or slander. The accusing husband has to make four testimonies, each under oath before God and swearing by Him that he is telling the truth. He has to follow this by calling God's curse to be upon him if he is a liar. The husband can accuse his wife of adultery or claim that a child of hers is not his child. The wife can defend herself only by four counter testimonies under oath before God in which she swears by Him that her husband is falsely accusing her, and she follows these by calling God's curse or wrath if she is telling the truth. This process is called "*li'an*" or "mutual condemnation," and the separation of the spouses becomes mandatory and permanent as a result. However, some jurists state that a judge's decision is required for such a separation, and it may be better to go through the whole procedure in court so as to observe the practice thoroughly and make sure of the fulfillment of legal requirements. Abu Hanifa and others are of the view that the ex-husband can propose later to his ex-wife after he admits that he was hasty in his accusation and is thus punishable for slander, and she can naturally disagree. However, what Abu Hanifa stated seems to be merely hypothetical, for it is almost impossible to imagine a person letting himself be flogged a hundred times after confessing that he had committed slander against his wife, in order to restore his marriage. There is always the risk that the ex-wife may pretend to agree to come back until he states her innocence and his lying, then declines. The Quranic verse specifically indicates the possibility of a husband's accusation of his wife, since this accusation most probably would arise due to a belief held by the husband that a child that the wife claims is his is not really his, and thus it is more frequent than a wife's accusation of her husband of adultery. However, an application of the same rules in the reversed case of an accusation of adultery raised from a wife against her husband with no other witnesses may be a case for ijtihad.

INTOXICATION AND GAMBLING

O you who have attained to faith! Liquor and gambling, and idolatrous practices and divining of the futures are but a loathsome evil of Satan's doing; avoid it, then so that you may attain to success. By means of liquor and gambling Satan

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِنَّمَا ٱلْخَمْرُ وَ ٱلْمَيْسِرُ
وَ ٱلْأَنصَابُ وَ ٱلْأَزْلَٰمُ رِجْسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ
ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ فَٱجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ
﴿٩٠﴾ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ أَن يُوقِعَ

seeks only to bring about enmity and hatred among you, and to bar you from the remembrance of God and from prayer. Will you not, then, desist? Hence, obey God and obey the Conveyor of His message, and beware [against evil], but if you turn away then know that it is only for the Conveyor of Our message to clearly deliver it. [5:90-92]

بَيْنَكُمُ ٱلْعَدَٰوَةَ وَ ٱلْبَغْضَآءَ فِى ٱلْخَمْرِ
وَٱلْمَيْسِرِ وَ يَصُدَّكُمْ عَن ذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ وَ عَنِ
ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ ۖ فَهَلْ أَنتُم مُّنتَهُونَ ﴿٩١﴾
وَأَطِيعُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَ أَطِيعُوا۟ ٱلرَّسُولَ
وَٱحْذَرُوا۟ ۚ فَإِن تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّمَا
عَلَىٰ رَسُولِنَا ٱلْبَلَٰغُ ٱلْمُبِينُ ﴿٩٢﴾

The process of forbidding intoxicants was an example of the gradual process that the Islamic law followed in legislation, when an old and dominant practice had to be changed. As the Arabs before Islam had been used to drink liquor and to gamble, the Quran started by stating that in both practices there is great evil, as well as some benefits for human beings but *"the evil that they cause is greater than any benefit that they may bring"* [2:219]. The next step was to forbid a person from trying to pray while he/she is drunk *"until you know what you are saying"* [4:43]. Then, as a last stage the above verses came to state a complete and clear prohibition. The Prophet punished for the drinking of liquor, but jurists have differed as to whether punishment has to be for mere drinking or for drunkenness only. Besides this, they differed on whether the penalty in this case is considered among the indicated crimes with determined punishments, *hudud*, or whether it is included in the discretionary punishments which may be left to the state legislation of the courts, *ta'zir* [Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, *Fath al-Bari*, vol. 25 pp. 201-209 trad no. 6779, Ibn Rushd, *Bidayat al-Mujtahid*, vol. 2 pp. 332-333, Cairo no date; al-Shawkani, *Nayl al-Awtar*, vol. 7 pp. 319-320, Beirut 1973]. The penalty inflicted by the Prophet for the offense was, as reported in the traditions, merely "beating", not flogging, and no precise number of stripes was mentioned, nor was a special instrument but hands, branches, clothes or shoes were used [reportedly by al-Bukhari and Abu Dawud]. After the time of the Prophet, Caliph Abu Bakr punished the offense by flogging forty lashes, and then the penalty was increased to eighty lashes in the time of Caliph 'Umar according to the suggestion of 'Ali, as drinking became more frequent.

The Prophet did not like that anyone who was convicted to be cursed, as such actions may push the guilty person further in stubbornness and deviation from good behavior. The offense has to be proved and punished only by the state authorities, and the human and legal rights of the defendant have to be secured in the enquiry and the trial. Jurists stated that a convicted person would lose his/her credibility as a witness until his/her repentance could be proved. Despite this, one can feel from what the Quran and the Sunna state, and what the precedents of the early Caliphs and the juristic statements indicate, that the offense of drunkenness or using intoxicants was not considered to be as grave as other crimes with determined penalties, *hudud*, especially in early times. Caliph Ali clearly stated that if the penalty of drinking might result in the death of the defendant, it would be the only penalty related to death in which he would sympathize with the defendant, and his/her family the due compensation of an accidental manslaughter [Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, *Fath al-Bari*, vol. 25 pp. 200-201 trad. no 6778, Cairo 1978; al-Shawkani,

Nayl al-Awtar, vol. 7 pp. 320-321, Beirut 1973]. However, the evils of intoxicants have to be assessed according to changing circumstances, and so the penalty was increased in the time of Umar.

As the prohibited in the above verse is what can affect the mental abilities of the user, *khamr*, the prohibition can encompass any substance that causes the same effect, such as narcotics. However, when an intoxicant is turned through a certain process into something different which does not have the same effect, it becomes lawful in its new form whatever its origin may have been. Thus vinegar which is made from wine, has been unanimously declared by jurists as lawful. Also, the prohibition of intoxicants does not necessarily imply that an intoxicating substance should be considered unclean, and its cleanliness is accepted by many jurists [see al-Qurtubi in his commentary on the verse 5:90, vol. 6 pp 288-289, Cairo: no date]. If the intoxicant can be considered clean according to some jurists, it can be legally owned and has a value. Yet, dealing in intoxicants is forbidden for a Muslim [see al-Qurtubi, ibid, pp 289-291]. Non-Muslims in an Islamic state may deal in liquor according to some jurists' view, especially when one considers its use in certain religious rituals, such as the Christian communion, which have to be secured as an implementation of the principle of freedom of worship that binds the Islamic state [see also the commentary on the verses 5:90-92 under "Civil Law"].

Gambling, and claiming to determine the divine will about a certain matter that preoccupy a person through a haphazard practice are also forbidden in the above verses. Earning money, or any kind of decision-making, should occur as a result of a serious sensible effort, not in a haphazard way. Even if such practices happen to once be successful for a person, they can lead to serious intellectual and moral harm in many other instances for that same person, other persons, and the society as a whole. Such haphazard practices contradict the Islamic teachings to use the human mind and energy granted by God to attain any legitimate benefit, not to rely on a stroke of luck or superstition. Targeting easy or effortless benefits is against sound thinking, and it develops laziness, passivity, and superstition which undermine the human initiative and productivity, as well as the true faith in the One God and His guidance to what is right and beneficial for the individual and the society.

The Quran indicated that the use of intoxicants and the practice of gambling may develop hostilities among people as a result of drunkenness or of the gains and losses of gambling. Furthermore, one may become addicted to either or both of them, and thus he/she becomes insensitive towards his/her other obligations and towards the true faith and due worship. The money gained through gambling is not considered legitimate since it is not earned as a result of useful and productive work as Islam requires. Such moral and physical, individual and social evils, outweigh the few benefits of these practices, such as the creation of business and work, the enjoyment of leisure-time, or what may be offered to charity through the various kinds of gambling. However, no special penalty is decided for organizing or practicing gambling or such superstitious idol exercises. Moral education through the family, the schools and the mosques is essential, and any suitable punishment is left to the human legislative or judicial discretion, *ta'zir*, according to the changing circumstances in different times and places.

EXPLOITATION, CORRUPTION, ABUSE OF POWER, FRAUD AND OTHER RELATED FINANCIAL FELONIES

And devour not one another's possessions wrongfully, nor offer them to those who rule, so as to wrongfully and knowingly devour what is owned by others. [2:188]

وَلَا
تَأْكُلُوٓاْ أَمْوَٰلَكُم بَيْنَكُم بِٱلْبَٰطِلِ وَتُدْلُواْ
بِهَآ إِلَى ٱلْحُكَّامِ لِتَأْكُلُواْ فَرِيقًا مِّنْ
أَمْوَٰلِ ٱلنَّاسِ بِٱلْإِثْمِ وَأَنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٨٨﴾

O you who have attained to faith! Do not devour one another's possessions wrongfully, but [legitimate] earnings come out [only] through trade based on mutual agreement; and do not destroy yourselves; surely, God is Most Gracious to you. [4:29]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُواْ لَا تَأْكُلُوٓاْ أَمْوَٰلَكُم بَيْنَكُم
بِٱلْبَٰطِلِ إِلَّآ أَن تَكُونَ تِجَٰرَةً عَن
تَرَاضٍ مِّنكُمْ ۚ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوٓاْ أَنفُسَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا ﴿٢٩﴾

These verses set a general rule for transactions so that they are fair, mutually beneficial for, and agreed upon by, all the parties involved, in order to avoid wrongful exploitation and devouring of possessions. Any unfairness, lack of consent and/or exploitation can be sanctioned by penalties for these felonies, and as they combine civil and criminal sides they may be treated by both laws. Besides, the practices of the state authorities with individual citizens or groups - including financial dealings - when they are influenced by abuse of power from the authorities, or false statements or fraud from the individuals and groups, would have an obvious relation to the penal law, as a branch of the public law. The special relation between the state and the people, being permanent and non-voluntary, cannot be treated in the same way as private relations that can only be controlled by contracts and/or private law, whether civil, or commercial or other. Thus, when a person in a public position offers an illegal privilege to another person as a special favor [e.g. spending public money on private interests] or exempts him/her from a public obligation [e.g. military service, or paying taxes etc], such a person has to pay compensation to the public treasury or to other individuals for the damages that may have resulted from such an action, whether or not he/she actually received any material benefit in return. Furthermore, this must be tackled as an offense against the whole society and the state that represents and guards the social interests, and thus it should be punished. A Prophet's tradition states God's condemnation for any who offers a bribe, and any who receives it, as well as the mediator between them [reported by Ibn Hanbal].

Paying and receiving money for votes, malversation of public funds, negligence of public property or service, and embezzlement of public or private possessions, combine both civil and penal aspects which have to be dealt with together. Any abuse of power, misconduct of a public official, or malpractice by a physician, architect, engineer or other professional in dealing with a client can also be viewed in this way. Tax-evasion or illegal

tax-exemption, adulteration of manufactured food or drinks and their subsequent marketing, counterfeiting and circulating forged money, in addition to various other fraudulent and harmful practices, all ought to be punished, and the damages that affect any public and/or private interests have to be compensated.

Punishment for such offenses that hurt other individuals or the whole society financially are not specified in the Quran and Sunna while they are clearly and firmly prohibited, but are left to the human discretion of the administration, the legislature or the judiciary according to what the law of the country decides. Such a human effort can decide what may be appropriate for the given circumstances of a certain time and place, and this unlimited, flexible and changeable part of the Islamic law, which is entrusted to the human discretion and guided only with the goals and directions and principles of Shari'a, is called in general *ijtihad*. It may be used to introduce penalties which were not specified in the divine sources and called *ta'zir*. According to many jurists, the penalty in such cases reach the penalties determined in the Quran and Sunna for specified crimes, if the crime for which the new law has to be introduced has the same level of seriousness. Thus, *ta'zir* is a source for a continuous and changeable penal legislation for different criminal practices, and cannot be categorized as dealing with light offenses and light punishments [e.g. misdemeanors or contravention]. The Quran teaches that various violations of moral and legal rules are not equal: *"If you avoid the grave of what you have forbidden [to commit], We shall acquit you of your [minor] wrongs, and shall cause you to reach your abode with honor"* [4:31], *"those who avoid the grave of wrongdoing and shameful deeds, save occasional and unserious offenses, surely your Lord is abounding in forgiveness ..."* [53:32].

FALSE STATEMENTS AND TESTIMONY

ذَٰلِكَ
وَمَن يُعَظِّمْ حُرُمَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّهُۥ عِندَ
رَبِّهِۦ ۗ وَأُحِلَّتْ لَكُمُ ٱلْأَنْعَٰمُ إِلَّا مَا
يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ ۖ فَٱجْتَنِبُوا۟ ٱلرِّجْسَ مِنَ
ٱلْأَوْثَٰنِ وَٱجْتَنِبُوا۟ قَوْلَ ٱلزُّورِ ﴿٣٠﴾

... avoid, then, the loathsomeness [in beliefs and practices] of the idols, and avoid saying what is false and untrue. [22:30]

وَٱلَّذِينَ لَا
يَشْهَدُونَ ٱلزُّورَ وَإِذَا مَرُّوا۟ بِٱللَّغْوِ
مَرُّوا۟ كِرَامًا ﴿٧٢﴾

And [the true worshippers of God are] those who never bear false witness; and [who] whenever they pass by [people engaged in] idleness and frivolity, pass on with dignity. [25:72]

Always saying the truth and refraining from lying is strictly required and repeatedly emphasized in the teachings of Islam. Lying is a sign of absence of faith in God and of consciousness of Him: "O *you who have attained to faith! Remain conscious of God and be among those who always say the truth"* [9:119]; *"It is but they who do not believe in*

God's messages that forge falsehood; and these are [really] the liars" [16:105]. The Prophet teaches that one must adhere to always saying the truth and avoid lying, even in frivolous matters, since saying the truth or lying can develop a habit that unconsciously dominates a person's behavior, and thus a person acquires a reputation among others as an untruthful person or a liar [a tradition reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Hanbal, al-Tirmidhi]. The Prophet even states that the believer may, in some cases, not be courageous or generous, but he should never be a liar [reported by Malik].

Not every type of lie, however, may be punished by law, since the law is concerned only with the serious lying which may hurt the public interest and affect justice. Making a false testimony in court by, for example, hiding, adding to or changing what one has witnessed, or saying any untrue statement to authorities or others in general, would provide erroneous premises on which judicial, official or individual decisions may be made. The warning against false testimony in the verse 22:30 directly follows the warning against idolatrous beliefs and practices, to significantly underline the seriousness of the offense, as a Prophet's tradition indicates [reported by Ibn Hanbal and al-Tirmidhi]. Another Prophet's tradition considers a false testimony among the grave and serious wrongdoing , *kaba'ir* [reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim]. Such an offense can be punished through legislative and judicial discretion, since no fixed penalty for it is indicated in the Quran and Sunna.

Muslim jurists and judges have devoted significant efforts to indicate the requirements for a credible witness in court, and what may blemish his/her credibility [see the Quranic references 2:282; 5:95, 106; 65:2]. Islamic courts in the past had a group of experts of the locality and its community to provide any necessary information about a place, a person, a custom etc.

RUMORING

And when there comes to them some matter, be it of security or fear, they spread it, whereas if they would but refer it to the Conveyor of God's message and to those from among the believers who have been entrusted with authority by them, such of them who investigate the matter would have directly known [the facts] about it from them. And but for God's bounty and grace towards you, all but a few of you would have followed Satan. [4:83]

وَإِذَا جَآءَهُمْ أَمْرٌ
مِّنَ ٱلْأَمْنِ أَوِ ٱلْخَوْفِ أَذَاعُوا۟ بِهِۦ ۖ
وَلَوْ رَدُّوهُ إِلَى ٱلرَّسُولِ وَإِلَىٰٓ أُو۟لِى
ٱلْأَمْرِ مِنْهُمْ لَعَلِمَهُ ٱلَّذِينَ يَسْتَنۢبِطُونَهُۥ
مِنْهُمْ ۗ وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ
وَرَحْمَتُهُۥ لَٱتَّبَعْتُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٨٣﴾

O you who have attained to faith! If any iniquitous person comes to you with any piece of information, ascertain the truth, lest you hurt people

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟
إِن جَآءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌۢ بِنَبَإٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوٓا۟ أَن

unwittingly, and afterwards become filled with remorse for what you have done. [49:6]

تُصِيبُوا۟ قَوْمًۢا بِجَهَٰلَةٍ فَتُصْبِحُوا۟ عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَٰدِمِينَ ﴿٦﴾

Just as the people have the right to know the reality of any public matter, especially that which is related to their security and what may threaten it, they have the obligation to refer what may reach them to those who have been entrusted with authority from among them by them [4:89]. Those agents of the people entrusted to run their affairs and administer the state, *'uli al-'amr minkum*, have a parallel obligation to make the facts known to people, and to refrain from withholding any information except in cases of necessity, such as for state security, the circumstances for which should be indicated and agreed upon in advance. The Quran offers the people its guidance in this essential area of relations between the state authorities and the people, setting the rights and obligations of different parties without any bias to any of them. This protects them against evil impulses that may tempt the authorities to abuse their power by hiding the facts, covering the truth, and/or violating the people's rights, and that may also tempt some people to distort the government's image and undermine its credibility by benefitting from the lack of true information about it and widely spreading mere rumors against it.

To protect and safeguard the dignity and integrity of the public authorities as well as that of the individuals, any information that emerges has to be verified in order to ensure its authenticity and validity. This requires that the informer as a person has to be judged in order that his/her truthfulness and the reliability of his/her sources be confirmed. Besides this, the information itself has to be assessed considering its given background circumstances. The verification of what was reported as traditions of the Prophet by al-Bukhari and other traditionists, "*muhaddithin,*" represents a pioneering scholarly approach in this field. The distinguished scholar and historian Ibn Khaldun [d. 1406 C.E.] suggested some methodological rules in evaluating the historical reports. Also, the jurists had their approaches in making judgements about the witnesses and their testimonies in court. Such a spreading of rumors may have a penalty that may be indicated through flexible discretion, *ta'zir*, according to the circumstances.

The obligation of the state authorities in providing the true information has to also be stressed and sanctioned. The governmental agency and its public officials who decline or delay providing the necessary information about a public matter should be punished. Also, through *ta'zir*, a penalty can be decided for one who invents or spreads false rumors about the state authorities. The individuals are protected by the Quran against a false accusation of adultery or fornication [24:4]. A law can be introduced to protect them against libel and other false accusations when they are spread maliciously and without reasonable scrutiny. Civil compensation for the damages may be sufficient in certain cases, while a penalty may be needed in certain others, such as when the target of such rumors occupies an important public position.

LEGITIMATE SELF-DEFENSE BY SPEECH, WRITING, OR OTHER FORMS OF EXPRESSION

God does not like any evil to be mentioned in public, unless it is by one who has [himself/herself] been wronged [thereby in order to complain or defend himself/herself], and God is All-hearing, All-knowing. Whether you reveal any good or hide it, or forgive [others] for evil [done to you], God is indeed All-forgiving, All-powerful. [4:148-149]

لَّا يُحِبُّ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْجَهْرَ بِٱلسُّوٓءِ مِنَ
ٱلْقَوْلِ إِلَّا مَن ظُلِمَ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ سَمِيعًا
عَلِيمًا ﴿١٤٨﴾ إِن تُبْدُوا۟ خَيْرًا أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ
أَوْ تَعْفُوا۟ عَن سُوٓءٍ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُوًّا
قَدِيرًا ﴿١٤٩﴾

While a believer is urged to refrain from initiating or circulating any information that hurts others, especially when no effort is made on his/her part to examine them, the case of legitimate defense of an individual or the society has to be considered as an exception. A person who has suffered injustice can initiate a complaint to the administration or the courts, indicating how he/she has been wronged, and how this has been done by the alleged wrong-doer, whether he/she is a public officer or an ordinary person. A defendant has to be allowed to defend his/her case in court even by attacking others such as the party against whom the defendant supposedly acted or the alleged witnesses to the event. When the wronged party is the society as a whole, any individual or group can initiate and publicize a denouncement of anyone who hurts the public interests. However, forgiveness for evil-doing in cases of violation of private rights is encouraged among individuals, since forgiveness is repeatedly urged by the Quran in such instances [e.g. 2:109, 178, 237; 3:124, 159; 4:149; 5:13; 13:22; 23:96; 24:22; 28:54; 41:34; 42:40; 64:14].

Aside from such exceptional cases, speaking about an evil-doing in public may be restricted and any violation can be considered as slander or libel which is met by a civil compensation of damages or by a penalty. Freedom of speech and expression should not include unjustifiable wronging of others and causing harm to them, or provoking hatred and bigotry against individuals or groups, especially when ill-intention or malice is involved. Since the right of free speech and expression has to be secured in principle and as a general rule, only an abuse of this right and a malicious harmful attack on others can be sanctioned by civil compensation or by a penalty through *ta'zir* which has to be decided according to the best legal discretion of the jurists, legislators and/or judges in the contemporary Islamic state.

UNIVERSAL RELATIONS

PEACE IS THE GENERAL RULE

O you who have attained to faith! Enter the peace, all of you, through submitting your whole selves to God, and follow not the footsteps of Satan; he is to you an evident enemy. [2:208]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُواْ ٱدۡخُلُواْ فِي ٱلسِّلۡمِ كَآفَّةٗ وَلَا
تَتَّبِعُواْ خُطُوَٰتِ ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنِۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَكُمۡ
عَدُوّٞ مُّبِينٞ ٢٠٨

This is an invitation to all who believe in the One God to develop peace within their inner-selves and in their relations with others, through God-consciousness, maintenance of justice and prevalence of magnanimity and compassion. Hatred and bitterness damage the peace in the inner-self as well as the peace in the society and in the whole world. Peace is the foundation of human relations that have to be maintained between Muslims and all others, locally and universally, while war has to be only an exception when the human rights of Muslims about their faith or their land are violated, and the use of force has to be the last resort when no other way can defend their rights. Some commentators understand the word "peace" in the above verse, *salam*, to mean Islam, since both words have the same root. Islam secures peace within one's own self, with nature and with other human beings, through securing peace with God, the Creator and Lord of all. It is significant that one of God's attributes is "*All-peace*" [59:23], and one of the names for Paradise is "*the abode of peace*" [6:127; 10:25] where the greeting with which its inhabitants are received and which is exchanged between them is: "*peace be upon you*" [10:10; 13:24; 16:32; 33:44; 39:73; 50:34; 56:26].

In this world's life, the Muslim greeting is also: "peace be upon you". Understanding the word "peace" in the above verse in its original and wider sense would not contradict its realization through Islam, while the general meaning of the word is maintained, and is not particularized or restricted.

O People of the Book, there has come to you the conveyor of Our message making clear to you much of what you have been concealing of the Book, and to dispense with much [that is now unnecessary]. Now there has come to you from God a light and a clear divine writ, through which God guides all who seek His goodly acceptance to paths of peace, and by His grace leads them out of the depths of darkness into the light,

يَٰٓأَهۡلَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ قَدۡ جَآءَكُمۡ رَسُولُنَا يُبَيِّنُ
لَكُمۡ كَثِيرٗا مِّمَّا كُنتُمۡ تُخۡفُونَ مِنَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ
وَيَعۡفُواْ عَن كَثِيرٖۚ قَدۡ جَآءَكُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ
نُورٞ وَكِتَٰبٞ مُّبِينٞ ١٥ يَهۡدِي بِهِ ٱللَّهُ
مَنِ ٱتَّبَعَ رِضۡوَٰنَهُۥ سُبُلَ ٱلسَّلَٰمِ
وَيُخۡرِجُهُم مِّنَ ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ إِلَى ٱلنُّورِ

and guides them to a straight way. [5:15-16]

بِإِذْنِهِۦ وَيَهْدِيهِمْ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿١٦﴾

The message of Islam is described in the above verses as "God's guidance to various paths of peace". The Arabic word for peace, *salam*, shares the same root with the word Islam, and the Paradise, as was mentioned before, is called in the Quran "the abode of peace" [6:127; 10:25]. Peace is comprehensive, and it has various paths in order to secure the inner peace within oneself and the peace with others in the society and in the whole world. Peace cannot be secured unless it is based on justice, which in its turn encompasses several areas from the various aspects of the human being (physical, psychological, intellectual, spiritual-moral) to the family and the neighborhood, the society and the state and the world. Such comprehensive peace based on such comprehensive justice would really bring people out from the depths of darkness; in which one may be initially split within his/her own self, as he/she may be disturbing the personal balance and dealing with one side at the expense of the other, or fighting unnecessarily in all directions against many enemies for elusive or ambiguous reasons. God's guidance gives every personal aspect and every human relation its real value, without excess or shortfall, because it comes from the source of supreme justice which is above all parties and any bias: *"It is God who has sent down the Book, setting forth the truth and [giving the human being] the balance [with which one can weigh right and wrong]"* [42:17, see also 57:25]. Although "peace" is the general basis for the Muslims' relations with others, if the others initiate aggression and no peaceful means can stop it, the Muslims have to stand and struggle by force against such an aggressor who uses force to violate their human rights and the sanctity of their homeland [e.g. 2:190]. In such a legitimate struggle, the Quran mobilizes the Muslims and warns them against any weakness or reluctance.

However, peace and war have their challenges, and their goals cannot be attained without persistence and perseverance. As Muslims believe in the eternal life to come, the Quran calls their attention repeatedly to what is permanent and more rewarding, and warns them against caring about the temporary conveniences of this life or momentary feelings at the expense of the eternal rewards and pleasures in the life to come which are presented in many verses throughout the whole Quran.

And if they incline to peace, do incline to it as well, and place your trust in God; He alone is the All-hearing, the All-knowing. Should they desire but to deceive you [by a false show of peace], be sure that God is sufficient [support] for you; it is He who has strengthened you with His support and through the believers. [8:61-62]

وَإِن جَنَحُوا۟ لِلسَّلْمِ فَٱجْنَحْ لَهَا وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿٦١﴾ وَإِن يُرِيدُوٓا۟ أَن يَخْدَعُوكَ فَإِنَّ حَسْبَكَ ٱللَّهُ ۚ هُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَيَّدَكَ بِنَصْرِهِۦ وَبِٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٦٢﴾

Peace requires an effort by both sides involved in the dispute, and any inclination towards peace, however slight it may be, from one side should be met positively by the other. As Muslims are taught that peace is the general rule and that war is a temporary

exception to which they may be pushed in order to meet the aggression of others when no other peaceful means can stop it, they have to welcome and encourage any inclination towards peace from the other side. Even if the others' show of peace is not genuine, Muslims have to make their judgement on the concrete apparent evidence according to their general legal principles, and encourage any attitude towards peace. The price that they may pay would probably be high when the pleasant appearance on the opposite side turns out to be false and something evil is hidden, but the moral and legal gain is certain in any case for the principles of justice and peace in the universal relations. The above verse emphasizes how peace for Muslims is the permanent basis for human relations that should be secured by all suitable means, and that a risk of striving for peace may be worthy of a try rather than the risk of suffering through war.

That abode in the life to come, We shall grant only to those who do not seek neither haughtiness nor any mischief on earth; and the future belongs to the God-conscious. [28:83]

تِلْكَ ٱلدَّارُ ٱلْأَخِرَةُ نَجْعَلُهَا لِلَّذِينَ لَا
يُرِيدُونَ عُلُوًّا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَ لَا فَسَادًا ۚ
وَ ٱلْعَٰقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾

The above verse emphasizes an essential principle that binds and directs the use of political power, inside a country in dealing with its people, and in world relations. As the prominent theologian and jurist Ibn Taymiyya rightfully noticed, seeking to be exalted on earth is forbidden in itself whatever the intention of gaining power may be, since such an obsession with power naturally pushes to abuses and excesses, which may lead to injustice and suppression in conducting the internal policies, and may lead to aggression, exploitation and arrogance in the country's relations with others. If these are the expected vices of seeking to be exalted on earth, the evils of those who seek power to spread corruption and to benefit only themselves or those whom they care about at the expense of others, are certain. The belief in God and the eternal life to come should guard the believer against worldly grandeur or self-indulgence in its pleasures, and should prevent him/her from ignoring God's teachings about justice and His judgement and requital about observing His guidance in the eternal life to come. Once again, God-consciousness and moral values provide deep dimensions to legal measures in order to secure internal and universal justice.

O human beings! We have created you all out of a male and a female, and made you into [various] peoples and tribes so that you may come to know one another. Surely, the most honored of you in the sight of God is the one who is most conscious of Him. Behold, God is All-knowing, All-aware. [49:13]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ إِنَّا
خَلَقْنَٰكُم مِّن ذَكَرٍ وَ أُنثَىٰ وَ جَعَلْنَٰكُمْ
شُعُوبًا وَ قَبَآئِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ
عِندَ ٱللَّهِ أَتْقَىٰكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ
﴿١٣﴾

The above verse emphasizes the human equality, and indicates that the difference of peoples and tribes is meant to encourage a universal dynamism through knowing and

cooperating with one another. Appreciation of the geographic and ethnic differences has to develop an enlightened material and cultural exchange throughout the whole world, and thus universal co-operation would practically remove the barriers between people and would support human equality and solidarity. The Quran mentions significantly *"the human beings"* or *"the children of Adam"*, and does not address a particular race or ethnicity. It characterizes the human beings as moving creatures whom God's grace *"has carried them on land and sea"* [17:70], and it refers to God's subservience of the air and space for the human beings [45:12-13]. Besides this, Shari'a secures, through individual and state support, the needs of one who moves to a new land and cannot earn his/her living for some time [2:177, 215; 4:36; 8:41; 17:26; 30:38]. In such a global human family, men and women are equal, and humanity could develop and expand into various lineages through both of them and their relationship.

FULFILLMENT OF BONDS

O you have attained to faith! Fulfill your bonds. Lawful to you is the [flesh of certain] beasts [camels, cattle and sheep], except that which is now mentioned to you, but you are not allowed to hunt while you are in the sanctity of pilgrimage. Behold, God ordains in accordance with His will.

O You who have attained to faith! Violate not the sanctity of the practices set up by God for worshipping Him, nor the sacred month [of pilgrimage], nor the offerings to God including those which may be made distinctive [as sacrifice] with garlands, nor the people resorting to the Inviolable Sacred House [of God], seeking favor and the goodly acceptance of their Lord; and [only] after your pilgrimage is over, you may hunt. And never let your hatred of some people who have [once] barred you from the Inviolable House of Worship lead you to aggression; but rather help one another in furthering virtue and God-consciousness, and help not one another in furthering evil and enmity; and remain conscious of God; behold, God is severe in retribution. [5:1-2]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ أَوۡفُواْ
بِٱلۡعُقُودِۚ أُحِلَّتۡ لَكُم بَهِيمَةُ ٱلۡأَنۡعَٰمِ إِلَّا
مَا يُتۡلَىٰ عَلَيۡكُمۡ غَيۡرَ مُحِلِّي ٱلصَّيۡدِ وَأَنتُمۡ
حُرُمٌۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَحۡكُمُ مَا يُرِيدُ ١
يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا تُحِلُّواْ شَعَٰٓئِرَ
ٱللَّهِ وَلَا ٱلشَّهۡرَ ٱلۡحَرَامَ وَلَا ٱلۡهَدۡيَ
وَلَا ٱلۡقَلَٰٓئِدَ وَلَآ ءَآمِّينَ ٱلۡبَيۡتَ ٱلۡحَرَامَ
يَبۡتَغُونَ فَضۡلٗا مِّن رَّبِّهِمۡ وَرِضۡوَٰنٗاۚ وَإِذَا
حَلَلۡتُمۡ فَٱصۡطَادُواْۚ وَلَا يَجۡرِمَنَّكُمۡ
شَنَـَٔانُ قَوۡمٍ أَن صَدُّوكُمۡ عَنِ ٱلۡمَسۡجِدِ
ٱلۡحَرَامِ أَن تَعۡتَدُواْۘ وَتَعَاوَنُواْ عَلَى
ٱلۡبِرِّ وَٱلتَّقۡوَىٰۖ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُواْ عَلَى
ٱلۡإِثۡمِ وَٱلۡعُدۡوَٰنِۚ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَۖ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ شَدِيدُ ٱلۡعِقَابِ ٢

The first of the above verses strongly stress the legal and moral obligation of keeping one's promises with any party. This applies to the individuals and to any Muslim legal body or institution, including the Islamic state; whether its promises have been given

internally to its people, or externally to other states, international bodies, or private alien individuals or companies. The divine command provides a religious foundation for the moral and legal responsibility of the Muslim party which makes the promise, since the fulfillment of the promise is now guarded by the believer's consciousness of God who is All-knowing and will be the only judge on the Day of Judgement in the eternal life to come.

In the second of the above verses, Muslims - whether individuals or legal bodies and institutions including the state - are taught to observe justice in their relations, even with those who may initiate enmity and may commit such a grave aggression as barring the Muslims from the Inviolable House of Worship in Mecca, which is their direction in prayers "*qibla*", and to which they have an obligation of pilgrimage and a recommendation of visit (*hajj, 'umra*). Since justice is the basis of Muslim conduct, their solidarity and unity are required to be directed only towards supporting righteousness and not abused to support evil or injustice merely because this is practiced by a Muslim party. This moral and legal commitment to justice has its implications in individual and public relations. Any Muslim people do not have to always support their government, just because it is an Islamic government, if it commits injustice, nor should an Islamic state support another just for following its same faith if it deviates from justice. The faith in God ought to guard and strengthen the commitment to justice in all its political, socio-economic, and legal dimensions, inside the Muslim country and in world relations. Besides, co-operation with any internal or external party is always required if it is based on justice and aims to further righteousness.

وَإِنْ أَحَدٌ مِّنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ
ٱسْتَجَارَكَ فَأَجِرْهُ حَتَّىٰ يَسْمَعَ كَلَٰمَ ٱللَّهِ
ثُمَّ أَبْلِغْهُ مَأْمَنَهُۥ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَّا
يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦﴾

And if one of those who associate others with God seeks your protection, grant him [/her] protection so that he [/she] may [be able to] hear the word of God, and then do convey him [/her] to the place where he [/she] feels secure, since there may be [among them] people who do not know [the truth]. [9:6]

This verse presents a pioneering recognition of the human right of political asylum. Any enemy of the Muslims can seek their protection in their camp or in their land, and they have to grant him/her this protection, and to allow him/her a chance to know Muslims and their message personally and closely, not through a hostile medium. Such a person has to be protected and escorted to a place where he/she feels safe, whether he/she wants to return to his/her homeland and people, or stays among the Muslims. Whatever such a person's choice may be, there should not be any pressure put on him/her to accept Islam; Muslims should care only to convey the message, not to convert the people, since there is no coercion in the matters of faith [2:256], and everybody has the right to choose his/her beliefs freely. Those who live in such circumstances of political asylum, far from their homelands, are offered assistance from the public resources if they cannot easily earn their living in the new homeland [e.g. 8:41; 9:60; 59:7].

إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِٱلْعَدْلِ وَ ٱلْإِحْسَٰنِ وَ إِيتَآئِ
ذِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ وَ يَنْهَىٰ عَنِ ٱلْفَحْشَآءِ
وَ ٱلْمُنكَرِ وَ ٱلْبَغْىِ ۚ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾ وَ أَوْفُوا۟ بِعَهْدِ ٱللَّهِ إِذَا
عَٰهَدتُّمْ وَ لَا تَنقُضُوا۟ ٱلْأَيْمَٰنَ بَعْدَ
تَوْكِيدِهَا وَ قَدْ جَعَلْتُمُ ٱللَّهَ عَلَيْكُمْ كَفِيلًا ۚ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٩١﴾ وَ لَا
تَكُونُوا۟ كَٱلَّتِى نَقَضَتْ غَزْلَهَا مِنۢ بَعْدِ
قُوَّةٍ أَنكَٰثًا تَتَّخِذُونَ أَيْمَٰنَكُمْ دَخَلًۢا
بَيْنَكُمْ أَن تَكُونَ أُمَّةٌ هِىَ أَرْبَىٰ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ ۚ
إِنَّمَا يَبْلُوكُمُ ٱللَّهُ بِهِۦ ۚ وَ لَيُبَيِّنَنَّ لَكُمْ
يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ مَا كُنتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٩٢﴾
وَ لَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً
وَلَٰكِن يُضِلُّ مَن يَشَآءُ وَ يَهْدِى مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ
وَ لَتُسْـَٔلُنَّ عَمَّا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾ وَ لَا
تَتَّخِذُوٓا۟ أَيْمَٰنَكُمْ دَخَلًۢا بَيْنَكُمْ فَتَزِلَّ قَدَمٌۢ
بَعْدَ ثُبُوتِهَا وَ تَذُوقُوا۟ ٱلسُّوٓءَ بِمَا
صَدَدتُّمْ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَ لَكُمْ عَذَابٌ
عَظِيمٌ ﴿٩٤﴾ وَ لَا تَشْتَرُوا۟ بِعَهْدِ ٱللَّهِ
ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۚ إِنَّمَا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ هُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ
إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٩٥﴾

God commands justice, the doing of good, and giving to [one's] relatives; and He forbids all that is shameful, and that runs counter to reason, in addition to aggression; He exhorts you so that you may bear this in mind.

And fulfill your bond [that you have given] in the name of God whenever you bind yourselves by such a bond, and break not [your] oaths after having confirmed them, while you have set God as your guarantor; surely God knows all that you do. And be not like a woman who breaks completely into fibers the yarn which she [herself] has firmly spun, [by] using your oaths to deceive one another, simply because some of you may be more powerful than others. God only puts you to a test thereby, and certainly on the Day of Resurrection He shall make clear to you all that whereon you used to differ. And had God so willed, He could surely make you all one single [homogenous] people; but He lets go astray one whom He wills [by his/her free choice allowed by God], and lets be guided aright one whom He wills; and you will surely be called to account for all that you ever did. And do not use your oaths to deceive one another, lest [your] foot should slip after it has stood firm, and then you will have to taste the evil [consequences] of turning away [as a whole] from the way of God, and tremendous suffering will be awaiting you [in the life to come]. Hence, do not barter away your bond with God for a trifling gain. Verily, what is with God is far better for you, did you but know. [16:90-95]

The fundamentals of the message of Islam are summed up in the first of these verses: God enjoins justice and benevolence in all their dimensions: political, administrative, legal, socio-economic, universal, etc., and these virtues have to be naturally developed within the family in its close and extended forms, in order to be radiated in the society and the whole world. Parallel to this, God forbids injustice and aggression and all that is shameful and all that runs counter to reason and common sense in all fields. These fundamentals direct the Muslims in both their internal and their universal relations.

The subsequent verses stress that promises given to the Muslim people or to any country in the world have to be honored, since God watches how those who believe in Him deal with others, and they have to consider Him as the guarantor of the fulfillment of their promises. People may be tempted to break their obligations in order to seize an opportunity for gaining more power over others in the world, but such people would lose their credibility in universal relations which have to be consistently and persistently built through time, the same as a stupid woman who untwists her yarn after spending her time and energy in spinning it and making it strong. Muslims are tested as to whether they observe their moral values in their universal relations, or they merely aim to gain more worldly power as others do. Those who believe in their accountability before God should be always conscious that everyone will be called to account and will be told the truth about any differences with others. God could shape the whole humanity in one pattern, but He allows human differences to test everyone in his/her dealings with others. Human relations are the main responsibility of the human beings in this world, and they reflect in their behavior with others the development of their inner selves. Unless Muslims observe their moral values in their human relations in their countries and in the whole world, their feet would slip in following the whims of power, and they will betray their pledge to God to catch trifling worldly gains, and thus their behavior will hurt the image of Islam in the whole world and turn others away from any respect for its message. These people will end with failure in this life and a tremendous suffering in the eternal life to come. What a depth Islam provides for universal relations, building them - as it builds the whole Islamic law, Shari'a - on faith and morality, not only on legality.

MUSLIM UNITY

The believers, both men and women, are in charge of [and responsible for] one another: they [all] enjoin the doing of what is right, and forbid the doing of what is wrong; they keep up prayers, render the purifying welfare dues (zakat) and obey God and the Conveyor of His Message. It is they upon whom God will bestow His grace; surely, God is All-mighty, All-wise. [9:71]

وَٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ
وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَآءُ بَعْضٍ ۚ
يَأْمُرُونَ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ
ٱلْمُنكَرِ وَيُقِيمُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ
ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَيُطِيعُونَ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥٓ ۚ
أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ ٱللَّهُ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ
حَكِيمٌ ﴿٧١﴾

The internal and universal role of the believers is shared by both men and women equally, as each is in charge of the other. Muslim men and women should work together for Muslim universal solidarity which has to encompass both sexes. Besides this, both have to support justice and peace in the whole world to be enjoyed by the whole humanity. Muslim women can be a strong force with Muslim men to enjoin what is right and good, and fight against what is wrong and evil among all the Muslims and in the world. A Muslim universal unity has no particular political form or frame, and the caliphate was

just a historical experience. Federation, confederation, commonwealth or any other form of cooperation and solidarity that have been experienced in this world may guide Muslims in this respect. Early Muslim theologians and jurists, such as al-Baghdadi [d.429 A.H./ 1037 C.E.] and al-Juwayni [d.478 A.H./ 1085 C.E.], allowed the existence of several Muslim political entities for physical necessities. Other human necessities also have to be considered, be they ethnic, cultural, doctrinal, organizational etc. Muslim unity is not meant to stand as a block against others in the world, nor to support any Muslim entity in any case, but to only represent and support peace and justice in the whole world. Muslims have to cooperate in furthering only virtue and righteousness, not in spreading evil and aggression [5:2].

O you who have attained to faith! If any iniquitous person comes to you with any piece of information, ascertain the truth, lest you hurt people unwittingly, and afterwards become filled with remorse for what you have done. And know that among you is the Conveyor of God's Message: were he to comply with your inclinations in many cases, you would certainly suffer; but God has endeared the faith to you, and has made it beautiful in your hearts, and He has made hateful to you all denial of the truth, and all inequity, and all rebelliousness [against what is good]; such indeed are those who follow the right course, a grace and favor from God, and God is All-knowing, Truly Wise.
And if two groups of believers fall to fighting, make peace between them; but then, if one of them commits aggression against the other, then fight the one that commits aggression until it reverts to God's commandment, and if it reverts, make peace between the two [groups] with justice, and deal equitably [with both]: God loves those who act equitably. All believers are but brethren; so set things right between your two brothers [who may have a conflict], and remain conscious of God, so that you may be blessed with His Grace. [49:6-10]

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟
إِن جَآءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌۢ بِنَبَإٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوٓا۟ أَن
تُصِيبُوا۟ قَوْمًۢا بِجَهَـٰلَةٍ فَتُصْبِحُوا۟ عَلَىٰ مَا
فَعَلْتُمْ نَـٰدِمِينَ ﴿٦﴾ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ فِيكُمْ
رَسُولَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ لَوْ يُطِيعُكُمْ فِى كَثِيرٍ مِّنَ
ٱلْأَمْرِ لَعَنِتُّمْ وَلَـٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ حَبَّبَ إِلَيْكُمُ
ٱلْإِيمَـٰنَ وَزَيَّنَهُۥ فِى قُلُوبِكُمْ وَكَرَّهَ
إِلَيْكُمُ ٱلْكُفْرَ وَٱلْفُسُوقَ وَٱلْعِصْيَانَ ۚ
أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلرَّٰشِدُونَ ﴿٧﴾ فَضْلًا مِّنَ
ٱللَّهِ وَنِعْمَةً ۚ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٨﴾
وَإِن طَآئِفَتَانِ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ٱقْتَتَلُوا۟
فَأَصْلِحُوا۟ بَيْنَهُمَا ۚ فَإِنۢ بَغَتْ إِحْدَىٰهُمَا
عَلَى ٱلْأُخْرَىٰ فَقَـٰتِلُوا۟ ٱلَّتِى تَبْغِى
حَتَّىٰ تَفِىٓءَ إِلَىٰٓ أَمْرِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ فَإِن
فَآءَتْ فَأَصْلِحُوا۟ بَيْنَهُمَا بِٱلْعَدْلِ
وَأَقْسِطُوٓا۟ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُقْسِطِينَ
﴿٩﴾ إِنَّمَا ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا۟
بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ ۚ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

Just as the above verses guide the individuals in the society to observe their moral values in their mutual relations, they guide the universal relations between various Muslim entities and between the Muslims as a whole and other countries in the world, since the

Muslims cannot act in unity to further evil and hostilities, but to develop peace and support justice [5:2]. A hasty reaction to any piece of information would cause tension or disturb peace in the world, and some damage may not be easily repaired once it is done, and the hasty party would be sorry for its hasty reaction. The faith in God ought to bring out moral sensitivity as a result of God consciousness, and thus hurting others without sufficient evidence or committing any wrong or injustice in world relations should not be allowed to happen in the first place, and if it does occur, it should not be allowed to expand. The main purpose of sending a human being to convey God's message is to be a living representation of this message among the people, and to guide them to the right path in day to day matters, not to follow them in their hasty emotional excitements. Such God-consciousness and moral commitment would provide solid foundations for world peace and universal co-operation.

However, if it happens that a conflict emerges between two Muslim groups, other Muslims should not stand passive, but should work out a solution through mediation, arbitration or a universal court. If one of the two groups goes further in the conflict and commits aggression, all the other Muslims have to fight together against the aggressors and to represent a force for world peace so as to emphasize a principle of justice: that aggression should by no means be rewarding. Passivity in world affairs is as damaging as it is in internal politics, for it encourages aggressors and tyrants to go further in their violation of internal or universal justice. However, as soon as the aggressor reverts to justice through words and deeds, justice should be observed in solving the dispute, and any bias even against the former aggressor has to be avoided, since two wrongs do not make one right. Injustice will continue to exist in the world when it just moves from one court of a group of players to another, and this would shake world stability and peace from time to time, as whichever party suffers injustice sooner or later struggles, and may use force and even commit another aggression. The above verses present advanced principles of world justice and world peace keeping, which can safeguard justice and peace not only among Muslims at the universal level, but in the whole world. However, the practical forms for these principles may benefit from any available human experience, whether reached by Muslims or non-Muslims. The United Nations and the International Court of Justice may help Muslims in having their own institutions or in contributing to the development of the existing ones. God's commandments which have to be observed represent basic justice, and the prominent jurist Ibn al-Quyyim stated in his two works "*I'lam al-Muwaqqi'in*" and "*al-Turuq al-Hukmiyya*" that whenever the signs of justice become obvious by any means, it is God's law and commandment.

RELATIONS WITH OTHERS

عَسَى ٱللَّهُ أَن
يَجْعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَ ٱلَّذِينَ عَادَيْتُم مِّنْهُم
مَّوَدَّةً ۚ وَٱللَّهُ قَدِيرٌ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٌ
رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٧﴾ لَّا يَنْهَىٰكُمُ ٱللَّهُ عَنِ ٱلَّذِينَ لَمْ

It may be that God will bring about affection between you [O believers] and those whom you [now] hold as enemies: for God is All- powerful and God is All-forgiving, All-gracious. As for those [of

the unbelievers] who do not fight against you because of [your] faith, nor drive you out of your homes, God does not forbid you to deal kindly and justly with them, for surely God loves those who act with justice. God only forbids you to [deal with] those who have fought against you because of [your] faith, and drive you out of your homes, or support [others] in driving you out, and as for those [from among you] who take them as patrons, it is they who are truly wrongdoers. [60:7-9]

يُقَٰتِلُوكُمْ فِى ٱلدِّينِ وَ لَمْ يُخْرِجُوكُم مِّن
دِيَٰرِكُمْ أَن تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَ تُقْسِطُوٓاْ إِلَيْهِمْ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴿٨﴾ إِنَّمَا
يَنْهَىٰكُمُ ٱللَّهُ عَنِ ٱلَّذِينَ قَٰتَلُوكُمْ فِى
ٱلدِّينِ وَ أَخْرَجُوكُم مِّن دِيَٰرِكُمْ
وَظَٰهَرُواْ عَلَىٰٓ إِخْرَاجِكُمْ أَن تَوَلَّوْهُمْ
وَ مَن يَتَوَلَّهُمْ فَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ ﴿٩﴾

The Quran repeatedly calls for universal co-operation between all races, peoples and tribes, teaching the Muslims to deal kindly and justly with all those who have different beliefs from them, as long as none of these have fought against Muslims on account of their faith, nor have driven them out of their homes. Muslims should represent in their universal relations the divine message and its moral values, as such behavior may turn others to friendship, and any hostility may be altered with time [see also 23:96; 41:34]. It is only aggression or collaboration with the aggressors, not merely the difference of beliefs, that may make an avoidance of a relation with certain people necessary. Such collaborators, with the aggressors, would bear the consequences of their evil-doing in this life and in the eternal life to come, since they may never, in the long term, be accepted in either front, and would suffer isolation, qualms of conscience, and the condemnation of others [11:113].

The above verses provide the rules of universal co-operation according to justice. Constructive world relations between different races, peoples, faiths and cultures give the Muslims and their faith a part in the universal diversity, and this would be beneficial for Muslims, Islam and the whole world. A present hostility should not block Muslims from always looking for a change for the better, and a development towards peace, affection and cooperation. In his life, Prophet Muhammad provided an inspiring messages for looking forward to peace and constructive relations with those who had confronted his message for successive years, tortured his followers, tried to kill him, and when the believers moved to another area, these enemies persistently waged war against them in this new area. Yet the Prophet refrained from cursing these enemies, saying, "I have not been sent by God to curse; I have been sent as grace and mercy. It may be that God would bring forth from their offspring some who worship Him alone. O God! Guide my people, for they do not know." [reported by Muslim]. When he was prevented by force at the confrontation of Hudaybiya from visiting the Inviolable House of Worship (the Ka'ba) he said, "Whatever calls made by Quraysh today for observing a sanctity stressed by God would be accepted by me" [reported by Ibn Sa'd in *al-Tabaqat* and by others].

Let not the believers take those who have stubbornly denied the truth as patrons and supporters in preference

لَّا يَتَّخِذِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ
أَوْلِيَآءَ مِن دُونِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۖ وَ مَن يَفْعَلْ

to the believers; and whoever does this cuts himself [/herself] off from God in everything; unless it be to protect yourselves in this way against something [very dangerous to you] that is to be feared from them. And God warns you to be aware of Him, for with God is all journey's end. [3:28]

ذَٰلِكَ فَلَيْسَ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ فِى شَىْءٍ إِلَّآ أَن
تَتَّقُوا۟ مِنْهُمْ تُقَىٰةً ۗ وَيُحَذِّرُكُمُ ٱللَّهُ
نَفْسَهُۥ ۗ وَإِلَى ٱللَّهِ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿٢٨﴾

The above verse forbids the believers from taking those who have denied stubbornly the truth as their "patrons" or "guarantors" in preference to those who share with them their beliefs. However, this does not contradict the general principle of maintaining relations and mutual benefits with all human beings, and dealing with them with justice and kindness as long as they have not committed any aggression against Muslims or the human rights related to their faith or their land. The Quranic guidance has to be understood in its totality; the relation which is forbidden is that of patronage and superiority on one side and clientage and subordination on the other. Besides, it is a relation with those who have openly and stubbornly denied the truth even if it has become obvious to them , and those that *"have fought against you because of [your] faith and driven you out of your homes or aided [others] in driving you out"* [60:9] which is forbidden. Moreover, relations with such aggressors and oppressors are forbidden if they are developed "in preference to" natural relations with the believers which can bring out the same benefits. If the benefits of such relations with others are essential for the Muslims, and their goals cannot be reached except through these relations, then the permission out of necessity can be applied in this case *"and He has clearly [and precisely] spelled out to you what He has forbidden you unless you are compelled [to do what has been forbidden because of necessity]"* [6:119], *"Yet, whoever is driven by necessity without wilful disobedience, nor exceeding the immediate need, no offense will be held against him [/her]"* [2:173]. *"God does not burden any human being with more than he [/she] is well able to bear"* [2:286]. However, Muslims are taught to develop co-operation among themselves and to support one another for the common benefit [5:2].

O you who have attained to faith! Do not take those who stubbornly reject the truth as patrons and supporters in preference to the believers; do you desire to place before God clear evidence against yourselves? [4:144]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تَتَّخِذُوا۟
ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ أَوْلِيَآءَ مِن دُونِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۚ
أَتُرِيدُونَ أَن تَجْعَلُوا۟ لِلَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ سُلْطَٰنًا
مُّبِينًا ﴿١٤٤﴾

The Arabic word *awliya'* cannot be easily translated, "patrons" and "supporters" from a center of power and superiority may be closest to its meaning. It indicates a certain relationship which entails more than mere friendship or support of equals, as it implies complete loyalty and full compliance in behavior at all times and in different avenues of life. The English word "patron" was used in ancient times for the master who freed a slave but retained rights on him/her, and for the same relation the Arabic words *waliyy* and

mawla were used. The relation forbidden in these verses does not apply to searching for political, military or technological assistance among those who do not follow or deny the truth, since the Prophet himself made use of such casual experiences when they were needed by the Muslims and could be available only from those who shared with his enemies their beliefs. He did his best to build up alliances with those who were by no means among the believers in His Message, both while he was in Mecca and when he migrated to Medina. The agreement of Hudaybiaya between the Prophet and Quraysh, a few years before the death of the Prophet, allowed the Arab tribes to be allies of either the Prophet or his enemies, and the Prophet did not stipulate Islam for those who might choose to be his allies. He hired a guide who shared with his enemies their beliefs to show him and his Companion Abu Bakr in their migration from Mecca to Medina a route which was not frequently used. In his siege of Ta'if, after entering Mecca, the Prophet benefited from others' experience in using the mangonel or the battering-ram which threw heavy stones against its strong walls.

Besides this, the forbidden relationship has to be understood within its Quranic and historical context. The verses that forbid such a relationship come usually in connection with condemning the hypocrites, who in spite of their apparent belief in Islam followed those who stubbornly rejected it [e.g. 4:137-146]. Thus, their forbidden relationship with those who stubbornly reject the message is closer to full loyalty, including the inclination towards their preference of beliefs and way of life. Meanwhile, the verse [60:9] clarifies those whom the Muslims should not take as *awliya'*: *"God only forbids from [dealing with] patrons those who have fought against you because of [your] faith and driven you out of your homes, or supported [others] in driving you out, and as for those [from among you] who take them as patrons, it is they who are truly wrong-doers".*

The same rules apply to the "People of the Book". It is the full loyalty and compliance, including the sharing of their beliefs and way of life, that is forbidden, not the particular assistance in certain practices, especially when it is asked for to those who *"do not fight against you because of [your] faith, nor drive you out of your homes"* [60:8]. Whatever the differences in faith may be, Islam urges developing human relations and universal understanding and co-operation, as long as such relations are based on justice and mutual benefit, for *"God does not forbid you to deal kindly and justly with them [those who have not committed aggression]; for, surely, God loves those who act with justice"* [60:8].

O you who have attained to faith! Do not take the enemies of Mine - who are your enemies as well - for your supporters, showing them affection although they stubbornly deny the truth that has come to you [and] drive away the Conveyor of God's message and yourselves [only] because you believe in God your Lord, if you have gone forth [from your homes] to strive in My way and seek My goodly

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا تَتَّخِذُواْ عَدُوِّى
وَعَدُوَّكُمْ أَوْلِيَآءَ تُلْقُونَ إِلَيْهِم بِٱلْمَوَدَّةِ
وَقَدْ كَفَرُواْ بِمَا جَآءَكُم مِّنَ ٱلْحَقِّ
يُخْرِجُونَ ٱلرَّسُولَ وَإِيَّاكُمْ ۙ أَن
تُؤْمِنُواْ بِٱللَّهِ رَبِّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ خَرَجْتُمْ
جِهَٰدًا فِى سَبِيلِى وَٱبْتِغَآءَ مَرْضَاتِى

acceptance, inclining towards them in secret affection. Yet I am fully aware of all that you may conceal and all that you do openly as well, and whosoever of you acts in this way has gone astray from the right path. Whenever they come to you, they are your enemies, and they would stretch forth their hands and tongues to do you evil, and they wish that you [too] would deny the truth. Neither your kinsfolk nor [even] your own children will be of any benefit to you on the Day of Resurrection, and He will judge between you, and God sees all that you do.
You have had a good example in Ibrahim [Abraham] and those who followed him, when they said to their [idolatrous] people: "We are quit of you and that which you worship apart from God; we disbelieve in you, and enmity and dislike between us and you have become obvious for ever, until you believe in God alone." The only exception was that of Abraham's saying to his father, "I shall pray for [God's] forgiveness for you, but I have no power to secure anything from God to you." [And he and the believers prayed:] "Our Lord, in You we have placed our trust, and to You do we turn, and to You is all journeys' end. O our Lord! Keep us from being a temptation for those who might reject the truth[in their rejection of the truth, and/or their persecution of the believers], and forgive any wrongdoing on our side; Our Lord, You alone are the All-mighty, the All-wise". You have had a good example in them for whoever looks forward to [meeting] God and the Last Day. And whoever turns away, surely God is the All-sufficient, the One to whom all praise and thanks are due. [60:1-6]

تُسِرُّونَ إِلَيْهِم بِٱلْمَوَدَّةِ وَ أَنَا۠ أَعْلَمُ بِمَآ
أَخْفَيْتُمْ وَ مَآ أَعْلَنتُمْ ۚ وَ مَن يَفْعَلْهُ مِنكُمْ
فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَآءَ ٱلسَّبِيلِ ﴿١﴾ إِن يَثْقَفُوكُمْ
يَكُونُوا۟ لَكُمْ أَعْدَآءً وَ يَبْسُطُوٓا۟ إِلَيْكُمْ
أَيْدِيَهُمْ وَ أَلْسِنَتَهُم بِٱلسُّوٓءِ وَ وَدُّوا۟ لَوْ
تَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٢﴾ لَن تَنفَعَكُمْ أَرْحَامُكُمْ وَ لَآ
أَوْلَٰدُكُمْ ۚ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ يَفْصِلُ بَيْنَكُمْ ۖ
وَ ٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٣﴾ قَدْ كَانَتْ
لَكُمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فِىٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَ ٱلَّذِينَ
مَعَهُۥٓ إِذْ قَالُوا۟ لِقَوْمِهِمْ إِنَّا بُرَءَٰٓؤُا۟ مِنكُمْ
وَ مِمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ كَفَرْنَا بِكُمْ
وَ بَدَا بَيْنَنَا وَ بَيْنَكُمُ ٱلْعَدَٰوَةُ وَ ٱلْبَغْضَآءُ
أَبَدًا حَتَّىٰ تُؤْمِنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَحْدَهُۥٓ إِلَّا
قَوْلَ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ لِأَبِيهِ لَأَسْتَغْفِرَنَّ لَكَ وَ مَآ
أَمْلِكُ لَكَ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ مِن شَىْءٍ ۖ رَّبَّنَا عَلَيْكَ
تَوَكَّلْنَا وَ إِلَيْكَ أَنَبْنَا وَ إِلَيْكَ ٱلْمَصِيرُ
﴿٤﴾ رَبَّنَا لَا تَجْعَلْنَا فِتْنَةً لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟
وَ ٱغْفِرْ لَنَا رَبَّنَآ ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ
ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٥﴾ لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِيهِمْ أُسْوَةٌ
حَسَنَةٌ ۖ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَ ٱلْيَوْمَ
ٱلْءَاخِرَ ۚ وَ مَن يَتَوَلَّ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ
ٱلْغَنِىُّ ٱلْحَمِيدُ ﴿٦﴾

This is a warning against trying to have it both ways, by extending bridges to those who stubbornly deny the truth, while continuing to be considered on the believers' front. Such behavior is dangerous for the believers' collective security, and damages the individual morality as well as the trust among the believers. Those whom the believers have been warned against having secret affectionate relations with, have been enemies who have not

been satisfied by just rejecting stubbornly the faith, but *"have driven away the Conveyor of God's message and yourselves [only] because you believe in God."* Besides this, in any future confrontation, these enemies will certainly stand against the believers, and would do their best to cause them every possible harm at least by their tongues, if not by their hands. Any kinship that may exist cannot be accepted as an excuse for collaborating with the enemies of the faith, since the expected material and moral damage to the cause and the believers that emerges from such a relation, may be far more serious than observing kinship relations. Not only will one's kinsfolk, but also his/her children, not be of any benefit on the Day of Judgement.

In general, maintaining good relations with any human being whatever his/her faith may be is taught by the divine teaching as long as it does not lead to a compromise in faith or a harm to the faithful. However, enmity and dislike are not permanent as the next verse [60:7] points out. Besides, enmity and dislike do not mean that the believers in God should resort to any force or refrain from dealing with others fairly and kindly as long as they do not initiate aggression against the believers, and in this way the latter would find themselves forced to be in legitimate self- defense. The next verses 60:8-9 indicate both cases. Muslims are never allowed to use force because of difference of beliefs or ideas, if such a difference is not connected with any aggression or violation of their rights of belief or their rights in their homes and their land.

Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) is presented in the verses as a model for shaping one's relations with others according to their stand and actions towards one's faith and the believers. However, this noble prophet and conveyor of God's message did not initiate any violent action against his idolatrous people, on the contrary he actually met his father's threat of using force against him with all peacefulness and forgiveness: " *Said he [the father], 'What, are you shrinking from my gods, Abraham? If you give not over, I shall stone you; so forsake me now for some while'. He said, 'Peace be upon you! I will ask my Lord to forgive you; surely He has been ever gracious to me. Now, I will go apart from you and that you call upon apart from God; I will call upon my Lord [along], and I hope that by praying for His support, I shall not be wretched.*" [19:46-48]. Even when Ibrahim (Abraham) broke the idols which his people had been worshipping, he aimed not to eliminate these false gods and stop their existence, but to present through this demonstration a practical argument that these idols could not defend themselves and thus how could they be expected to benefit or hurt their worshippers [see 21:51-70; 37:83-98]. When he was punished by being thrown into the fire, God presented, by rescuing him, another demonstration to prove who is the real God who deserves to be worshiped, and from whom the worshippers can expect support and help.

And fight against those who - despite having the Book [aforetime] - do not [truly] believe either in God or in the Last Day, nor consider forbidden that which God and the Conveyor of His Message have forbidden, nor follow the religion of truth [which God has enjoined upon them] until

قَٰتِلُواْ
ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤۡمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَلَا بِٱلۡيَوۡمِ
ٱلۡأٓخِرِ وَلَا يُحَرِّمُونَ مَا حَرَّمَ ٱللَّهُ
وَرَسُولُهُۥ وَلَا يَدِينُونَ دِينَ ٱلۡحَقِّ مِنَ

they agree to the payment of the exemption tax [of defence obligations, jizya] by those who afford it, and acknowledge their subjection [to the Islamic state]. [9:29]

ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ حَتَّىٰ يُعْطُوا۟
ٱلْجِزْيَةَ عَن يَدٍ وَهُمْ صَٰغِرُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾

One should keep in mind primarily that fighting is only allowed for Muslims to defend themselves and their faith against those who have initiated war and aggression against them [2:190, 193; 60:9], not against peaceful people whatever their beliefs may be [60:8]. Besides, the people whom the Muslims are allowed to fight in the above verse do not truly believe in God and the Last Day, nor forbid that which God and His Message to them has forbidden, although they have had the Book that provides them with information about this and they are supposed to believe in it and observe its guidance. According to the prominent commentator on the Quran al-Fakhr al-Razi, these negative qualities are a condition that should exist to allow fighting such people. However, the initiation of fighting and aggression by any people, even if they are Muslims, sufficiently justifies fighting them back [49:9]. The non-Muslims who live under the Muslim authorities have to submit a payment in return for being protected by their power, *jizya*, and as a recognition of its authority. The payer should be a strong man, and the elderly, the women and the children are exempt. The above verse addresses a case of non-Muslims who claim to be among the People of the Book while their beliefs and behavior contradict its teachings, and who live with the Muslims on the same land, but have initially confronted them. These people's belligerence has to be dealt with until they accept the authority of the Islamic state, including what God prohibits, but their freedom of belief remains secure in spite of their initial hostility and confrontation.

The above verse cannot be understood as a license to fight people who may have the character indicated in the verse wherever they exist in the world, and it was applied only in the Arabian peninsula during the life of the Prophet. Taking it as a general rule that authorizes Muslims to fight all peoples of the world until they accept Islam or pay jizya cannot be concluded from the Quranic text. It may have been a historical practice in certain circumstances, but it cannot be a permanent law based on the Quran.

As for the payment of *jizya* itself, all the early Muslim documents and practices indicated explicitly that it was taken in return for protection and defense. The non-Muslims may not like to participate in the military obligations related to the defense of the Islamic state, and so, as the reliable Muslim historians al-Baladhuri [d.279 A.H./ 892 C.E.] and al-Tabari [d.310 A.H./ 922 C.E.] reported, whenever non-Muslims accepted military obligations, their jizya was dropped. The exemption of those who were unable to fight from paying jizya in the historical precedents of the early Caliphate supports the fact that jizya was considered as a cost of defense paid by those who did not want to participate in it. In a modern state, according to the concept of equal citizenship with equality in all rights and obligations, such an exemption of military service or the restriction of its responsibility and honor to a certain group of people is out of discussion. Non-Muslim citizens in an Islamic state are equal to Muslims in their rights and obligations, and they are expected to share whole-heartedly the responsibility of defending their land and state, where they enjoy their human rights in full.

POSITIVE AWARENESS OF WORLD DEVELOPMENTS

Defeated have been the Byzantines in a land close-by; but they, despite their [present] defeat, will be victorious, within a few years. To God belongs all decisive power, in the past and in the future. And on that day, the believers [in the One God and the life to come will have cause to] rejoice for God's support; He supports whomever He wills, and He is Exalted in Might, Most Gracious. [This is] God's promise; never does God fail to fulfill His promise, but most people know not. They know but the outer surface of this world's life, but of the ultimate reality of the life to come, they are unaware. [30:2-7]

غُلِبَتِ ٱلرُّومُ ۝٢ فِيٓ
أَدۡنَى ٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَهُم مِّنۢ بَعۡدِ غَلَبِهِمۡ
سَيَغۡلِبُونَ ۝٣ فِي بِضۡعِ سِنِينَ ۗ لِلَّهِ
ٱلۡأَمۡرُ مِن قَبۡلُ وَمِنۢ بَعۡدُ ۚ وَيَوۡمَئِذٖ
يَفۡرَحُ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنُونَ ۝٤ بِنَصۡرِ ٱللَّهِ
يَنصُرُ مَن يَشَآءُ ۖ وَهُوَ ٱلۡعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ
۝٥ وَعۡدَ ٱللَّهِ ۖ لَا يُخۡلِفُ ٱللَّهُ وَعۡدَهُۥ
وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكۡثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعۡلَمُونَ ۝٦
يَعۡلَمُونَ ظَٰهِرٗا مِّنَ ٱلۡحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنۡيَا وَهُمۡ
عَنِ ٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ هُمۡ غَٰفِلُونَ ۝٧

The above verses reveal how the Quran nurtures care in the Muslim mind about the development of world relations, since Muslims represent an inseparable part of the world that cannot live isolated, and will be affected by whatever happens in any part of it. The Byzantines were Christians, yet they shared with the Muslims the belief in God and in the human accountability to Him, and thus both could be within one front, distinctively from those who may have different beliefs. However, the military confrontation of the Sassanians Persians and the Byzantines, two medieval superpowers, resulted in the weakening of both, and this weakening helped Islam and Muslims to secure their place in the world. Yet the Muslims were not so narrow-minded and ego-centric. They saw the Byzantines closer to them as People of the Book and believers in the One God and the life to come, and were inclined to see them prevail over the Persians who were from them in their beliefs and values.

The verses refer to the ongoing war between the two Empires (which succeeded older wars between the Greeks and then the Romans on one side and the Persians on the other), in which the Byzantines captured Damascus in the year 613 C.E. and Jerusalem in the next year. The verses presented a prophecy that the Byzantines would prevail again in a few years. This was fulfilled exactly as the tide turned in favor of the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius when he fought the Persians persistently between the years 622 and 626, restored his previous territories and put tremendous pressure on the Persian power. The Quran supported the Muslims' inclination to see the Byzantines victorious: "*and that day, the believers [in the One God and the life to come will have cause to] rejoice for God's support...*"

Regardless of these particular events of the past, the Quranic message which urges Muslims to be involved in world developments is relevant in any time. The verses remind the believers in God that whenever He promises, He never does fail to fulfill His promise, and that people often know only what is seen on the outer surface of this world's life, and

may think a momentary show of power or weakness to be permanent. In this life, turns and cycles of ups and downs succeed one another in the human life, and in the eternal life to come God shall judge the intentions and the deeds of every human being and requite him/her accordingly, whatever his/her pleasures or sufferings in the present life may be. People should not be so enshrouded in the temporary vicissitudes that they lose sight of the eternal life to come.

WAR: AN EXCEPTIONAL NECESSITY TO FACE AGGRESSION AND DEFEND HUMAN RIGHTS

Assuredly God will defend those who have attained to faith; surely God loves not any who betrays trust and is ungrateful [for the good that has been offered to him/her]. Permission [to fight back] is given to those who have been wronged and are suffering [the woes of] injustice; surely, God in His exalted power is quite able to support them. Those who have been driven from their homes in defiance of all right, for no other reason than saying, "Our Lord is God". And had not God enabled people to defend themselves against one another, there would have been destroyed monasteries and churches and synagogues, and mosques, wherein God's name is abundantly extolled. Assuredly, God will support one who supports His [cause]; for verily, God is the Most Powerful, the All-mighty.

Those who if We firmly establish them [and enable them to seize power] in the land, keep up prayer and render purifying welfare dues (zakat), and enjoin the doing of what is right and forbid the doing of what is wrong; with God rests the final outcome of all events. [22:38-41]

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُدَٰفِعُ عَنِ
ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ
خَوَّانٍ كَفُورٍ ﴿٣٨﴾ أُذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقَٰتَلُونَ
بِأَنَّهُمْ ظُلِمُواْ ۚ وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ نَصْرِهِمْ
لَقَدِيرٌ ﴿٣٩﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُواْ مِن دِيَٰرِهِم
بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ إِلَّآ أَن يَقُولُواْ رَبُّنَا ٱللَّهُ ۗ
وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ ٱللَّهِ ٱلنَّاسَ بَعْضَهُم بِبَعْضٍ
لَّهُدِّمَتْ صَوَٰمِعُ وَبِيَعٌ وَصَلَوَٰتٌ وَمَسَٰجِدُ
يُذْكَرُ فِيهَا ٱسْمُ ٱللَّهِ كَثِيرًا ۗ وَلَيَنصُرَنَّ
ٱللَّهُ مَن يَنصُرُهُۥٓ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَقَوِىٌّ عَزِيزٌ
﴿٤٠﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ إِن مَّكَّنَّٰهُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ
أَقَامُواْ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَوُاْ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ
وَأَمَرُواْ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَوْاْ عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ ۗ
وَلِلَّهِ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلْأُمُورِ ﴿٤١﴾

The first of the above verses was reported to be the earliest one related to fighting. It states sharply that permission has been given to the Muslims to fight back against those who "*drove them from their homes in defiance of all right for no other reason than their saying: 'Our Lord is God'.*" The word permission clearly indicates that fighting is an exception from the general rule which is maintaining peace in Muslims' relations with others, and the permission is only given to exercise legitimately the right of "self-defense".

This goes with the other verses which were successively revealed afterwards [e.g. 2:190, 193-194; 4:75]. The above verses indicate that such exceptional permission for fighting for self-defense has been given by God to enable people to resist any possible transgression which is expected from the human nature. If self-defense were not allowed, transgression would continue and expand to reach even the houses of worship which are only established to worship and thank and praise God [22:40]: *"and corruption would surely overwhelm the earth"* [2:251]. God promises to support those who support His cause, and who fight back against aggression to secure justice even if they were initially weak and oppressed. These believers will prevail in the long term, and in that time they will be tested as to how they meet the temptation of power after being tested in challenging oppression. They have to prove that they will continue to fulfill their commitment to their faith and moral values in all circumstances, whether they are suffering oppression or enjoying power. The prevalence of the believers should mean the prevalence of justice and morality; *"Those who if We firmly establish them on earth, [they] keep up prayer and give the purifying welfare dues (zakat) and enjoin the doing of what is right and forbid the doing of what is wrong"*, and they have to always keep in mind that the rise and fall of any people are both possible in any time according to their deeds *"and with God rests the final outcome of [all] matters."*

And fight in the way of God against those who have [initially] waged war against you, but do not commit aggression; surely, God loves not the aggressors. [2:190]

وَقَٰتِلُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّذِينَ
يُقَٰتِلُونَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا
يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿١٩٠﴾

Fighting in the way of God, *jihad*, and for His cause which secures justice and peace for all, is restricted to defending the human rights, whether related to the human life or the homeland, or to the opinion, belief, and expression. This restriction is also obvious in the earlier verse *"Permission [to fight back] is given to those who have been wronged and are suffering [the woes of] injustice"* [22:39], and in a later verse *"thus, if they keep themselves aloof from you, and do not fight you, but offer you peace, then God does not allow you in any way to fight against them"* [4:90]. Another later verse reminds the Muslims that God may bring about in any future time good relations between the believers and their present enemies, and so the Muslims have to try to develop such good relations that are based on justice and kindness with those who have not fought against them on account of their faith, nor have driven them out of their homelands, as *"God loves those who act with justice"* [60:7-8]. Using force should be restricted to those who initiate aggression and carry on persistently and *"do not keep themselves aloof from you, and do not offer you peace and do not hold back their hands"* [4:91]; those who initially *"fight against you because of [your] faith and drive you out from your homes or support [others] in driving you out"* [60:9]. In such cases only are Muslims allowed to fight so as to defend *"the oppressed and utterly helpless men and women and children"* who continuously suffer from oppression in their land [4:75].

And fight against them [those who initiated war against you] until there is no more oppression and the matter of faith is [left free from any human interference and pertains] to God alone, and if they desist, then all hostility shall cease, save against those who have been [willfully and initially] evil transgressors. Fight during a sacred month if you are attacked, for sanctity should be guarded by involved parties. If then anyone commits aggression against you, fight against the aggressor just as he [/she] has fought against you; but remain conscious of God, and know that God is with those who are conscious of Him. [2:193-194]

وَقَٰتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّىٰ لَا تَكُونَ
فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ ٱلدِّينُ لِلَّهِ ۖ فَإِنِ ٱنتَهَوْا۟
فَلَا عُدْوَٰنَ إِلَّا عَلَى ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٩٣﴾
ٱلشَّهْرُ ٱلْحَرَامُ بِٱلشَّهْرِ ٱلْحَرَامِ
وَٱلْحُرُمَٰتُ قِصَاصٌ ۚ فَمَنِ ٱعْتَدَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ
فَٱعْتَدُوا۟ عَلَيْهِ بِمِثْلِ مَا ٱعْتَدَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ ۚ
وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَعَ
ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٩٤﴾

Just as fighting back is allowed for the defense of physical life, it is also allowed for the defense of the human moral rights, especially those of freedom of belief, expression, and practiced belief, since oppression is worse than killing in damaging the human merits [2:191, 217]. Islam does not allow Muslims to fight to impose their faith by force, which the misleading translation of jihad as "holy war" may lead some to mistakenly think. On the contrary Muslims have only to fight to secure the freedom of belief and remove any human obstruction from the way between the individual and God [also 8:39].

As long as this way is kept fully open and these rights are enjoyed, the Muslims have no right to fight, even if the people who enjoy these rights choose not to be Muslims, since fighting is allowed only against aggressors and oppressors. Assigning certain months during which fighting is prevented and peace is maintained by all people, was a good arrangement that the Arabs reached before Islam. It would allow hostile parties to move peacefully during the sacred months in order to practice pilgrimage to the House of God established by Ibrahim (Abraham) and Isma'il (Ishmael) in Mecca, and to practice commercial and cultural activities during this yearly gathering. Muslims are more keen to observe the sanctity of the sacred months than the Arabs before Islam might have been, but if they face aggression from others in violation of this sanctity they have the right to fight back within the limits set by God for such legitimate defence: *" and fight against the aggressor, just as he [/she] has fought against you, and remain conscious of God"* [2:194]. Accordingly, fighting for the sake of fighting or for mere expansion of land or imposition of beliefs is forbidden by the principles of Islam, and whenever fighting becomes legitimate for self-defense, it is restricted to those who are fighting on the other side. Thus, the use of weapons that lead to mass destruction and indiscriminate killing, and thus hurt non-combatants, cannot be allowed according to the Islamic moral and legal principles.

Fighting is ordained for you, even though it be hateful to you; but it may well be that you hate a thing

كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ
ٱلْقِتَالُ وَهُوَ كُرْهٌ لَّكُمْ ۖ وَعَسَىٰٓ أَن

while it is good for you, and it may well be that you love a thing while it is bad for you; and God knows, whereas you do not know. They ask you concerning fighting in the sacred month. Say: "Fighting therein is serious, but more serious [in its evil consequences] in the sight of God is to turn people away from the way of God and deny Him and [to initially violate the sanctity of] the Inviolable House of Worship, and to drive out its people therefrom, since oppression is more serious [in its evil consequences] than killing." They will not cease to fight against you until they turn you away from your faith if they can. And whosoever of you turns away from his [/her] faith and dies as a denier of the truth, it is these whose works will be futile in this life and in the life to come; and it is these who are the inmates of the fire and will abide therein. [2:216-217]

تُكْرَهُوا۟ شَيْـًٔا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۖ وَعَسَىٰٓ
أَن تُحِبُّوا۟ شَيْـًٔا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَّكُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ
يَعْلَمُ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢١٦﴾ يَسْـَٔلُونَكَ
عَنِ ٱلشَّهْرِ ٱلْحَرَامِ قِتَالٍ فِيهِ ۖ قُلْ قِتَالٌ
فِيهِ كَبِيرٌ ۚ وَصَدٌّ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَكُفْرٌۢ
بِهِۦ وَٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ وَإِخْرَاجُ أَهْلِهِۦ
مِنْهُ أَكْبَرُ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَٱلْفِتْنَةُ أَكْبَرُ مِنَ
ٱلْقَتْلِ ۗ وَلَا يَزَالُونَ يُقَٰتِلُونَكُمْ حَتَّىٰ
يَرُدُّوكُمْ عَن دِينِكُمْ إِنِ ٱسْتَطَٰعُوا۟ ۚ وَمَن
يَرْتَدِدْ مِنكُمْ عَن دِينِهِۦ فَيَمُتْ وَهُوَ كَافِرٌ
فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَٰلُهُمْ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا
وَٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ ۖ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ ۖ
هُمْ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٢١٧﴾

The above verses indicate clearly that fighting is not pleasant to the human nature, but it may be the last resort to defend the human beings against what is more harmful and hateful, and that is why God allows it in cases of self-defense to avoid more material or moral destruction that may be caused by the aggressors. Accordingly, fighting in the sacred month when peace should be observed by everybody is only allowed to stop a more evil violation committed against the sanctity of life and home and the freedom of faith. The sanctity of the human being has priority over the sanctity of a certain time or place however sacred these may be, and oppression must be responded to by self-defense since its continuous harms and terrors on the individual and social life exceed instant killing. Passivity and weakness would encourage the aggressors or oppressors. It is obvious then that fighting, however hateful and evil it can be, may be necessary and legitimate to change a situation which is more hateful and evil. However, legitimate fighting has to be legitimate also in practice, and its harm should be restricted to the aggressors and should not hurt the non-combatants. Through legitimate struggle, firmness and steadfastness, the believers can prevail in due time, and thus the aggressors would be the losers in this life and in the life to come!

And how could you refuse to fight in the way of God, and for the utterly helpless and oppressed men, women and children who are crying, "O our Lord! Lead us forth out of this land whose people are oppressors, and raise for us out of Your grace

وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُقَٰتِلُونَ فِى
سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱلْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ ٱلرِّجَالِ
وَٱلنِّسَآءِ وَٱلْوِلْدَٰنِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ
رَبَّنَآ أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْ هَٰذِهِ ٱلْقَرْيَةِ ٱلظَّالِمِ

أَهْلُهَا وَ ٱجْعَل لَّنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ وَلِيًّا
وَٱجْعَل لَّنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ نَصِيرًا ﴿٧٥﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا۟ يُقَٰتِلُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ
وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ يُقَٰتِلُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ
ٱلطَّٰغُوتِ ۖ فَقَٰتِلُوٓا۟ أَوْلِيَآءَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ ۚ
إِنَّ كَيْدَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ كَانَ ضَعِيفًا ﴿٧٦﴾ أَلَمْ
تَرَ إِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ قِيلَ لَهُمْ كُفُّوٓا۟ أَيْدِيَكُمْ
وَأَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتُوا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ فَلَمَّا
كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْقِتَالُ إِذَا فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ
يَخْشَوْنَ ٱلنَّاسَ كَخَشْيَةِ ٱللَّهِ أَوْ أَشَدَّ
خَشْيَةً ۚ وَقَالُوا۟ رَبَّنَا لِمَ كَتَبْتَ عَلَيْنَا
ٱلْقِتَالَ لَوْلَآ أَخَّرْتَنَآ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ
قَرِيبٍ ۗ قُلْ مَتَٰعُ ٱلدُّنْيَا قَلِيلٌ ۖ وَٱلْءَاخِرَةُ
خَيْرٌ لِّمَنِ ٱتَّقَىٰ ۖ وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا
﴿٧٧﴾ أَيْنَمَا تَكُونُوا۟ يُدْرِككُّمُ ٱلْمَوْتُ
وَلَوْ كُنتُمْ فِى بُرُوجٍ مُّشَيَّدَةٍ ۗ وَإِن تُصِبْهُمْ
حَسَنَةٌ يَقُولُوا۟ هَٰذِهِۦ مِنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ
وَإِن تُصِبْهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَقُولُوا۟ هَٰذِهِۦ مِنْ
عِندِكَ ۚ قُلْ كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ فَمَالِ
هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ ٱلْقَوْمِ لَا يَكَادُونَ يَفْقَهُونَ
حَدِيثًا ﴿٧٨﴾ مَّآ أَصَابَكَ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنَ
ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَمَآ أَصَابَكَ مِن سَيِّئَةٍ فَمِن
نَّفْسِكَ ۚ وَأَرْسَلْنَٰكَ لِلنَّاسِ رَسُولًا ۚ
وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ شَهِيدًا ﴿٧٩﴾ مَّن يُطِعِ
ٱلرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ ٱللَّهَ ۖ وَمَن تَوَلَّىٰ
فَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَٰكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا ﴿٨٠﴾
وَيَقُولُونَ طَاعَةٌ فَإِذَا بَرَزُوا۟ مِنْ عِندِكَ
بَيَّتَ طَآئِفَةٌ مِّنْهُمْ غَيْرَ ٱلَّذِى تَقُولُ ۖ
وَٱللَّهُ يَكْتُبُ مَا يُبَيِّتُونَ ۖ فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ

a supporter, and raise for us out of Your grace a defender. Those who have attained to faith fight in the way of God, and those who stubbornly deny the truth fight for the powers of evil and tyranny. Fight, then, against the allies of Satan; surely, Satan's guile is ever feeble. Have you seen those who have been told, "Curb your hands and keep up prayers and render the purifying [welfare] dues," then as soon as fighting [in God's cause] is ordained for them, there are some of them that fear people as they fear God or more, and they say, "Our Lord! Why have You ordained fighting for us? Would you have delayed us for a little while?" Say, "The enjoyment of this world's life is little, and the life to come is better for one who is conscious of God, and none of you shall be wronged by even a single date thread." Wherever you may be, death will overtake you, even though you may be in strongly built high towers. And when something good happens to them, they say, "This is from God;" but when something evil befalls them they say, "This is from you [O Muhammad]." Say, "All is from God [as He allows it to happen through His laws to test people]. How is it with these people? They do not almost understand what they are told." Whatever good happens to you is from God, and whatever befalls you is from yourself [as every human being is granted his/her free will by God]. And We have sent you [O Muhammad] as a Conveyor [of Our message] to all people, and none can bear witness [thereto] as God does. Whoever obeys the Conveyor of the message, he[/she] actually obeys God thereby.
And they say, "We do pay heed unto you [O Muhammad]" but when they go out leaving you, some of them devise in the dark of night what is different from that which they have been saying [with their mouths] while God records what they devise in the dark of night. Leave them, then, alone, and place your trust in God, and God suffices to be trusted as a

guardian. [4:75-81]

وَ تَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَ كَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ وَكِيلًا ﴿٨١﴾

The previously mentioned verses 2:190, 194, clearly indicate that Muslims should fight only against aggression by practicing the right of self-defense against those who initiate war unjustly against them in their own homelands. The above verses indicate that Muslims may also fight against oppression to defend their human rights of belief and expression. If the initiation of killing justifies instant self-defense for those who are targeted, then self-defense against oppression, which is worse than killing since it represents a continuous attack on the human being and violation of the human rights, has to also be allowed [2:191, 217]. Therefore, fighting against oppression is not less legitimate than fighting against aggression [2:193; 8:39], and the oppressed and utterly helpless men, women and children are entitled to self-defense and should be supported by those who have the power to support them. Whatever the risks that such supporters may meet in supporting these helpless human beings, their cause and morals would prevail over the powers of evil in the end.

The human nature is inclined to enjoy peace and safety, but sometimes it may be necessary for the society to go through a struggle for justice when human rights are violated, and so peace and safety in this case would mean humiliation and oppression. Although the Quran in principle strongly urges for peace, it never tolerates injustice or aggression, and thus it mobilizes people to defend the elderly and the weak and all who face oppression. The faith in God and the eternal life to come ought to support the struggle for justice, and thus the believers should always be aware that their dynamic faith cannot advocate offering prayers and charity while suffering oppression and injustice. Striving in the way of God, *jihad*, actually means "the defense of human rights and the support of the weak and oppressed," and it cannot in any way mean imposing the faith on others, since the Quranic principle is that "*There is no coercion in matters of faith*" [2:56]. Translating *jihad* to "holy war" with its connotations is confusing, and war for mere expansion of land and subjection of people is not legitimate according to the Islamic law, even if this was sometimes practiced in history.

How, then, could you be of two views about the hypocrites, seeing that God [Himself] has caused them to fall in what they have earned. Do you seek to guide [against their own will] those whom God has let go astray[as they have themselves chosen], and one whom God lets go astray[according to the person's own will], you can never find [for him/her] the way. They wish that you should deny the truth, as they deny it, and thus you would be all the same. Do not, therefore, take supporters from among them until they leave [the domain of evil] for the cause of God. And

فَمَا لَكُمْ فِى ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ
فِئَتَيْنِ وَ ٱللَّهُ أَرْكَسَهُم بِمَا كَسَبُوٓا۟ ۚ
أَتُرِيدُونَ أَن تَهْدُوا۟ مَنْ أَضَلَّ ٱللَّهُ ۖ
وَمَن يُضْلِلِ ٱللَّهُ فَلَن تَجِدَ لَهُۥ سَبِيلًا ﴿٨٨﴾
وَدُّوا۟ لَوْ تَكْفُرُونَ كَمَا كَفَرُوا۟ فَتَكُونُونَ
سَوَآءً ۖ فَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا۟ مِنْهُمْ أَوْلِيَآءَ حَتَّىٰ
يُهَاجِرُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا۟
فَخُذُوهُمْ وَ ٱقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ وَجَدتُّمُوهُمْ

if they should ever turn against you [openly], then [stand up to their hostility and] seize them and fight against them wherever you may find them; and [in any case] never take from among them a supporter or defendant. Except those who have a relation with people with whom you have a bond, or those who approach you with hearts that feel uncomfortable fighting against you or their own people, and had God willed, He could have turned them against you, and they would have fought you; thus, if they keep themselves aloof from you and do not fight you, but offer you peace, then God does not allow you in any way to fight against them. Others you will find who would wish to be safe from you as well as safe from their people; but whenever they come upon a chance for causing disturbance [in your front], they plunge in to it. If they do not keep aloof from you and do not offer you peace and hold back their hands, then [face firmly their hypocrisy and] seize them and fight against them whenever you may come across them; and against these We have clearly authorized you [to fight]. And no believer should kill another, unless it be by error. And if any believer kills another by error, then let him [/her] set free a believing human being from bondage, and pay an indemnity to the victim's family, unless they forgo it as an act of generosity and magnanimity. But if the victim himself [/herself] belongs to people who are at war with you and is a believer, let the killer set free a believing human being from bondage. Whereas if he [/she] belongs to a people with whom you have a bond, then an indemnity is to be paid to his [/her] family, in addition to setting free a believing human being from bondage. But one who finds not the means, let him [/her] fast two consecutive months: an atonement ordained by God; and God is All-knowing, All-wise. But whoever kills deliberately another believer, his [/her] requital shall be hell, therein to abide; and God will condemn

وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا مِنْهُمْ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا
(٨٩) إِلَّا الَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ إِلَىٰ قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ
وَبَيْنَهُم مِّيثَاقٌ أَوْ جَاءُوكُمْ حَصِرَتْ
صُدُورُهُمْ أَن يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ أَوْ يُقَاتِلُوا
قَوْمَهُمْ ۚ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَسَلَّطَهُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ
فَلَقَاتَلُوكُمْ ۚ فَإِنِ اعْتَزَلُوكُمْ فَلَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ
وَأَلْقَوْا إِلَيْكُمُ السَّلَمَ فَمَا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ
لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سَبِيلًا (٩٠) سَتَجِدُونَ
آخَرِينَ يُرِيدُونَ أَن يَأْمَنُوكُمْ وَيَأْمَنُوا
قَوْمَهُمْ كُلَّ مَا رُدُّوا إِلَى الْفِتْنَةِ أُرْكِسُوا
فِيهَا ۚ فَإِن لَّمْ يَعْتَزِلُوكُمْ وَيُلْقُوا إِلَيْكُمُ
السَّلَمَ وَيَكُفُّوا أَيْدِيَهُمْ فَخُذُوهُمْ
وَاقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ ثَقِفْتُمُوهُمْ ۚ وَأُولَٰئِكُمْ
جَعَلْنَا لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانًا مُّبِينًا (٩١)
وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ أَن يَقْتُلَ مُؤْمِنًا إِلَّا
خَطَأً ۚ وَمَن قَتَلَ مُؤْمِنًا خَطَأً فَتَحْرِيرُ
رَقَبَةٍ مُّؤْمِنَةٍ وَدِيَةٌ مُّسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ
إِلَّا أَن يَصَّدَّقُوا ۚ فَإِن كَانَ مِن قَوْمٍ عَدُوٍّ
لَّكُمْ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُّؤْمِنَةٍ
وَإِن كَانَ مِن قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُم مِّيثَاقٌ
فَدِيَةٌ مُّسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ وَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ
مُّؤْمِنَةٍ ۖ فَمَن لَّمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ شَهْرَيْنِ
مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ تَوْبَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ
عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا (٩٢) وَمَن يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا

him [/her] and will reject him [/her] and will ready for him [/her] an awesome suffering.

O you who have attained to faith! When you go forth [to struggle in the way of God, use your discernment and] say not to anyone who offers you the greeting of peace "You are not a believer," seeking the fleeting gains of this world life , for with God there are gains abundant. You, too, were once in the same situation, but God has been gracious to you. So use your discernment, surely, God is always well aware of all that you do.

Not equal are those believers who remain passively staying behind, without any [justifying] impairment or disability, and those who strive hard in the way of God with their possessions and their selves; God has upgraded those who strive hard with their possessions and their selves above those who stay passively behind; [however] for each God has promised the reward most fair, yet He has elevated those who strive hard above those who passively stay behind by a mighty reward; [many] degrees thereof and His forgiveness and His grace, and God is All-forgiving, Most Gracious.

Behold, those whom the angels gather in death, while they are wronging their own selves, will be asked [by the angels], "Under what circumstances were you [during your life on earth]?" They say, "We were weak and oppressed on earth". They [the angels] say, "Was not God's earth wide enough for you to move [from your place] to another place on it?" Such people's end is hell, and how evil a journey's end.

But excepted are the oppressed and weak - be they men, women or children - who cannot help it nor find a way of deliverance; and these may God pardon them; and God is All-pardoning, All-forgiving.

And whoever forsakes his [/her] home [and property] for the cause of God, shall find on

مُتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَآؤُهُۥ جَهَنَّمُ خَٰلِدًا فِيهَا
وَغَضِبَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَلَعَنَهُۥ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُۥ
عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٩٣﴾ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟
إِذَا ضَرَبْتُمْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ فَتَبَيَّنُوا۟ وَلَا
تَقُولُوا۟ لِمَنْ أَلْقَىٰٓ إِلَيْكُمُ ٱلسَّلَٰمَ لَسْتَ
مُؤْمِنًا تَبْتَغُونَ عَرَضَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا
فَعِندَ ٱللَّهِ مَغَانِمُ كَثِيرَةٌ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ كُنتُم مِّن
قَبْلُ فَمَنَّ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ فَتَبَيَّنُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ﴿٩٤﴾ لَّا
يَسْتَوِى ٱلْقَٰعِدُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ غَيْرُ
أُو۟لِى ٱلضَّرَرِ وَٱلْمُجَٰهِدُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ
ٱللَّهِ بِأَمْوَٰلِهِمْ وَأَنفُسِهِمْ ۚ فَضَّلَ ٱللَّهُ
ٱلْمُجَٰهِدِينَ بِأَمْوَٰلِهِمْ وَأَنفُسِهِمْ عَلَى
ٱلْقَٰعِدِينَ دَرَجَةً ۚ وَكُلًّا وَعَدَ ٱللَّهُ
ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ ۚ وَفَضَّلَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُجَٰهِدِينَ
عَلَى ٱلْقَٰعِدِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٩٥﴾
دَرَجَٰتٍ مِّنْهُ وَمَغْفِرَةً وَرَحْمَةً ۚ وَكَانَ
ٱللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿٩٦﴾ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ
تَوَفَّىٰهُمُ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ ظَالِمِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ
قَالُوا۟ فِيمَ كُنتُمْ ۖ قَالُوا۟ كُنَّا مُسْتَضْعَفِينَ
فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ قَالُوٓا۟ أَلَمْ تَكُنْ أَرْضُ ٱللَّهِ
وَٰسِعَةً فَتُهَاجِرُوا۟ فِيهَا ۚ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ
مَأْوَىٰهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۖ وَسَآءَتْ مَصِيرًا ﴿٩٧﴾
إِلَّا ٱلْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ ٱلرِّجَالِ وَٱلنِّسَآءِ
وَٱلْوِلْدَٰنِ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ حِيلَةً وَلَا
يَهْتَدُونَ سَبِيلًا ﴿٩٨﴾ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ عَسَى
ٱللَّهُ أَن يَعْفُوَ عَنْهُمْ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَفُوًّا
غَفُورًا ﴿٩٩﴾ ۞ وَمَن يُهَاجِرْ فِى سَبِيلِ
ٱللَّهِ يَجِدْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مُرَٰغَمًا كَثِيرًا

earth many refuges and plenty [of opportunities for good living], and whoever goes forth from his [/her] home migrating for the cause of God and the conveyor of His message, and then death overtakes him [/her], his [/her] reward is with God, and God is indeed All-forgiving, Most Gracious. [4:88-100]

وَسَعَةً ۚ وَمَن يَخْرُجْ مِنۢ بَيْتِهِۦ مُهَاجِرًا
إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ ثُمَّ يُدْرِكْهُ ٱلْمَوْتُ
فَقَدْ وَقَعَ أَجْرُهُۥ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ
غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿١٠٠﴾

The first four of the above verses teach the Muslims how to deal with the hypocrites who pretend to be believers while they are not, and these became obvious in Medina and among the bedouins near it [9:75, 101]after the Prophet became the leader of the first Islamic state, in addition to his essential religious position as the Conveyor of God's message. These people say they are believers while they are lying [63:1-5], and they *"come to believe and then stubbornly deny the truth, and again come to believe and again stubbornly deny the truth, and thereafter grow stubborn in their denial of the truth"* [4:137], *"who but wait to see what comes to you: if you prevail by God's will they say: 'Were we not on your side?', whereas if those who stubbornly deny the truth have some success, they say [to them]: 'Didn't we back you and hold off the believers from you?' But God will judge between you all on the Day of Judgement"* [4:141], *"wavering between this and that, but [true] neither to these nor those"* [4:143].

These mere self-serving opportunists were of enormous danger to the Muslim community, and its early state in Medina, since they were traitors from within, and the Quran mentions many signs of their disloyalty [e.g. 3:167-168; 4:138-142; 8:49; 9:42-67, 74-88; 107- 110; 33:12; 47:25-32]. Nevertheless, the Quran teaches the Muslims not to judge the intentions of others or to go by unclear evidence when conducting their relations with them. Of course, they have to be cautious and not rely on such cheaters' support or alliance, but as long as these hypocrites do not fight against the Muslims and offer peace to them instead, the Muslims must act peacefully towards them, however uncomfortable they may feel about their intentions and feelings.

After the migration, those who did not live in Medina were required to move there. This was necessary for those suspected to be hypocrites in order for them to prove their commitment to the faith they claimed to follow, and to be more easily observed in case of any contacts with the enemy. If concrete evidence of fighting the Muslims or causing harm to them could be gathered, then these self-serving deceivers could really be considered to be more harmful and evil than the open enemies [4:145] with whom they sometimes formed one front [e.g. 4:139], and they have to be fought together with them [also 9:73].

The next two verses deal with killing a true believer by mistake while fighting against those who pretend to be Muslims. Such a mistake is expected especially in a tribal society, where the whole tribe lives in a certain area, and its chiefs followed by the majority may fight against the Muslims, while there may be some believers or non-combatants among the tribe. The general Islamic principle in war is to fight only against the combatants and not to hurt anyone who does not fight [2:190], and here is a special warning in the case of fighting against the hypocrites, since there may be true believers among them. It is significant that the Quran, as a penalty for mistakingly killing a believer,

ordains the freeing of a slave in addition to a fair indemnity paid to the victim's family. When the believer is related to a family or clan that is at war with the Muslims, then paying indemnity to them would be meaningless, and the penalty in such a case would be only freeing a slave.

The known commentator on the Quran, al-Nasafi [d. 537 A.H./ 1142 C.E.], explains in his commentary on the verse 4:92 about the relation between the offense and the penalty, by saying that freeing a slave means actually bringing him/her to life after the allegorical destruction of the human personality caused by slavery, and this is the only possible way to make up for killing an innocent person, since it is impossible to bring the victim back to life. This can be supported by the Quranic expression for freeing a slave which is *"freeing or releasing the neck"* [2:177; 4:92; 5:89; 9:60; 58:3; 90:13], and it implies that slavery is a chain around the neck which strangles the essential human merit of free will. The neck symbolizes life in Arabic, especially in the Quranic glossary, and thus killing is symbolized by cutting or striking the neck, as other languages symbolize it by cutting the throat. In this way, the Quranic expression of freeing or releasing the neck means simply restoring life to a person who was, before, almost dead.

The commentator considered slavery to be a remnant of a social life which was dominated by the inhumanness of untruthfulness and unrighteousness, *kufr*, before Islam among Arabs, and thus it is an element of the moral death which existed therein. It was obvious then, at least for those who were knowledgeable about the Quran, that slavery was not accepted except as a temporary transitional situation that had to be terminated by the collective efforts of the people who were ordered to free slaves as reparation for offenses or as charity [e.g. 2:177; 90:13] and the authorities which had an obligation to allocate some of the state revenues for freeing the salves 9:60. During this transitional period, Muslims were ordered - according to the Prophet's tradition - to give the slaves food and clothes like they themselves had, and not to require from them something that might burden them, and if they did then they had to help them with it [reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah]. The Quran did not initiate slavery or determine it as one of its laws, neither did it even mention the words "slave" or "slavery", instead it stated that prisoners of war may be freed for a payment or gratuitously [47:4]. The Prophet taught that even the word "slave" should not be used, but one could only say "my boy" or "my girl" [reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Hanbal and Abu Dawud]. It is unfortunate that the Muslims did not become pioneers in the abolition of slavery, "the remnant of injustice and unrighteousness."

Since killing a believer in the confusion of a war against those who pretend to be Muslims is a grave offense if committed intentionally, and its penalty is costly even in cases of error, Muslims are instructed in their fighting to be cautious and to refrain from hurting anyone who offers them any sign of peace, including naturally the Muslim greeting "peace be upon you." If they have to refrain from fighting when the hypocrites keep aloof from them and not initiate fighting against them, and if they have to refrain from hurting the non- combatants in war, they should refrain from fighting one who offers them any understandable sign of peace, explicit or implicit. Muslims do not fight to intimidate and terrify, nor to collect spoils of war, but only to defend their human rights against aggressors.

Thus, not only are the reasons for war restricted, but also its allowed conduct. Although Islam never urges the believers to fight to conquer land and people and impose Islam on others who have not initiated fighting against Muslims, contrary to what is normally understood by the word "jihad," it strongly mobilizes those who suffer from injustice to defend their rights. Those who suffer from aggression and oppression and accept the violation of their human rights are *"doing injustice and causing harm to their own selves"* [4:97]. They should struggle and strive hard to defend their human dignity that God has bestowed on all human beings [17:70], or at least move to another place where their human rights can be secured. There is no excuse for any human being to accept oppression and humiliation, unless he/she is absolutely helpless and cannot find any way to escape from such oppression, and even those helpless men or women or children *"God may hopefully pardon them"*, as He will judge each case according to its own merits, and He is the All-knowing and the Absolute Just, as well as the All-forgiving and Most Gracious. Since God *"has carried them [the children of Adam] on land and sea"* [17:70], one who faces oppression in his/her homeland and is unable to defend his/her rights, can at least move to another place, and on earth there are many a place to move to, where means of life may be more abundant and human rights may be more secure. The acceptance of oppression is condemned in the Quran as much as committing oppression is, because the state of injustice has to be changed, and the aggressors and oppressors have to be challenged and confronted. This is the *jihad* as instructed by the Quran, not as it might be claimed or practiced by the expansional invaders. All those who are able to support such oppressed helpless people and find a way to get them out of their shackles are urged to do so as soon as they can [4:75-76], as it is a shame to leave such helpless human beings under tyranny without supporting them by all possible means.

And fight against them [those who initiated war against you] until there is no more oppression and the whole matter of faith is [left entirely free and pertains to] God alone, and if they desist, behold, God sees all that they do. But if they turn away, be sure that God is your Lord Supreme, the best to have supreme power and the best to support. And know that whatever spoils of war you acquire, one fifth of it belongs to God and the Conveyor of His message, and the near of kin, and the orphans and the needy, and the wayfarer, if you believe in God and what We sent down upon Our servant on the day when the true was distinguished from the false, the day when the two hosts met in battle. And God has the power over everything. [8:39-41]

وَقَٰتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّىٰ لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ
وَيَكُونَ ٱلدِّينُ كُلُّهُۥ لِلَّهِ ۚ فَإِنِ ٱنتَهَوْا۟ فَإِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٣٩﴾ وَإِن
تَوَلَّوْا۟ فَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَوْلَىٰكُمْ ۚ نِعْمَ
ٱلْمَوْلَىٰ وَنِعْمَ ٱلنَّصِيرُ ﴿٤٠﴾
وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّمَا غَنِمْتُم مِّن شَىْءٍ فَأَنَّ لِلَّهِ
خُمُسَهُۥ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ
وَٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰ وَٱلْمَسَٰكِينِ وَٱبْنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ
إِن كُنتُمْ ءَامَنتُم بِٱللَّهِ وَمَآ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَىٰ
عَبْدِنَا يَوْمَ ٱلْفُرْقَانِ يَوْمَ ٱلْتَقَى
ٱلْجَمْعَانِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٤١﴾

What God has turned over to the Conveyor of His Message from the people of the cities, belongs to God and the Conveyor of His Message, and the near of kin [of the deceased fighters] and the orphans, and the needy and the wayfarer; in order that it may not be [merely a benefit limited to a particular group] going round and round among only those of you who [may fight and] thus would become wealthy. Hence, follow whatever the Conveyor of the Message gives you [thereof] and refrain from whatever he forbids you, and be conscious of God; surely, God is strict in retribution. [59:7]

مَّآ أَفَآءَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ
رَسُولِهِۦ مِنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْقُرَىٰ فَلِلَّهِ وَ لِلرَّسُولِ
وَ لِذِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ وَ ٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰ وَ ٱلْمَسَٰكِينِ
وَ ٱبْنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ كَىْ لَا يَكُونَ دُولَةًۢ بَيْنَ
ٱلْأَغْنِيَآءِ مِنكُمْ ۚ وَ مَآ ءَاتَىٰكُمُ ٱلرَّسُولُ
فَخُذُوهُ وَ مَا نَهَىٰكُمْ عَنْهُ فَٱنتَهُوا۟ ۖ
وَ ٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ شَدِيدُ ٱلْعِقَابِ
۝٧

The Muslims fight to stop oppression and secure the freedom of belief for all people so that everyone's faith is between him/her and God alone [see previously 2:193-194 and the commentary], but they should by no means fight to impose their own faith. This is repeatedly stressed by the above verse 8:39, which assures here that "the whole" matter of faith has to be left for everyone to decide on his/her own between him/herself and with God alone. If the oppressors insist on blocking the way between the human being and God and imposing what to believe or what to reject on the people, then a struggle for the human freedom of belief has to be undergone, but as soon as the oppression is halted and the freedom of belief is secured, Muslims have to stop fighting whatever the future plans of the other party may be, as God watches all that they may do.

If it happens that Muslims gain some movable belongings of the enemy in the war, the Quran is keen to give a share of it (one fifth) to the state for the benefit of the needy in the society, to emphasize the fact that the army is fighting for a cause shared by the Muslim people and it is an inseparable part of the people, and is not fighting to acquire gains and prestige for itself only. What belongs to God often refers in the Islamic legal terms to what belongs to the society in its totality, not to any particular individual(s). Those who are eligible to receive a share in this one fifth, are, in addition to the family and near relatives of the fighters who may be killed or seriously injured and disabled in the battle, the poor, and those who are away from their homeland and have not sufficient means of livelihood in their new residence. As for the remaining four fifths of what may be gained from the enemy, the dominant view among classical jurists is that this remainder has to be distributed among the fighters, although al-Mawardi reported in *al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyya* that Malik authorized the imam (state) to deal with the four fifths according to the public interest, relying on the verse 8:1 which refers the whole matter of war gains to God and the Conveyor of His Message, and since the Prophet is succeeded in his political capacity by the leadership of the Islamic state.

One has to keep in mind the historical fact that the fighters in the time of the Prophet did not constitute a permanent professional army, but were individuals who had their ways of earning their living in ordinary times, and were gathered in times of war to

fight, each usually bringing his own weapon and horse (or camel) with him and it was fair then to give them what was gained from the enemy in the battle. After the Islamic state organized permanent professional armies, we do not hear much about distributing four fifths of the gains of war among the soldiers, and the Quran has stated nothing that might support such a practice. Some contemporary jurists - such as the prominent scholar Mustafa al-Zarqa - are of the view that the four fifths should be utilized according to the discretion of the state authorities in military or civil purposes.

O you who have attained to faith! Whenever you meet a [belligerent] force, stand firm, and keep God in your mind, so that you may attain success. And obey God and the Conveyor of His Message: and do not let yourselves fall into dispute with one another, lest you lose heart and your power departs; and be patient and persevering [in facing the challenge and pressures] for God is with those who patiently persevere. And be not like those who came out [to confront you] from their homes swaggering boastfully and showing off to people, trying to turn others away from the way of God; but God encompasses all that they do. [8:45-47]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِذَا
لَقِيتُمْ فِئَةً فَٱثْبُتُواْ وَٱذْكُرُواْ ٱللَّهَ كَثِيرًا
لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾ وَأَطِيعُواْ ٱللَّهَ
وَرَسُولَهُۥ وَلَا تَنَٰزَعُواْ فَتَفْشَلُواْ وَتَذْهَبَ
رِيحُكُمْ ۖ وَٱصْبِرُوٓاْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَعَ
ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾ وَلَا تَكُونُواْ كَٱلَّذِينَ
خَرَجُواْ مِن دِيَٰرِهِم بَطَرًا وَرِئَآءَ
ٱلنَّاسِ وَيَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ
وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطٌ ﴿٤٧﴾

Firmness, God-consciousness, obedience of God and the Conveyor of His Message and the leadership, patience, perseverance, and avoidance of arrogance and conflict all represent the moral equipment for those who struggle for the cause of God and to defend the oppressed men, women and children [4:75], and secure the human dignity. Such believers are reminded to avoid the moral failures of their enemies, because such a moral distinction is the only justification for their struggle and sacrifices.

And if you have any reason to fear treachery from any people [with whom you have previously made a bond, declare it dissolved and] confront them openly and fairly, surely, God loves not the treacherous. [8:58]

وَإِمَّا تَخَافَنَّ مِن
قَوْمٍ خِيَانَةً فَٱنۢبِذْ إِلَيْهِمْ عَلَىٰ سَوَآءٍ ۚ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلْخَآئِنِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾

Promises should be kept and treaties should be honored, as long as the other party acts in the same way. Muslims feel that they are watched by God and that they will be judged in the eternal life to come for their honest observance of their commitments, and so this represents a safeguard that goes beyond what any worldly arrangement can achieve. However, it is meaningless to observe a treaty that the other party violates, especially when you have strong justification for fearing a planned treachery. When an initial violation of

a treaty justifies its cancellation and meeting the planned offense with necessary force, such counter-actions ought to be taken openly and in an equitable manner, and Muslims should never meet treachery with treachery, for two wrongs do not make a right. Justice and morality should always be observed by Muslims even in facing hostilities and treacheries, otherwise their ultimate struggle would betray its cause and purpose through immoral flaws.

وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُم مَّا
ٱسْتَطَعْتُم مِّن قُوَّةٍ وَمِن رِّبَاطِ ٱلْخَيْلِ
تُرْهِبُونَ بِهِۦ عَدُوَّ ٱللَّهِ وَعَدُوَّكُمْ
وَءَاخَرِينَ مِن دُونِهِمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ
يَعْلَمُهُمْ ۚ وَمَا تُنفِقُوا مِن شَىْءٍ فِى
سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ يُوَفَّ إِلَيْكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ لَا
تُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾ ۞ وَإِن جَنَحُوا لِلسَّلْمِ
فَٱجْنَحْ لَهَا وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ
ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿٦١﴾ وَإِن يُرِيدُوٓا أَن
يَخْدَعُوكَ فَإِنَّ حَسْبَكَ ٱللَّهُ ۚ هُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ
أَيَّدَكَ بِنَصْرِهِۦ وَبِٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٦٢﴾
وَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ ۚ لَوْ أَنفَقْتَ مَا فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مَّآ أَلَّفْتَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ
وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ أَلَّفَ بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ
﴿٦٣﴾

To counter [those who may commit aggression any time against you] make ready whatever force and horses assigned for war that you can, so that you may deter thereby the enemies of God and of you and others besides, those of whom you may not be aware, but of whom God is well aware. And whatever you may spend [of human and material resources] in the way of God shall be repaid in full unto you, and you shall not be wronged. And if they incline to peace, incline to it as well, and place your trust in God; He alone is the All-hearing, the All-knowing. Should they want but to deceive you [by a false show of peace], be sure that God is sufficient [support] for you: it is He who has strengthened you with His support and through [the company of] the believers.He brought the hearts of the believers together, [for] if you had spent all that is on earth you could not have brought their hearts together [by yourself], and God has brought them together. Surely, He is Exalted in Might, Wise. [8:60-63]

Peaceful people may be mistaken by some to be weak, and in such a case their peaceful attitude may be exploited and may consequently face aggression from others. Peace has to be protected by all possible forces to deter those who may think of attacking the Muslims in the present or in the future. However, any inclination to peace should be met in the same way, and Muslims should rely on God even if they may have unproved doubts about such an inclination, since any judgement about others should be based only on outward evidence. Whatever the doubted treachery may be, the Muslims should have enough moral, material and human resources to meet it whenever it concretely emerges at any time, so there is no need to reject any reasonable offer of peace. They have the faith in God and His support and rewards, the human resources of the believers with their high moral, morality and unity, and they should, in addition, have all the possible material force in order always to be ready for deterrence of those who may become hostile to them.

Said she [the Queen of Sheba to her court], "Verily, whenever kings enter a city, they cause [a lot of] damage to it, and they humiliate those with the highest dignity among its people; and this is what they always do." [27:34]

قَالَتْ إِنَّ ٱلْمُلُوكَ إِذَا
دَخَلُوا۟ قَرْيَةً أَفْسَدُوهَا وَجَعَلُوٓا۟ أَعِزَّةَ
أَهْلِهَآ أَذِلَّةً ۖ وَكَذَٰلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

When Sulayman [Solomon, the son of David] to whom the Quran refers as both a Prophet and a King found out about the Queen of Saba' [Sheba] and her people who used to worship the sun instead of the One God, he sent a letter to her in the name of God the Most Merciful and Mercy-giving, calling her and her people to worship God alone and submit themselves to His guidance. As the wise Queen discussed the matter with those who were close to her, they mentioned that they had enough power to confront Sulayman but they were ready to carry out whatever the Queen might decide. The thoughtful leader reminded her counsels that using force might end in being defeated, and a conqueror usually causes enormous damage to the land that is conquered, and humiliates its venerable people. Her statement which is reported by the Quran without any reservation, implies a condemnation of expansionist policies that are connected always with material and moral damage, and supports the Quranic principle of limiting the legitimate use of force to self-defense [e.g. 2:190, 193-194; 4:75; 22:39-40]. Aside from this point, it is significant that the Quran presents the Queen of Sheba as a wise and thoughtful leader, and does not implicitly or explicitly criticize the leadership of a woman over a country .

Then, when you meet those who are bent on stubbornly denying the truth [and who have initiated war against you], strike them sharply [to death], and when you fully overcome them, tighten their bonds; but thereafter set them free by an act of grace or by accepting something in return, and so the burdens of war may come to an end. And [know that] had God so willed, He could certainly have inflicted defeat on them [directly]; but [He wills you to struggle] so as to test you [all] by one another. And those who are killed for the cause of God, He will never let their deeds to waste; He will guide them and will set their hearts at rest, and will admit them to the garden which He has made known to them. O You who have attained to faith! If you support [the cause of] God, He will support you, and will make steady and firm your steps. [47:4-7]

فَإِذَا لَقِيتُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ فَضَرْبَ ٱلرِّقَابِ
حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَآ أَثْخَنتُمُوهُمْ فَشُدُّوا۟ ٱلْوَثَاقَ
فَإِمَّا مَنًّۢا بَعْدُ وَإِمَّا فِدَآءً حَتَّىٰ تَضَعَ
ٱلْحَرْبُ أَوْزَارَهَا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ۖ وَلَوْ
يَشَآءُ ٱللَّهُ لَٱنتَصَرَ مِنْهُمْ وَلَٰكِن لِّيَبْلُوَا۟
بَعْضَكُم بِبَعْضٍ ۗ وَٱلَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا۟ فِى
سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ فَلَن يُضِلَّ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ ﴿٤﴾
سَيَهْدِيهِمْ وَيُصْلِحُ بَالَهُمْ ﴿٥﴾ وَيُدْخِلُهُمُ
ٱلْجَنَّةَ عَرَّفَهَا لَهُمْ ﴿٦﴾ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِن تَنصُرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ يَنصُرْكُمْ
وَيُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ ﴿٧﴾

Under the circumstances of the Prophet and early Muslims, a decisive victory had to destroy the enemy's force physically in the battlefield, as warriors did not easily accept the humiliation of surrender on the one hand, and it was also not easy to keep prisoners of war and secure comfortable living conditions for them as commanded by the Quranic teachings on the other hand [e.g. 76:8]. Thus Muslims have been urged to reach a decisive victory before burdening themselves by capturing some of the enemy's forces [and the verses [8:7, 57, 67] may be understood in this light]. However, it is significant in the above verses that Shari'a requires the prisoners of war to be set free in the end, either unilaterally by Muslims through acts of grace, or bilaterally with the opposite side for something in return in the form of a ransom or an arrangement for mutual exchange and repatriation of prisoners of war. Imposing slavery on the prisoners of war was not mentioned in any way in the above verses as a permanent Islamic law of war.

This clearly indicates that Shari'a considers the state of a prisoner of war to be temporary both by the nature and by law, and it has to be terminated as soon as possible either graciously or for something fair in return, so as to restore the prisoners' natural human freedom. As has been previously mentioned, Islam never initiated or legislated the state of slavery, but it accepted it temporarily as the status quo, while its general principle and transitional rules paved the way to the termination of such an exceptional contradiction to the human dignity and equality repeatedly stressed by the Quran and the Sunna. Liberating the existing slaves was encouraged by all means, and the public treasury was obliged to push such a massive liberation forward [e.g. 2:177; 9:60]. The remaining slaves during the transitional period have to share with their masters the same food and clothing, and should not be required to do any work which is more than any of them is well able to bear, and if this happens then the master has to work with his/her slave side by side to get the work done - as the Prophet taught [reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah]. Even the word "slave" should not be used by the master who has been required to use instead "my boy" or "my girl" [reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Hanbal, Abu Dawud]. In this way, slavery would be practically a burden not a privilege, as it would not be economically profitable to the masters and thus it should in time come to an end.

Unfortunately, these Islamic rules and guidance were ignored, and some Muslims, tempted by the enormous profits of the slave trade, were involved in it and in importing slaves from other countries in open violation of the rules of Shari'a which do not, by any means, allow the seizure, let alone the enslaving, of a person who has never participated in fighting the Muslims. The worldly tendency towards offensive war and monarchical expansion was connected with another towards self-indulgence in luxuries whatever the deviation from Shari'a might be. Accordingly, the status quo of monarchical - or imperial - expansion and inhuman and inhumane slavery was prolonged until modern times. The new discovered world "the Americas" were colonized by force and their aborigines were mercilessly wiped out by advanced weapons and immoral tricks. Then huge numbers of slaves were hunted in Africa and brought in the chains of slavery to exploit by their sweat and blood the economic potentials of the new world. It was only the steam power, followed by other new forms of energy which were discovered, that caused slavery to become uneconomical and so it was terminated. Unfortunately, the Muslim rulers and jurists,

instead of grasping the essence of their message and taking the initiative to gradually abolish slavery as early as possible, maintained the status quo, until they followed the Modern West in abolishing it.

Those who have attained to faith say "Would that a revelation [allowing us to defend ourselves and our faith] be sent down [for us]?" But now that a revelation has clearly come, and fighting is mentioned therein, you will see those ill-hearted looking at you [O Muhammad] as one who swoons at death; but yet, far better for them would be obedience [to God's call] and a good say, and whenever a decision is made, it would be for their own good to remain true to God. Then, if you [who are reluctant to fight] turn away [from God's commandment], are you contemplating the spreading of corruption on earth and the breaking of your ties of kinship [as you return to the previous life of evil and injustice, or as you allow it to prevail by your reluctance to defend righteousness and justice]. [47:20-22]

وَيَقُولُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَوْلَا نُزِّلَتْ سُورَةٌ ۚ
فَإِذَآ أُنزِلَتْ سُورَةٌ مُّحْكَمَةٌ وَذُكِرَ فِيهَا
ٱلْقِتَالُ ۙ رَأَيْتَ ٱلَّذِينَ فِى قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ
يَنظُرُونَ إِلَيْكَ نَظَرَ ٱلْمَغْشِىِّ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ
ٱلْمَوْتِ ۖ فَأَوْلَىٰ لَهُمْ ﴿٢٠﴾ طَاعَةٌ
وَقَوْلٌ مَّعْرُوفٌ ۚ فَإِذَا عَزَمَ ٱلْأَمْرُ فَلَوْ
صَدَقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ ﴿٢١﴾ فَهَلْ
عَسَيْتُمْ إِن تَوَلَّيْتُمْ أَن تُفْسِدُوا۟ فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ وَتُقَطِّعُوٓا۟ أَرْحَامَكُمْ ﴿٢٢﴾

Many of the early Muslims were not enthusiastic to go fighting for material or spiritual motives, as some modern historians, mostly Western, may think. The Quran reports that fighting - when it became inevitable for self-defense - was not liked by many Muslims and several arguments were presented by the Quran to convince those with good intentions of its necessity, while other verses exposed those with bad intentions [e.g. for the first 2:193, 216-217; 3:138-143, 154-158; 4:74-80, 95-99; 8:5-8, 15-16, 45-46, 65-66; 9:38-41, 120-121; for the second 3:167-168; 4:81; 8:49; 9:42-52, 81-89, 93-96; 47:20-31; 48:11-17]. The above verses address such a reluctance to fight and show its chaotic consequences of overwhelming corruption, disorder and factional fighting even within the same clan, as a short-sighted egoistic reaction to the discipline and unity developed by the spiritual, moral and organizational teachings of Islam and guarded by the central leadership of the Prophet and those whom he charged with certain public responsibilities. The periods that follow the failure of reforms may bring out worse circumstances than what dominated before, and those who feel reluctant to defend the reform against a counter-movement are responsible morally and practically for the chaotic consequences of any subsequent failure. However, if the Quran stresses the needed decisiveness about exercising self-defense in general when it becomes inevitable, it also urges an open honest and decent exchange of thoughts to work out the particularities of a certain case. As soon as a decision is reached, all believers have to work together whole-heartedly to carry it into effect,

whatever the differences may be. Discipline and unity should not mean by any way dictatorship, just as participation in the decision-making process should not mean chaos.

As those who are bent to deny stubbornly the truth harbored in their hearts an impetuosity - the impetuosity developed [by their way of life that was an outcome] of ignorance [before Islam], God sent down His [gift of] inner peace upon the Conveyor of His message and the believers, and bound them to what God consciousness really means, and they were most worthy of it since it became their essential character. And God has full knowledge of all things. [48:26]

إِذْ جَعَلَ ٱلَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا۟ فِى قُلُوبِهِمُ ٱلْحَمِيَّةَ حَمِيَّةَ
ٱلْجَٰهِلِيَّةِ فَأَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُۥ عَلَىٰ
رَسُولِهِۦ وَعَلَى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَأَلْزَمَهُمْ
كَلِمَةَ ٱلتَّقْوَىٰ وَكَانُوٓا۟ أَحَقَّ بِهَا
وَأَهْلَهَا ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمًا
(٢٦)

Here is a comparison between the commitment and balanced behavior of the believers which is guided and guarded by God consciousness, and the impetuosity and heedlessness of those who are egocentric and follow only their individual or folk whims. This difference in the moral perspective and behavior is a result of the difference in the beliefs. The believer in God follows the guidance of His wisdom and justice, which are beyond any flaw or bias for or against anyone, while the behavior of one who follows his/her own whims is centered around his/her desires and the desires of those who are close to him/her, and is against anyone who he/she, or those who are close to him/her, dislike. Such a person is moody and may be moved to the extreme by fortunes and misfortunes, gladness and sadness, and love and hatred. They may turn from one extreme to another in one moment without considering any matter seriously. [compare as examples 3:153; 4:135; 5:2,8; on the one hand, and 3:154; 5:49, 50, 77; 18:28; 23:71; 28:50; 47:14, 16 on the other].

But excepted are people from among those who associate others with God, with whom you have made a bond and who thereafter have never failed to fulfill any of their obligations towards you, and neither have [they] supported anyone against you: with these observe your bond with them until the end of term agreed upon. Verily, God loves those who are conscious of Him. [9:4]

إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ عَٰهَدتُّم مِّنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ثُمَّ
لَمْ يَنقُصُوكُمْ شَيْـًٔا وَلَمْ يُظَٰهِرُوا۟ عَلَيْكُمْ
أَحَدًا فَأَتِمُّوٓا۟ إِلَيْهِمْ عَهْدَهُمْ إِلَىٰ مُدَّتِهِمْ ۚ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ (٤)

The Muslim's peaceful attitude and moral values ought to prevent them from making wide generalizations when they are forced to meet hostilities or cancel treaties with treacherous parties. Hostilities should be reduced to the minimum, and a necessary differentiation has to be made for the different cases. Although bonds were cancelled with the Arab tribes that associated others with God and *"have not repeatedly observed any tie nor obligation in relation to a believer - and they are aggressors"* [9:10], an exception was made for those who had never failed to fulfill their obligations and had never supported

an enemy of the Muslims against the Muslims, and consequently treaties with them should be observed. The Hudaybiya treaty between the Prophet and Quraysh had to be observed by the Muslims as long as it was observed by the other party *"and these so long as they are straight with you, be straight with them"* [9:7]. Muslims have to do their best to limit hostilities if they develop and become beyond any peaceful handling, not to extend and widen the range of war sufferings.

Say: "If it be that your fathers and your children and your brothers, and your spouses and your clan and the wealth that you have gained and the commerce which you fear to decline and the dwellings in which you take pleasure are dearer to you than God and the Conveyor of His Message, and the struggle in His way, then wait until God brings what He wills; and [know that] God does not grace such an iniquitous people with [or force them against their will to follow] His guidance." [9:24]

قُلْ إِن كَانَ ءَابَآؤُكُمْ وَ أَبْنَآؤُكُمْ
وَ إِخْوَٰنُكُمْ وَ أَزْوَٰجُكُمْ وَ عَشِيرَتُكُمْ
وَ أَمْوَٰلٌ ٱقْتَرَفْتُمُوهَا وَ تِجَٰرَةٌ تَخْشَوْنَ
كَسَادَهَا وَ مَسَٰكِنُ تَرْضَوْنَهَآ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكُم
مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَ رَسُولِهِۦ وَ جِهَادٍ فِى سَبِيلِهِۦ
فَتَرَبَّصُوا۟ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِىَ ٱللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِۦ
وَ ٱللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلْفَٰسِقِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

Although Islam cares about the maintenance and the strengthening of the relations of family and neighborhood, as well as about earning money by legitimate means, it does not want such natural relations to tempt the believer to be their prisoner, and refrain from standing for God's moral guidance and justice and struggling for such a cause which ought to prevail over egoistic pleasures. A believer should be ready to differ with his/her family and to liberate him/herself from loyalty to his/her people or land or interests in order to defend justice and to resist injustice, wherever this or that may exist. It is through those who are committed to the universal justice and morality, that humanity can enjoy a better world.

CHAPTER NINE

SUPPLICATIONS
"DU'A' "

Supplication represents the closest point in the relation between the human being and God. During supplication the human being is recognizing and admitting his/her limitations, weakness and need for help and support from his [/her] Lord and Creator whose Omnipotence and Grace are assured and stressed in such a sincere human appeal to Him. Even in the cases when the human being is thanking God for His gifts and favors, his/her heart is filled with gratitude and appreciation of God's grace, and such feelings press the tongue to thank and praise. Thus, true supplication is a manifestation of the genuine faith in the Almighty and Gracious Lord and His closeness to the human being: *"And if my servants ask you about Me, I am indeed close [to them]; I respond to the prayer of one who calls on Me when he [/she] calls"* [2:186], *"Verily, it is We who have created the human being, and We know what his [/her] innermost self whispers within him [/her], and We are closer to him [/her] than his [/her] jugular vein"* [50:16].

It is due to this feeling of a person's closeness to God and his/her need for His support and gratefulness for His bounty, that the Prophet's tradition states that "supplication is [genuine] worship" or "the essence of worship" [reported by al-Bukhari in *al-Adab*, Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi, al-Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, Ibn Hibban, Ibn Abi Shayba, Ibn Hanbal, al-Hakim in *al-Mustadrak*]. Al-Bukhari reported another of the Prophet's traditions which states that God answers a human being's supplication for God's forgiveness by saying to the angels, "Does my servant know [surely] that he [/she] has a Lord who forgives the wrong doing and accepts the repentance? I forgive him [/her]" [also reported by Muslim and Ibn Hanbal]. Such consciousness of God and awareness of His closeness and grace have their cognitive and moral effects one's whole life, and they represent a general accomplishment of supplication which is essential, even if an appeal about a particular casual matter is not fulfilled. A Prophet's tradition reported by Ibn Hanbal and al-Tirmidhi states that a sincere supplication that does not include any injustice for others may be

responded to by God in one of three ways: a quick fulfillment of what one appeals for in particular, a fulfillment through another quick form of God's grace in this world's life, or a reward in the eternal life to come.

Besides the above points, a supplication embodies something good for which the supplicator appeals to God, or something bad the supplicator appeals to God to help him[/her] avoid. Many supplications are presented in the Quran and the Prophet's traditions to crystallize essential virtues that the human being must adopt in his/her behavior and relations with others, alongside with serious failures that the human being has to avoid. In this way, the supplications in the Quran and Sunna represent concise moral highlights that teach and penetrate the human heart and mind through both day and night and during different occasions. This explains why God, just as He tells us that He is near and that He responds to one who calls unto Him, He also calls upon us to respond to His guidance as He responds to our supplications: *"let them [O Muhammad] respond to Me, and believe in Me so they might follow the right way"* [2:186]. It would be inconsistent and contradictory if a supplicator appeals to God to help him/her obtain total happiness and avoid all sufferings, while at the same time this supplicator has no serious intention to help himself/herself to conduct his/her behavior to reach those objectives; *"Verily, God does not cause the condition of people to change unless they themselves change what is in their own inner selves"* [13:11]. If one appeals to God to help him/her get rid of poverty, overwhelming debts, sickness, incompetence, oppression, depression etc, and to help himself/herself maintain his/her physical, mental, and spiritual health and prosperity, as the Prophet's traditions teach [e.g. a tradition reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, al-Tirmidhi, al-Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, al-Hakim, al-Bukhari] such a supplicator must exert all of his/her possible human efforts to facilitate the necessary means to meet these objectives. A saying attributed to Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab states wisely: "One should never sit passively without working to earn his[/her] living, and pray to God to grant him[/her] of His sustenance, while he[/she] well knows that the sky never drops gold or silver!" [quoted by Rafiq al-`Azm in *Ash-har Mashahir al-Islam*, 2nd edition, Cairo, 1973, from *al-`Iqd al-Farid* by Ibn `Abd Rabbih].

To conclude these "concepts of the Quran", the following Quranic supplications have been chosen to present how the Muslim is taught to appeal for God's guidance and support in the various avenues of this life: the individual's physical and spiritual wholeness, the family accord and mutual care within it, the social and universal justice, peace and cooperation and competition in good deeds etc. To maintain the beautiful flow of these Quranic supplications, and as their meanings are clear, I have interpolations through the translation only when they are necessary to make the English text understandable. Sometimes these supplications are reported to have been uttered by prophets, angels and true believers on certain occasions, while sometimes they are presented by the Quran as a reflection during certain circumstances. They are concise, distinct, and to the point and are beautifully presented to be easily remembered and repeated. They may represent together, with similar Quranic texts and with supplications taught by the Prophet, a vocalization of the Islamic moral values that every Muslim has to engrave in his/her mind and heart in order to conduct his/her whole life and human relations in their light. May God's grace encompass all of humanity, and may His guidance embrace them all.

And among them are those who say, "O Our Lord! Give us good in this world and good in the life to come, and keep us safe from the suffering through the fire!" [2:201]

وَ مِنهُم مَّن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَآ ءَاتِنَا فِى
ٱلدُّنيَا حَسَنَةً وَ فِى ٱلأَخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً
وَقِنَا عَذَابَ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿٢٠١﴾

God does not burden any human being with more than he [/she] is well able to bear; [a person] is credited with whatever he [/she] has earned, while he [/she] is debited with whatever he [/she] has brought upon him [/her] self.
"Our Lord! Take us not to task if we forget or make a mistake!
"Our Lord! Lay not us upon us a burden such as You did lay upon those before us!
"Our Lord! Do not require from us to bear burdens more than we can bear!
"Our Lord! Pardon us, and forgive us, and bestow Your mercy upon us; you are our Protector, so grant us Your support against those who stubbornly reject the truth." [2:286]

لَا يُكَلِّفُ ٱللَّهُ نَفسًا إِلَّا وُسعَهَا ۚ لَهَا مَا
كَسَبَتْ وَ عَلَيهَا مَا ٱكتَسَبَتْ ۗ رَبَّنَا لَا
تُؤَاخِذنَآ إِن نَّسِينَآ أَوْ أَخطَأنَا ۚ رَبَّنَا
وَ لَا تَحمِلْ عَلَينَآ إِصرًا كَمَا حَمَلتَهُۥ
عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبلِنَا ۚ رَبَّنَا وَ لَا تُحَمِّلنَا
مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِۦ ۖ وَ ٱعفُ عَنَّا
وَ ٱغفِرْ لَنَا وَ ٱرحَمنَآ ۚ أَنتَ مَولَىٰنَا
فَٱنصُرنَا عَلَى ٱلقَومِ ٱلكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٢٨٦﴾

"Our Lord! Let not our hearts deviate from the truth after You have guided us; and grant us the gift of Your mercy and grace: surely, You are the gracious grantor of bounties. Our Lord! You will gather the entire humanity on a day about which there is no doubt; surely, God never fails to fulfill His promise." [3:8-9]

رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغ قُلُوبَنَا
بَعدَ إِذ هَدَيتَنَا وَ هَب لَنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ
رَحمَةً ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلوَهَّابُ ﴿٨﴾ رَبَّنَآ
إِنَّكَ جَامِعُ ٱلنَّاسِ لِيَومٍ لَّا رَيبَ فِيهِ ۚ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُخلِفُ ٱلمِيعَادَ ﴿٩﴾

All that they said was: "O our Lord! Forgive us our wrongdoing, and what we do exceeding the right limits, and make firm our steps, and support us against those who stubbornly reject the truth. [3:147]

وَ مَا كَانَ قَولَهُم إِلَّآ أَن قَالُوا۟
رَبَّنَا ٱغفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَ إِسرَافَنَا فِىٓ
أَمرِنَا وَ ثَبِّتْ أَقدَامَنَا وَ ٱنصُرنَا عَلَى
ٱلقَومِ ٱلكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿١٤٧﴾

Surely, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, there are indeed

إِنَّ فِى خَلقِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلأَرضِ

signs[and messages] for people who really have minds. Those who remember and invoke God when they stand and when they sit and when they lie down on their sides, reflecting upon the creation of the heavens and the earth, [and saying,] "O our Lord! You have not created this in vain [without meaning or purpose]. Glory be to You! Keep us safe, then, from suffering through the fire.

"O our Lord! Whomsoever you shall commit to the fire, truly You have brought him [/her] to disgrace, and evil-doers shall have no supporters.

"O our Lord! We have heard a voice calling [us] unto faith: 'Believe in your Lord', and so we have believed. O our Lord! Forgive us, then, our wrong-doing, and acquit us of our bad deeds, and let us be when we die with the virtuous.

"O our Lord! Grant us what you have promised us through the conveyors of Your messages, and disgrace us not on the Day of Resurrection. Surely, you never fail to fulfill your promise." [3:190-194]

وَ ٱخۡتِلَٰفِ ٱلَّيۡلِ وَ ٱلنَّهَارِ لَأٓيَٰتٖ لِّأُوْلِي
ٱلۡأَلۡبَٰبِ ﴿١٩٠﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يَذۡكُرُونَ ٱللَّهَ
قِيَٰمٗا وَ قُعُودٗا وَ عَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمۡ
وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلۡقِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَ ٱلۡأَرۡضِ
رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقۡتَ هَٰذَا بَٰطِلٗا سُبۡحَٰنَكَ فَقِنَا
عَذَابَ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿١٩١﴾ رَبَّنَآ إِنَّكَ مَن تُدۡخِلِ
ٱلنَّارَ فَقَدۡ أَخۡزَيۡتَهُۥۖ وَ مَا لِلظَّٰلِمِينَ
مِنۡ أَنصَارٖ ﴿١٩٢﴾ رَّبَّنَآ إِنَّنَا سَمِعۡنَا
مُنَادِيٗا يُنَادِي لِلۡإِيمَٰنِ أَنۡ ءَامِنُواْ بِرَبِّكُمۡ
فَـَٔامَنَّاۚ رَبَّنَا فَٱغۡفِرۡ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَ كَفِّرۡ
عَنَّا سَيِّـَٔاتِنَا وَ تَوَفَّنَا مَعَ ٱلۡأَبۡرَارِ ﴿١٩٣﴾
رَبَّنَا وَ ءَاتِنَا مَا وَعَدتَّنَا عَلَىٰ رُسُلِكَ
وَلَا تُخۡزِنَا يَوۡمَ ٱلۡقِيَٰمَةِۗ إِنَّكَ لَا تُخۡلِفُ
ٱلۡمِيعَادَ ﴿١٩٤﴾

We would indeed be forging a lie against God if we return to your common belief after God has saved us therefrom, and it is by no means for us to return unless God our Lord so wills. Our Lord does embrace everything with His knowledge, and in God we place our trust.

[He prayed], "Our Lord! Make the truth decisively distinct and clear [in this conflict] between us and our people, and you are the best to make this decisive distinction." [7:89]

قَدِ ٱفۡتَرَيۡنَا عَلَى ٱللَّهِ كَذِبًا إِنۡ عُدۡنَا فِي
مِلَّتِكُم بَعۡدَ إِذۡ نَجَّىٰنَا ٱللَّهُ مِنۡهَاۚ وَ مَا
يَكُونُ لَنَآ أَن نَّعُودَ فِيهَآ إِلَّآ أَن يَشَآءَ
ٱللَّهُ رَبُّنَاۚ وَسِعَ رَبُّنَا كُلَّ شَيۡءٍ عِلۡمَۢاۚ
عَلَى ٱللَّهِ تَوَكَّلۡنَاۚ رَبَّنَا ٱفۡتَحۡ بَيۡنَنَا
وَبَيۡنَ قَوۡمِنَا بِٱلۡحَقِّ وَ أَنتَ خَيۡرُ ٱلۡفَٰتِحِينَ
﴿٨٩﴾

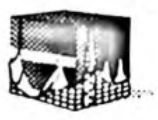
"O our Lord! Truly, You do know all that we may conceal and all that we may reveal: for nothing whatsoever, be it on earth or in heaven, remains hidden from God.

"All praise be to God, who has granted unto

رَبَّنَآ إِنَّكَ تَعۡلَمُ مَا نُخۡفِي
وَ مَا نُعۡلِنُۗ وَ مَا يَخۡفَىٰ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ مِن
شَيۡءٖ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَ لَا فِي ٱلسَّمَآءِ ﴿٣٨﴾
ٱلۡحَمۡدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِي وَهَبَ لِي عَلَى ٱلۡكِبَرِ

me in my old age Isma'il (Ishmael) and Is-haq (Isaac); verily my Lord hears the prayer.
"O my Lord! Help me to keep up the prayer, and let there be among my offspring those who do [the same]; O our Lord, accept my prayer.
"O our Lord! Grant your forgiveness unto me and my parents and all the believers, on the Day when the reckoning will come to pass." [14:38-41]

إِسْمَٰعِيلَ وَ إِسْحَٰقَ ۚ إِنَّ رَبِّى لَسَمِيعُ
ٱلدُّعَآءِ ﴿٣٩﴾ رَبِّ ٱجْعَلْنِى مُقِيمَ
ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَ مِن ذُرِّيَّتِى ۚ رَبَّنَا وَ تَقَبَّلْ
دُعَآءِ ﴿٤٠﴾ رَبَّنَا ٱغْفِرْ لِى وَ لِوَٰلِدَىَّ
وَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ ٱلْحِسَابُ ﴿٤١﴾



[Behold,] as those youth took refuge in the cave, they prayed: "O our Lord! bestow on us grace from you and let our matter be [always directed through the different circumstances] in the right way." [18:10]

إِذْ
أَوَى ٱلْفِتْيَةُ إِلَى ٱلْكَهْفِ فَقَالُوا۟ رَبَّنَآ
ءَاتِنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ رَحْمَةً وَ هَيِّئْ لَنَا مِنْ
أَمْرِنَا رَشَدًا ﴿١٠﴾

And those [true servants of the Most Gracious] who pray: "O our Lord! Grant that our spouses and our offsprings be of joy to our eyes, and cause us to be a model among those who are conscious of You." [25:74]

وَ ٱلَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا هَبْ
لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَٰجِنَا وَ ذُرِّيَّٰتِنَا قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ
وَ ٱجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا ﴿٧٤﴾

Said he [Abraham], "Then realize ever, that all what you have been worshipping, you and those earliest forebearers of yours, they are all my enemy, save the Lord of all beings. The One who has created me, and who Himself guides me, and who He Himself gives me to eat and to drink, and whenever I am sick He Himself heals me and brings me back to health, and He is the One who will cause me to die and will bring me back to life, and who - I hope - will forgive me on the Day of Judgement.
[He prayed], "O my Lord! Endow me with [the capability of] correct judgement, and enable me to join the righteous, and grant me a truthful acknowledgement [of my mission] among those of later times, and place me

قَالَ أَفَرَءَيْتُم مَّا كُنتُمْ تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾ أَنتُمْ
وَ ءَابَآؤُكُمُ ٱلْأَقْدَمُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾ فَإِنَّهُمْ عَدُوٌّ
لِىٓ إِلَّا رَبَّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾ ٱلَّذِى
خَلَقَنِى فَهُوَ يَهْدِينِ ﴿٧٨﴾ وَ ٱلَّذِى هُوَ
يُطْعِمُنِى وَ يَسْقِينِ ﴿٧٩﴾ وَ إِذَا مَرِضْتُ
فَهُوَ يَشْفِينِ ﴿٨٠﴾ وَ ٱلَّذِى يُمِيتُنِى ثُمَّ
يُحْيِينِ ﴿٨١﴾ وَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَطْمَعُ أَن يَغْفِرَ لِى
خَطِيٓـَٔتِى يَوْمَ ٱلدِّينِ ﴿٨٢﴾ رَبِّ هَبْ لِى
حُكْمًا وَ أَلْحِقْنِى بِٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾
وَ ٱجْعَل لِّى لِسَانَ صِدْقٍ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرِينَ ﴿٨٤﴾

among those who shall inherit the garden of bliss!
"And forgive my father; he is one of those who have gone astray. And do not disgrace me on the Day when all shall be raised from the dead, the Day on which neither wealth will be of any benefit [for anyone] nor children; but only [will be of benefit] that one who comes to God with a clean, heart free from evil." [26:75-89]

وَ ٱجْعَلْنِى مِن وَرَثَةِ جَنَّةِ ٱلنَّعِيمِ
(٨٥) وَ ٱغْفِرْ لِأَبِى ۖ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ مِنَ
ٱلضَّآلِّينَ (٨٦) وَ لَا تُخْزِنِى يَوْمَ يُبْعَثُونَ
(٨٧) يَوْمَ لَا يَنفَعُ مَالٌ وَ لَا بَنُونَ (٨٨)
إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى ٱللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ (٨٩)

Those who bear the throne of God and those around it extol their Lord's limitless glory, and have faith in Him [beyond measure and time]. And they pray for forgiveness for all who have attained to faith: "O our Lord! You embrace all things within [Your grace] and knowledge; forgive, then, [the wrong doing of] those who turn in repentance, and follow Your path, and preserve them from suffering through the blazing fire.
"And O our Lord, bring them [those who have responded and followed God's way] into the gardens of perpetual bliss which You have promised them, together with the righteous from among their forebearers and their spouses and their offspring; verily you are the All-mighty, the All-wise." [40:7-8]

ٱلَّذِينَ
يَحْمِلُونَ ٱلْعَرْشَ وَ مَنْ حَوْلَهُۥ يُسَبِّحُونَ
بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِۦ وَ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ
لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ۖ رَبَّنَا وَسِعْتَ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ
رَّحْمَةً وَ عِلْمًا فَٱغْفِرْ لِلَّذِينَ تَابُوا۟
وَ ٱتَّبَعُوا۟ سَبِيلَكَ وَ قِهِمْ عَذَابَ ٱلْجَحِيمِ
(٧) رَبَّنَا وَ أَدْخِلْهُمْ جَنَّٰتِ عَدْنٍ ٱلَّتِى
وَعَدتَّهُمْ وَ مَن صَلَحَ مِنْ ءَابَآئِهِمْ
وَ أَزْوَٰجِهِمْ وَ ذُرِّيَّٰتِهِمْ ۚ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ
ٱلْحَكِيمُ (٨)

And those who come later after them pray, "O our Lord! Forgive us, and our brethren who preceded us in faith, and let not our hearts have any hard feelings against those who have attained to faith. O our Lord! Verily, You are All-compassionate, Most Gracious." [59:10]

وَ ٱلَّذِينَ
جَآءُو مِنۢ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا ٱغْفِرْ لَنَا
وَ لِإِخْوَٰنِنَا ٱلَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِٱلْإِيمَٰنِ
وَ لَا تَجْعَلْ فِى قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِّلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟
رَبَّنَآ إِنَّكَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ (١٠)

You have had a good example in Ibrahim [Abraham] and those who followed him, when they said to their [idolatrous] people: "We are quit of you and

قَدْ كَانَتْ
لَكُمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فِىٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَ ٱلَّذِينَ
مَعَهُۥ ۖ إِذْ قَالُوا۟ لِقَوْمِهِمْ إِنَّا بُرَءَٰٓؤُا۟ مِنكُمْ

that which you worship apart from God; we disbelieve in you, and enmity and dislike between us and you have become obvious for ever, until you believe in God alone." The only exception was that of Abraham's saying to his father, "I shall pray for [God's] forgiveness for you, but I have no power to secure anything from God to you." [And he and the believers prayed:] "Our Lord, in You we have placed our trust, and to You do we turn, and to You is all journeys' end. O our Lord! Keep us from being a temptation for those who might reject the truth [in their rejection of the truth, and/or their persecution of the believers], and forgive any wrongdoing on our side; Our Lord, You alone are the All-mighty, the All-wise." [60:4-5]

وَ مِمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ كَفَرْنَا بِكُمْ
وَ بَدَا بَيْنَنَا وَ بَيْنَكُمُ ٱلْعَدَٰوَةُ وَ ٱلْبَغْضَآءُ
أَبَدًا حَتَّىٰ تُؤْمِنُوا بِٱللَّهِ وَحْدَهُۥٓ إِلَّا
قَوْلَ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ لِأَبِيهِ لَأَسْتَغْفِرَنَّ لَكَ وَ مَآ
أَمْلِكُ لَكَ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ مِن شَىْءٍ ۖ رَّبَّنَا عَلَيْكَ
تَوَكَّلْنَا وَ إِلَيْكَ أَنَبْنَا وَ إِلَيْكَ ٱلْمَصِيرُ
﴿٤﴾ رَبَّنَا لَا تَجْعَلْنَا فِتْنَةً لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
وَٱغْفِرْ لَنَا رَبَّنَآ ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ
ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٥﴾

O you who have attained to faith! Turn to God in sincere repentance; it may well be that your Lord will acquit you of your bad deeds, and will admit you into gardens beneath which rivers flow, on a Day on which God will not let the Prophet and those who share his faith feel any embarrassment. Their light will spread before them and on their right, [and] they will pray: "O our Lord! Bring our light to its fullness, and grant us forgiveness; surely, You have power over everything." [66:8]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا تُوبُوٓا إِلَى
ٱللَّهِ تَوْبَةً نَّصُوحًا عَسَىٰ رَبُّكُمْ أَن يُكَفِّرَ
عَنكُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمْ وَ يُدْخِلَكُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى
مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ يَوْمَ لَا يُخْزِى ٱللَّهُ
ٱلنَّبِىَّ وَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مَعَهُۥ ۖ نُورُهُمْ
يَسْعَىٰ بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَ بِأَيْمَٰنِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ
رَبَّنَآ أَتْمِمْ لَنَا نُورَنَا وَ ٱغْفِرْ لَنَآ ۖ إِنَّكَ
عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٨﴾

APPENDIX

SURAS OF THE QURAN REVEALED IN MAKKA (MECCA)

INDICATED ACCORDING TO THE SEQUENCE OF REVELATION

Number of the Sura according to the sequence of revelation	Name of the Sura	Number of the Sura according to its place in the Quranic collection & exceptions of verses that were not revealed in Mecca.(These were revealed in Medina, unless otherwise indicated)
1	al-'Alaq	96
2	al-Qalam	68 (except verses 17-33, 48-50
3	al-Muzzammil	73 (except verses 10-11, 20)
4	al-Muddathir	74
5	al-Fatiha	1
6	al-Masad	111
7	al-Takwir	81
8	al-A'la	87
9	al-Layl	92
10	al-Fajr	89
11	al-Duha	93
12	al-Sharh	94
13	al-'Asr	103
14	al-'Adiyat	100
15	al-Kawther	108
16	al-Takathur	102
17	al-Ma'un	107 (except verses 4-7)
18	al-Kafirun	109
19	al-Fil	105
20	al-Falaq	113
21	al-Nas	114
22	al-Ikhlas	112
23	al-Najm	53 (except verse 32)
24	'Abasa	80
25	al-Qadr	97
26	al-Shams	91
27	al-Buruj	85
28	al-Tin	95
29	Quraysh	106

Number of the Sura according to the sequence of revelation	Name of the Sura	Number of the Sura according to its place in the Quranic collection & exceptions of verses that were not revealed in Mecca.(These were revealed in Medina, unless otherwise indicated)
30	al-Qari'a	101
31	al-Qiyama	75
32	al-Humaza	104
33	al-Mursalat	77 (except verse 48)
34	Qaf	50 (except verse 38)
35	al-Balad	90
36	al-Tariq	86
37	al-Qamar	54 (except verses 44-46)
38	Sad	38
39	al-A'raf	7 (except verses 163-170)
40	al-Jinn	72
41	Yasin	36 (except verse 45)
42	al-Furqan	25 (except verses 68-70)
43	Fatir	35
44	Maryam	19 (except verses 58, 71)
45	Taha	20 (except verses 130-131)
46	al-Waqi'a	56 (except verses 81-82)
47	al-Shu'ara'	26 (except verses 97, 224-227)
48	al-Naml	27
49	al-Qasas	28 (except verses 52-55 & 85 revealed on the way to Medina during Migration *Hijra*)
50	al-Isra'	17 (except 26, 32-33, 57, 73-80)
51	Yunus	10 (except verses 40, 94-96)
52	Hud	11 (except verses 12, 17, 114)
53	Yusuf	12 (except verses 1-3, 7)
54	al-Hijr	15 (except verse 87)
55	al-An'am	6 (except verses 20, 23, 91, 93, 114, 141, 151-153)
56	al-Saffat	37
57	Luqman	31 (except verses 27-29)
58	Saba'	34 (except verse 6)
59	al-Zumar	39 (except verses 52-54)
60	Ghafir	40 (except verses 56-57)
61	Fussilat	41
62	al-Shura	42 (except verses 23-25, 27)
63	al-Zukhruf	43 (except verse 54)

Number of the Sura according to the sequence of revelation	Name of the Sura	Number of the Sura according to its place in the Quranic collection & exceptions of verses that were not revealed in Mecca.(These were revealed in Medina, unless otherwise indicated)
64	al-Dukhan	44
65	al-Jathiya	45 (except verse 14)
66	al-Ahqaf	46 (except verses 10, 15, 35)
67	al-Dhariyat	51
68	al-Ghashiya	88
69	al-Kahf	18 (except verses 28, 83-101)
70	al-Nahl	16 (except verses 126-128)
71	Nuh	71
72	Ibrahim	14 (except verses 28-29)
73	al-Anbiya'	21
74	al-Mu'minun	23
75	al-Sajda	32 (except verses 16-20)
76	al-Tur	52
77	al-Mulk	67
78	al-Haqqa	69
79	al-Ma'arij	70
80	al-Naba'	78
81	al-Nazi'at	79
82	al-Infitar	82
83	al-Inshiqaq	84
84	al-Rum	30 (except verse 17)
85	al-'Ankabut	29 (except verses 1-11)
86	al-Mutaffifin	83

TOTAL: 86 SURAS

SURAS OF THE QURAN REVEALED IN MADINA (MEDINA)

INDICATED ACCORDING TO THE SEQUENCE OF REVELATION

Number of the Sura according to the sequence of revelation	Name of the Sura	Number of the Sura according to its place in the Quranic collection & exceptions of verses that were not revealed in Medina. (These were revealed in Mecca, unless otherwise indicated)
1	al-Baqara	2 (except verse 281: revealed in Mina during the Farewell Pilgrimage)
2	al-Anfal	8 (except verses 30-36)
3	Aal-'Imran	3
4	al-Ahzab	33
5	al-Mumtahina	60
6	al-Nisa'	4
7	al-Zalzala	99
8	al-Hadid	57
9	Muhammad (pbuh)	47 (except verse 13: revealed during Migration *Hijra*)
10	al-Ra'd	13
11	al-Rahman	55
12	al-Insan	76
13	al-Talaq	65
14	al-Bayyina	98
15	al-Hashr	59
16	al-Nur	24
17	al-Hajj	22 (except verses 52-55: revealed on the way from Mecca to Medina)
18	al-Munafiqun	63
19	al-Mujadala	58
20	al-Hujurat	49
21	al-Tahrim	66
22	al-Taghabun	64
23	al-Saff	61
24	al-jumu'a	62
25	al-Fath	48 (revealed at the departure from Hudaybiya)

Number of the Sura according to the sequence of revelation	Name of the Sura	Number of the Sura according to its place in the Quranic collection & exceptions of verses that were not revealed in Medina. (These were revealed in Mecca, unless otherwise indicated)
26	al-Ma'ida	5 (except verse 3: revealed at Arafat during the Farewell Pilgrimage)
27	al-Tawba	9 (except verses 128-129)
28	al-Nasr	110 (revealed in Mina during the Farewell Pilgrimage)

TOTAL:28 SURAS